

A GUIDE FOR
HOLY
WEEK



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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the church, Christians have remembered and celebrated the last days of Jesus' earthly life. This has been called Holy Week, and it's celebrated the week leading up to Easter.

To help you worship King Jesus with joy, intentionality, and love during Holy Week, we've created this simple guide which explains how each day of Holy Week matters for your life. Additionally, we've suggested specific ways to pursue the Lord through the disciplines of reading, praying, singing, and sharing. We've structured this guide so that each day you can:

- Read the Bible and remember Jesus' last week on earth.
- Pray in response to what each day celebrates.
- Sing a song that celebrates the Lord's activity on each day of Holy Week.
- Share with someone in your life what each day teaches us about Jesus. We specifically encourage you to use these truths as you share the gospel with those who do not know the Lord.

Lastly, if you have kids, we have provided activities and conversation suggestions to help you explain each day to your children! We hope that this resource will help you better understand and trust in what Jesus accomplished on the cross. Romans 5:6-10 reminds us that the love of God is most clearly expressed through the glorious event that occurred on Calvary, where the Son of God bore the wrath of God so that we can become children of God. We hope that this guide will help you respond to the grace of God by worshipping him in every area of your life. Have a blessed Holy Week!

PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 5

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9. Upon his arrival, the crowds greeted him with palm branches and shouts of "Hosanna," a plea for God to save them.

READ

Matthew 21:1-11

PRAY

- Spend time thanking God for sending Jesus, the true King that the world so desperately needs.
- Praise God for keeping his promise to send us a King who would deal with our sin problem once and for all.

SING

King of Kings - Hillsong Worship

SHARE

Palm Sunday reminds us that Jesus is the King who came to deliver us from our sin.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Decorate a Palm Branch and Praise God Together

Celebrate Palm Sunday by decorating [our palm branch template](#) with crayons, paint, or leaves from outside (use glue to make them stick)! Then, talk about how the people praised Jesus as he entered Jerusalem. Use your palm branches to decorate the dinner table. Over dinner, ask each child what they can praise Jesus for. Spend time praying, praising God, and thanking him for sending Jesus, the true King that the world so desperately needs.

MONDAY

APRIL 6

On Monday, Jesus entered the temple at Jerusalem and found it full of traders and money-changers who most likely were ripping off those who needed to purchase animals for sacrifice. In purifying the temple, Jesus declared that all people - Gentiles, children, the blind, and lame - should be able to come and worship God.

READ

Matthew 21:12-17

PRAY

- Give God thanks for including all types of people in his kingdom and for not showing partiality.
- Confess to God ways you have shown partiality to others.
- Pray for God to help you show the same compassion to others that Jesus shows in this passage.

SING

Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me - CityAlight

SHARE

Monday of Holy Week reminds us that Jesus is the perfect worshipper who worships the Lord in purity and gave his life to purify us.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Take a Family Prayer Walk

Celebrate Monday of Holy Week with a family prayer walk. Before the walk, explain to your children that God wants people to worship him, and that's what Jesus wanted when he cleansed the temple. Then, explain that you're going to pray for the people in your neighborhood to worship God as well. Before you leave, make cards for your neighbors. Let them know that you are praying for them, that God loves them, and maybe use the "Share" statements from the Holy Week guide. As you walk, pray over each house and ask that God would use the season of Easter to lead your neighbors to Jesus.

On Tuesday, Jesus again entered the temple and began teaching. The chief priests and authorities approached him and questioned his authority to teach (21:23), to disrupt the money-changers (vv. 12-13), and to heal (v. 14). Jesus in turn trapped them with his response.

READ

Matthew 21:23-27

PRAY

- Take time to consider that, in Jesus, God himself has taken on a human body and understands firsthand what it's like to live in this fallen world.
- Pray that God would help you to submit to Jesus' authority each day.

SING

None Like You - Vertical Church Band

SHARE

Tuesday of Holy Week reminds us that Jesus is the true teacher who tells us how to have eternal life through faith in him.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Share the True Gospel with Jelly Beans

Celebrate Tuesday of Holy Week by sharing the gospel with jelly beans. Explain that Jesus was the true teacher who had authority to forgive our sins and proclaim the true gospel. Then, give them the following jelly beans:

Yellow/Gold - Explain that God is holy and the King over all creation. He created us to bring him glory.

Black - All people have sinned and are separated from our holy God.

Red - Jesus came to earth and died in our place.

White - When we ask Jesus to save us from our sin, he takes the penalty for us and cleanses us before God.

Green - As a follower of Jesus, we now have a relationship with God and can grow in that relationship by trusting in him, reading his word, talking to him through prayer, and obeying his commands.

WEDNESDAY

APRIL 8

This day is sometimes referred to as “Silent Wednesday” since the Bible doesn’t explicitly mention any of Jesus’ activities on this day. This may have been when his opponents plotted to kill him.

READ

Matthew 26:3-5; Psalm 2

PRAY

- Confess even small ways that you, too, have considered Jesus’ authority as a threat to your own plans for your life.

