

Holy Week 2026 @ Pinnacle Church



Holy Week Reflection Introduction

by Pastor Wayne Smith

Throughout Church history, people have taken time to reflect during the time between Palm Sunday and Easter. Varying traditions might call it Passion Week or Holy Week. The purpose of this guide is to provide a structured reflection for the week, oriented around each day as it occurred in the biblical record.

Let's walk with Jesus through this final week. Turn off the TV or the video game, put down the novel you have been reading, and pick up the Bible. Read and listen to the words of our Lord as one of His disciples. Use these teachings as meditations throughout your day. Perhaps Jesus, not the painting on the wall or the made-up personas of him, but the actual living Jesus who walked and talked during that final week, has something to say to you.

This is not merely history—it is *His story of your redemption unfolding*.

Note: On Thursday, there is a guide to doing a home-based Lord's Supper. Please look at that early to gather and prepare the meal.

Day One: Palm Sunday

Jesus enters Jerusalem—not on a stallion, but on a donkey. The crowd cheers. Palm branches wave. “Hosanna!” fills the air.

Donkeys have never been confused with chariots or majestic horses of nobility. He was not exactly the picture of a conquering king. However, the imagery was not lost on the people of Israel. Zechariah the prophet had prophesied about this moment, “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” (Zechariah 9:9)

What the people had not grasped was that before the King would wear a crown, He must endure the cross.

As Jesus approaches the city, He weeps. While others celebrate, He sees what they cannot—their coming rejection, their missed opportunity, and the judgment that will follow at the hands of the Romans in 70 AD.

On Palm Sunday, we celebrate the coming of the King. He will teach His final lessons this week, He will suffer horribly this week, and He will give the *greatest gift a King could give - His life*. And, in the end, the King will overcome. He will overcome sin, death, and Satan.



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So let us spread before his feet, not garments or soulless olive branches, which delight the eye for a few hours and then wither, but ourselves, clothed in his grace, or rather, clothed completely in him. -Andrew of Crete

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Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 21:1–11
- Mark 11:1–11
- Luke 19:28–44
- John 12:12–19

Reflection Questions:

- What kind of King am I expecting Jesus to be in my life?
- Where might I be celebrating Jesus outwardly but resisting Him inwardly?
- What does it mean for me to truly receive Him as King today?

Day Two: Monday

On Monday, as He left Bethany, He became hungry and went toward a fig tree only to find it barren of fruit. He curses the fig tree, which, at the time, might have seemed like a temper tantrum of a divine kind. But the text clues us in on a higher purpose with the simple remark, “And His disciples were listening” (Mark 11:14).

Then He enters the temple—and finds the same thing.

Religious activity... but no spiritual fruit.

Sacred space... but no reverence.

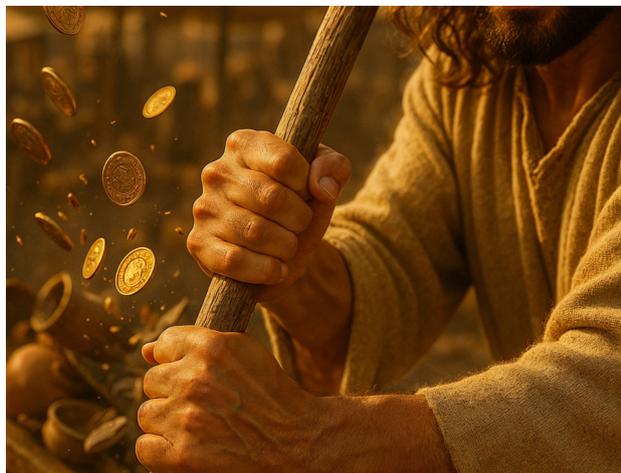
So, Jesus acts. He overturns tables. He drives out corruption. He declares, “My house shall be called a house of prayer.”

This is not anger without purpose—it is **holy zeal for true worship**.

He stopped to heal the blind and lame, teach the people, and face opposition from the chief priests and scribes. He foretold His death and its meaning for His followers.

The Temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed, but a new temple, the followers of Jesus, would become the place where the presence of God is manifest.

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you” (1 Corinthians 3:16)?



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What is sin? It is the glory of God not honored. The holiness of God not revered.

-John Piper

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Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 21:12–22 (includes fig tree)
- Mark 11:12–19
- Luke 19:45–48

Reflection Questions:

- Is my life producing spiritual fruit—or just the appearance of it?
- What “tables” might Jesus need to overturn in my heart?
- Is my life truly a place of prayer and communion with God?

