



# HOLY WEEK

CROSS BEFORE CROWN

What happened during the last week of the life of Jesus of Nazareth changed the world.

And, for the last 2,000 years, whenever the church has the retold and reread the account of the last week of the life of Jesus, people have been changed.

Why?

What is it about the life and death of Jesus that affects people so deeply?

The only way to answer those questions is to actually read—for the first time, all over again—the story of the last week of the life of Jesus, beginning with what we now call Palm Sunday, and concluding with the story of what the women saw at dawn on that first Easter Sunday morning.

What follows is Mark's account of that last week of Jesus's life, chapters 11-16 of Mark's Gospel. I offer here very brief commentary following each day's reading, in an attempt to help readers get something out of their reading. My commentary is NOT the point—the point is the words of the scripture; my goal is just to get people engaged in actually reading about the most important week in history.

Let's go.

✝ *Andrew Forrest*

Andrew Forrest

Pastor

Asbury Church

Tulsa, OK

P.S. Want to receive these daily readings and commentary in your inbox? Sign up on my website: [www.andrewforrest.org](http://www.andrewforrest.org)



## SUNDAY, APRIL 2

### PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES | 8 AM | 9 AM | 11 AM

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week, during which we remember the last week of the life of Jesus. Children will wave palm branches during the services.

#### MARK 11:1-33

#### PALM SUNDAY

#### JESUS COMES TO JERUSALEM AS KING

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. <sup>3</sup>If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’” <sup>4</sup>They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, <sup>5</sup>some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” <sup>6</sup>They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. <sup>7</sup>When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. <sup>8</sup>Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. <sup>9</sup>Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” <sup>10</sup>“Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!” <sup>11</sup>Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

#### JESUS CURSES A FIG TREE AND CLEARS THE TEMPLE COURTS

<sup>12</sup>The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. <sup>13</sup>Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. <sup>14</sup>Then he said to the tree, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard him say it. <sup>15</sup>On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began

driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, <sup>16</sup>and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. <sup>17</sup>And as he taught them, he said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’” <sup>18</sup>The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching. <sup>19</sup>When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city. <sup>20</sup>In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. <sup>21</sup>Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!” <sup>22</sup>“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. <sup>23</sup>“Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. <sup>24</sup>Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. <sup>25</sup>And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” <sup>[26]</sup>

## THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS QUESTIONED

<sup>27</sup>They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. <sup>28</sup>“By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?” <sup>29</sup>Jesus replied, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. <sup>30</sup>John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!” <sup>31</sup>They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’” <sup>32</sup>But if we say, ‘Of human origin’ ...” (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.) <sup>33</sup>So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.” Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

<sup>[26]</sup> Mark 11:26 - Some manuscripts include here words similar to Matthew 6:15.

---

The time for confrontation has arrived. Jesus has been avoiding an outright confrontation as long as possible (which is why, if you read through Mark's Gospel, you'll see that Jesus keeps telling people to keep quiet about the miracles he's performing). But, on Palm Sunday Jesus has arrived in Jerusalem for the purpose of confronting the rebellious powers of the world. From his confrontation in the Temple and the overturning of the tables to his prophetic parable about the fig tree and power of prayer to overturn the powers, Jesus is now unapologetically moving toward the final confrontation of the Cross.

In other words, it's time to fight.

*What is it time for you to confront in your life?*

## **MONDAY, APRIL 3**

### **MARK 12:1-27**

#### **THE PARABLE OF THE TENANTS**

Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. <sup>2</sup>At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. <sup>3</sup>But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>4</sup>Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. <sup>5</sup>He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. <sup>6</sup>"He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' <sup>7</sup>"But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' <sup>8</sup>So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. <sup>9</sup>"What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. <sup>10</sup>Haven't you read this passage of Scripture: "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; <sup>11</sup>the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" <sup>12</sup> Then the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

## PAYING THE IMPERIAL TAX TO CAESAR

<sup>13</sup>Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. <sup>14</sup>They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? <sup>15</sup>Should we pay or shouldn’t we?” But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” <sup>16</sup>They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. <sup>17</sup>Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

## MARRIAGE AT THE RESURRECTION

<sup>18</sup>Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. <sup>19</sup>“Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. <sup>20</sup>Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. <sup>21</sup>The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. <sup>22</sup>In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. <sup>23</sup>At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?” <sup>24</sup>Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? <sup>25</sup>When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. <sup>26</sup>Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? <sup>27</sup>He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!”