SING

This We Know - Shane & Shane

SHARE

Silent Wednesday reminds us that the world hates God and his people, but God has great love for sinners.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Conduct an Easter Scavenger Hunt

Celebrate Wednesday of Holy Week by sending your children on an Easter scavenger hunt. Instruct them to find items that symbolize different parts of the Easter story: **a rock** (the tomb), **two sticks** (the cross), **something black** (sin), **something red** (blood), **something white** (a clean heart), and **something green** (growing in Christ). Older children can go on a digital scavenger hunt, taking photographs of items that remind them of Easter. After children have gathered the items, talk about what each one represents. Pray together and thank God for the gift of salvation through Jesus.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

APRIL 9

On Thursday, Jesus shared his final meal with his disciples and instituted what we call the Lord's Supper. ("Maundy" comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, or "command," a reference to the command Jesus gave his disciples in John 13:34 to love one another.)

READ

Matthew 26:17-35

PRAY

- Meditate on John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another."
- Ask God to help you love others as Jesus has loved you.
- Take time to confess sin to God. Give thanks to him for the blood of Jesus "which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28).

SING

Mercy - Matt Redman

SHARE

Maundy Thursday reminds us that Jesus is the perfect friend who loved us, served us, and gave his life for us.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Wash Each Other's Feet

Celebrate Thursday of Holy Week by washing each other's feet. Fill a bucket with water, grab a few towels, and gather your family. Read from John 13:1-17 and explain that, although Jesus was God, he humbled himself and showed his disciples how to be a servant. One of the ways he did that was by washing their feet. Discuss the various ways you can follow this model of service to those in your family. Give concrete examples of how you can serve your spouse, your children, and your neighbors, and then encourage your children to do the same. After reading the text, spend time washing everyone's feet. Then, end by praying that God will give your family a deeper love for him and a greater desire to love and serve one another.

Note: If Dad is able, we encourage him to lead this exercise by reading the text and washing the feet of his wife and children.

GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 10

After a sham trial, Jesus was condemned to death and was crucified, a common means of execution by the Romans. Because the sinless Son of God died in place of sinful people, the Friday of Holy Week is especially somber. Christians have therefore traditionally referred to this day as "holy" or "good."

READ

Matthew 27:32-61

PRAY

- Meditate on the fact that your own sins were being punished by God on the cross. Give thanks to God for the incredible mercy he has shown you.
- Ask God for strength to endure the suffering that comes with following Jesus.

SING

Hallelujah for the Cross - Shane & Shane

SHARE

Good Friday reminds us that Jesus died to satisfy the wrath God has against us and our sin.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Make a Cross and Remember Christ

Celebrate Good Friday by going on a walk and finding sticks to make a cross. Once you have your sticks, go home and build a cross. Explain to your children that Jesus died on the cross to pay for the penalty of our bad, rebellious, disobedient lives. Take time to confess your sins to one another and ask for forgiveness for any way that you've hurt each other. Then, pray as a family and invite your kids to pray and confess their sin. Thank Jesus for paying the penalty for our sins on the cross, and remember that God's wrath has been satisfied by Jesus!

On Saturday, the Sabbath day, Jesus' body lay in a tomb. Because of previous remarks by Jesus that he would rise again, the religious leaders set a guard over the tomb.

READ

Matthew 27:62-66

PRAY

- Ask God to increase your desire for Jesus' return.
- Ask him for the strength to endure the trials of this life.

SING

In Christ Alone - Kristian Stanfill

SHARE

Saturday of Holy Week reminds us that even when times are dark, God always keeps his promises.

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Illustrate Forgiveness with an Old T-Shirt

Celebrate Saturday of Holy Week by teaching your kids about the forgiveness we can receive from God through Christ's sacrifice. On Saturday, Jesus was in the grave, and his death and resurrection secured our redemption. Use this activity to help illustrate this beautiful reality!

Grab an old, white t-shirt and put it on. Then, with a permanent marker, have your kids write examples of sin on the t-shirt. Explain that our sin separates us from God and keeps us from knowing him as Father. To be reconciled with God, we need to get rid of the sin that separates us. Ask for ideas on how to remove the marker stains from the shirt. If the kids suggest washing it, try scrubbing it in the sink. Let them see that the stains are permanent. Also note how the "sins" can't be hidden, even if the shirt is turned inside out. Then, ask: "If we can't remove our own sin, who can help us?" Guide your kids toward understanding that only Jesus, through his death and resurrection, has the power to get rid of our sins. Take a new, clean shirt and put it on over the dirty white shirt. Explain that when we believe in Jesus, God no longer sees our sin when he looks at us. Instead, he sees what Jesus has accomplished through his life and death.

EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 12

On the most important day in history, Jesus emerged from the tomb alive and in a glorious body, signaling the full forgiveness for sins, the eventual end of death, and promising the arrival of a new heaven and a new earth.

READ

Matthew 28:1-10

PRAY

- Give God thanks for bringing Jesus back from the dead. Thank him for the assurance this gives us that our sins are forgiven.
- Pray for someone in your life who does not know Jesus and ask God for an opportunity to share this good news with them.
- Meditate on these verses: "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ...If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Corinthians 15:17, 19).
- Ask that God would help you to live each day in light of the resurrection.

SING

Christ Is Risen - Phil Wickham

SHARE

Easter Sunday reminds us that Jesus is truly God and that he can truly save us from our sin!

PROVIDENCE KIDS

Make Resurrection Rolls

Celebrate Easter Sunday by making resurrection rolls and rejoicing in the fact that he is risen! You can find our [Resurrection Rolls Recipe and Activity Guide](#) by clicking here.