Day Three: Tuesday

Tuesday was a hectic day for Jesus. Put yourself in the position of one of His disciples as you walk with him, see Him interact with the leaders of the day, and then you have the privilege of being instructed by Him regarding who He is and what it means to have faith.

This day begins with a visit and a lesson on the fig tree. Then, as He enters the city, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and other religious leaders question Jesus, trying to turn the people against Him.

But Jesus does not retreat—He teaches boldly.

Jesus taught regarding His authority, paying taxes to Caesar, the resurrection, and the greatest commandment. He told parables condemning the leaders (e.g., two sons, wicked tenants/vineyard, wedding banquet). He pronounced seven woes against the scribes and Pharisees, observed a poor widow's offering, and predicted the temple's destruction.

On the Mount of Olives, He delivered the Olivet Discourse—teaching His disciples on end-time signs, His second coming, and parables urging readiness (ten virgins, talents, sheep and goats).

Jesus is making a clear distinction between those who are open to His teaching and those who are hard of heart. This includes both judgments and blessings.

That was one busy day!



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All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all.

- Edward Perronet

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Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 21:23–25:46
- Mark 11:20–13:37
- Luke 20:1–21:36
- John 12:20–50 (non-Jews come to hear)

Reflection Questions:

- How do I respond when God's truth confronts me?
- Am I more concerned with appearances or genuine obedience?
- Where might Jesus be calling me to deeper faith and readiness?

Day Four: Wednesday

In the middle of the most critical week in history, a guy slips out the back door of an intimate gathering of his closest friends to meet a group of religious leaders who count out “28-29-30” pieces of silver. Did Judas know he was sending Jesus to his crucifixion? It seems so crass to put a monetary price on a person’s life.

While Jesus prepares for the cross, Judas prepares for betrayal.

Zechariah prophesied that Jesus would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. Roughly figured, 30 pieces of silver were equivalent to 120 denarii, or four months’ wages. Quite a bit? Perhaps to those who put price tags on people. In the Old Testament, 30 pieces of silver were the standard price for a slave (Exodus 21:32). Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, and then he sealed his contract with a kiss.

Although His life was only valued at 30 pieces of silver, giving His life would pay for the world's sins. The priests did something much more than they intended. It is so crassly human to put a price on a person or a relationship, and it is so divine for God to pay it. God knew exactly how much it would cost to save us—the rejection and betrayal and crucifixion of His Son, and He paid it all. That’s the value He puts on you. In the middle of the most critical week of history, we walk out, counting all our sins forgiven.

What man intends for evil, God uses for redemption.



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For you will certainly carry out God’s purpose, however you act, but it makes a difference to you whether you serve like Judas or like John.

- C.S. Lewis

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Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 26:1–5, 14–16
- Mark 14:1–2, 10–11
- Luke 22:1–6

Reflection Questions:

- Being around Jesus and His followers is not the same as having faith in Jesus. Are you just along for the ride, or are you sold out to Jesus?
- What does this passage teach me about the seriousness of sin?
- How does the value God places on me, as seen in the voluntary offering of Jesus, shape how I see myself?

Day Five: Thursday

In an upper room, Jesus does something completely unexpected. He kneels... and washes feet. The King becomes a servant.

Some Christian traditions call this Maundy Thursday, derived from the Latin *mandatum* ("commandment"). It refers to Jesus' command to love one another: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another" (John 13:34). The emphasis is not on love itself as a new commandment but on the servant nature of loving one another.

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper (the bread representing his body, the cup representing his blood of the new covenant) to be shared together by His followers from that day forward. He delivered the Upper Room Discourse (John 13–17), teaching on love, the Holy Spirit as Comforter, His departure, and prayer. They sang a hymn and went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in deep agony. Then we read that Judas betrayed Him with a kiss, and Jesus was arrested.

We can begin to follow a timeline for the final days of Jesus from His arrest to His crucifixion. These times are an approximate reconstruction from the Scripture and given according to our modern-day calendar and clock.

Thursday (6pm-11:30pm): Jesus eats the Passover meal with His disciples, Judas leaves to betray Him, and the Lord talks to the remaining eleven about love, unity, and sacrifice. He closes with a prayer and leads the eleven to the Garden.



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As the preaching of the Word makes the gospel audible, so the sacraments make it visible, and the Holy Spirit stirs up faith by both means.

- J.I. Packer

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Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 26:17–75
- Mark 14:12–72
- Luke 22:7–62
- John 13:1–18:11 (including arrest)

Reflection Questions:

Rather than questions for this day, use the following *Maundy Thursday Communion Experience* to celebrate the Lord's Supper in your home with friends or family.

A Maundy Thursday Home Communion Experience

“Do this in remembrance of Me.” — Luke 22:19

Introduction: Entering the Upper Room



On the Thursday before His crucifixion, Jesus gathered with His disciples to share a meal—the Passover. It was during this meal that He took bread and wine and gave them new meaning, instituting what we now call the Lord’s Supper.

This guide is designed to help you recreate that sacred evening in your home—not as a performance, but as a meaningful, Christ-centered experience of remembrance, worship, and fellowship.

This is not simply about the elements—it is about **the table, the relationships, the story, and the Savior.**

Preparing Your Home

1. Invite Others Attend

- Family, friends, neighbors, or members of your small group
- Ideal size: 4–12 people (like the disciples)

2. Set the Atmosphere

- Light candles to reflect the solemn and sacred tone
- Consider dim lighting
- Remove distractions (phones, TV, etc.)

3. Invite Others to Participate

- Host
- Leader (guides the evening)
- Scripture Readers
- Meal preparer(s)

4. Arrival – when people arrive consider having them participate in one of two symbolic gestures:

- Option One: (Option 1) Wash feet before the meal – this might be most appropriate if kids are present. This is in remembrance of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet that night. Often, household servants would wash the feet of guests. On the night of this supper, Jesus washed the disciples’ feet as a demonstration of the type of servant-love they were to show to one another.
 - Option Two: Have a bowl and towel for handwashing. This was another practice of Jesus’ day that was both practical and symbolic of having clean hands/heart.
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The Meal (Simple, Symbolic, Shared)

The original meal was a Passover meal, but you do not need to replicate it fully. Instead, aim for simplicity with symbolism.

Suggested Elements:

- **Bread** (preferably unleavened, if possible, but not required)
- **Red wine or juice**
- **A shared meal** (simple dinner—lamb is great to symbolize the Passover lamb, but another meat will do). Middle Eastern or Mediterranean cuisine adds a feeling of authenticity.

Key Principle:

This is not about perfection—it is about **intentional remembrance**.

Order of the Evening

1. Welcome & Opening (Host)

After explaining the hand/foot washing, say:

“Tonight, we gather as Jesus did with His disciples on the night before His crucifixion. We come not just to eat, but to remember—to reflect on His sacrifice, His love, and His invitation to follow Him.”

2. Scripture and Prayer of Preparation

Read one or more (consider having different people read):

- Luke 22:7–20
- Matthew 26:17–30
- John 13:1–17

Pray for the meal.

3. The Shared Meal

Eat together slowly and intentionally. Encourage conversation around:

- Gratitude
- God’s faithfulness
- What Jesus has done in your life

Optional Reflection During Meal:

- *What are your most fond memories of the Easter season?*
- *What does it mean to you that Jesus shared a table with His disciples on this occasion?*

4. The Bread — His Body Given

This may be done at any time before, during, or after the meal.

Read: Luke 22:19

“And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’”

Action: Break the bread and, after giving thanks, pass it to each person.

5. The Cup — The New Covenant

Read: **Luke 22:20**

Leader says:

There would have been four cups of wine drunk with the Passover meal. The cup immediately following the meal would have been the cup of redemption. This is likely the cup when Jesus communicated that his blood was for their redemption.

Jesus said, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.”

Action: Pour and distribute into glasses.

6. A Moment of Reflection

Encourage personal reflection:

- Confession of sin
- Gratitude for grace
- Renewed commitment to Christ

Optional Prompt: *What does the cross mean to me personally today?*

7. Closing Scripture: The Hope Beyond the Cross

Read: **Matthew 26:29**

“I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

Remind everyone:

- This meal points back to the cross
- And forward to the coming kingdom

8. Optional: End with a Song or Hymn

Suggestions:

- “Nothing But the Blood”
- “The Old Rugged Cross”
- “Jesus Paid It All”

Or simply read a Psalm together (Psalm 103 or Psalm 22).

Day Six: Good Friday

This is the darkest day.

Trials filled with injustice. Mockery filled with cruelty. A cross filled with suffering.

And yet... this is the day of **greatest love**. Jesus is crucified. Darkness covers the land.

The veil is torn. Sin is paid for. Access to God is opened. Redemption is accomplished.

“It is finished.”

The following is a breakdown of the hours of Good Friday. Use this as a prayer and reflection guide to walk through this day by yourself or with others:

- **Friday (1:00 am-1:30 am):** *Jesus is confronted in the Garden and arrested.*
- **Friday (1:30 am-2:00 am):** *Jesus’ first trial takes place, under the direction of Annas, a former Jewish High Priest.*
- **Friday (2:00 am-5:00 am):** *Jesus’ second trial takes place, under the direction of Caiaphas, the current Jewish High Priest (along with the Sanhedrin Court). They decide to petition the Roman government to kill Jesus.*
- **Friday (6:00 am-7:00 am):** *Jesus’ third trial is a hearing before Roman governor Pilate.*
- **Friday (7:00-7:30 am):** *Jesus is sent to Herod Antipas who had (Roman-appointed) jurisdiction over Galilee. He mocks Jesus, who remains silent.*
- **Friday (7:30 am-8:30 am):** *Jesus returns to Pilate, who repeatedly attempts to release Him while the Jewish leaders continue to rebuff. Pilate orders Jesus to be scourged to satisfy the Jewish leaders; the Jews demand that Jesus be crucified. Pilate resists but eventually gives the order to execute Jesus.*
- **Friday (8:30 am-9:00 am):** *Pilate’s Roman soldiers take Jesus into the Praetorium and enjoy mocking and abusing Him, including driving a thorny crown into His skull.*
- **Friday (9:00 am-12:00 pm):** *Jesus is forced to carry His own cross up the Golgotha hill, and then His crucifixion begins. Jesus cries out three of his seven “final sayings” from the cross.*
- **Friday (12:00 pm- 3:00 pm):** *Darkness covers the earth. Jesus’ final four sayings are uttered.*
- **Friday (3:00 pm):** *Jesus dies, the veil in the Temple, which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, is torn from top to bottom. An earthquake reverberates through the holy city, and the dead rise from their graves, appearing to many.*
- **Friday (3:30 pm):** *Roman soldiers break the legs of the victims (to speed up their asphyxiation and kill them faster), but find Jesus is already dead (which is unusual, considering the “short” time He was on the cross). Instead of breaking His legs, they pierce His side, through to His heart (fulfilling prophecy).*
- **Friday (4:00 pm-5:00 pm):** *Jesus is buried and laid in the tomb of the disciple Joseph, for part of the first day (day one).*



Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 27:1–66
- Mark 15:1–47
- Luke 22:66–23:56
- John 18:28–19:42

Reflection Questions:

- What does the cross reveal about the seriousness of my sin?
- What does the cross reveal about the depth of God’s love?
- How should I respond to what Jesus has done for me?

Day Seven: Silent Saturday

Jesus' body lay in the sealed tomb. The chief priests and Pharisees obtained a Roman guard to secure it. The disciples observed the Sabbath in rest and mourning; the women prepared spices but rested.

The disciples wait... confused, grieving, uncertain.

But what they could not see was that God was still working. Although the details are scant in the Scriptures, it seems as though there was activity in the spiritual world between the crucifixion and Easter (see 1 Peter 3). Perhaps we will never know this side of heaven.

Silent does not mean absent. Stillness does not mean defeat.

This is the space between promise and fulfillment.

Often, when God seems silent in our lives, perhaps, like the disciples, we think His plans have stopped; God is at work. It is the darkness before the dawn. It is when doubt meets faith. Be sure, your faith is not in vain, for Sunday is coming.



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Only the one who descends into the underworld rescues the beloved.

- Soren Kiekegaard

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Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 27:62–66
- I Peter 3:18-20 (many believe this happened between Friday and Sunday)
- Luke 23:56 (women rest on Sabbath)

Reflection Questions:

- Where in my life does God seem silent right now?
- How can I trust Him even when I cannot see what He is doing?
- What does this day teach me about waiting in faith?

Day Eight: Sunday

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, a small group of women made their way to the tomb. Their hearts were heavy, their hopes seemingly buried with Jesus.

But everything changed.

The silence is broken. The stone is rolled away. The tomb is empty.

What they expected to be a place of death became the very place where life broke forth. Angels declared the unthinkable: *“He is not here; He has risen!”* (Luke 24:6). And then, in a moment of deeply personal grace, Jesus appeared first—not to kings or crowds—but to Mary Magdalene. A grieving woman became the first witness to the greatest victory in history.

What seemed like defeat was revealed as victory.

The cross was not the end. The grave was not the conclusion. Death was not the final word. Sin is conquered. Death is defeated. And this changes everything—not just for them, but for us. Because Jesus lives, our past no longer defines us. Our sin no longer condemns us.

Our future is no longer uncertain. The resurrection is not just an event to remember—it is a reality to live in. The same power that raised Christ from the dead now brings life to our weary hearts, hope to our broken places, and purpose to our everyday lives.

Hope is alive.

He is risen. He is risen indeed.

Scripture Passages:

- Matthew 28:1–10
- Mark 16:1–8
- Luke 24:1–49
- John 20:1–23 (additional appearances in John 21)

Reflection Questions:

- What does the resurrection mean for my life today?
- Am I living as someone who truly believes Jesus is alive?
- Who can I share this hope with?