---

Jesus doesn’t fit into the world’s categories and refuses to be placed in them, which is why the powers hate him.

*He is calling us to follow his example—do not let yourself be defined by the world, and do not be surprised when, in response to your defiance, you are hated. Remember: they hated Jesus before you.*

**TUESDAY, APRIL 4**

**MARK 12:28-40**

### **THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT**

<sup>28</sup>One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” <sup>29</sup>“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup>The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” <sup>32</sup>“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. <sup>33</sup>To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” <sup>34</sup>When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

### **WHOSE SON IS THE MESSIAH?**

<sup>35</sup>While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he asked, “Why do the teachers of the law say that the Messiah is the son of David? <sup>36</sup>David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: “‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.”’” <sup>37</sup>David himself calls him ‘Lord.’ How then can he be his son?” The large crowd listened to him with delight.

### **WARNING AGAINST THE TEACHERS OF THE LAW**

<sup>38</sup>As he taught, Jesus said, “Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, <sup>39</sup>and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. <sup>40</sup>They devour widows’ houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely.”

I think the crowd is listening to Jesus with delight (v. 37) because they know the religious leaders of the day are in it for themselves, and they feel that Jesus is on their side. *Jesus shows us what the Kingdom is like: those with power use it for those without.*

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

### LENT MORNING COMMUNION | 7AM-7:20AM | CHAPEL

Join us for a Holy Communion service this Wednesday morning, 7-7:20 am in the Chapel, with grab-and-go breakfast available on the way out.

## MARK 12:41-13:37

### THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

<sup>41</sup>Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. <sup>42</sup>But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. <sup>43</sup>Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. <sup>44</sup>They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

### THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE AND SIGNS OF THE END TIMES

As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!" <sup>2</sup>"Do you see all these great buildings?" replied Jesus. "Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." <sup>3</sup>As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, <sup>4</sup>"Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?" <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them: "Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>6</sup>Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. <sup>7</sup>When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. <sup>8</sup>Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places,



and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. <sup>9</sup>“You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. <sup>10</sup>And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. <sup>11</sup>Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. <sup>12</sup>“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. <sup>13</sup>Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>14</sup>“When you see ‘the abomination that causes desolation’ standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>15</sup>Let no one on the housetop go down or enter the house to take anything out. <sup>16</sup>Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. <sup>17</sup>How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! <sup>18</sup>Pray that this will not take place in winter, <sup>19</sup>because those will be days of distress unequaled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. <sup>20</sup>“If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them. <sup>21</sup>At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. <sup>22</sup>For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. <sup>23</sup>So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time. <sup>24</sup>“But in those days, following that distress, “‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; <sup>25</sup>the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ <sup>26</sup>“At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. <sup>28</sup>“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

## THE DAY AND HOUR UNKNOWN

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. <sup>34</sup>It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. <sup>35</sup>“Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. <sup>36</sup>If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup>What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

---

The disciples draw Jesus’s attention to the great stones of Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem, and he casually remarks that it will be destroyed (13:1). When Peter, James, and John ask him privately for more information, Jesus uses his prediction of the destruction of the Temple as an opportunity to talk about the Second Coming and Judgment Day, using vivid, apocalyptic language.

Whole books have been written on these remarks of Jesus, but I think the most important lesson for us to draw today from his predictions and warnings is this: always be ready for the end, always be prepared to die—be ready.

*How can you prepare today?*

## THURSDAY, APRIL 6

**MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE | 7PM | SANCTUARY**  
Join us for a simple Holy Communion service.

### MARK 14:1-72

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

### JESUS ANOINTED AT BETHANY

Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were

scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. <sup>2</sup>“But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people may riot.” <sup>3</sup>While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. <sup>4</sup>Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? <sup>5</sup>It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly. <sup>6</sup>“Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>7</sup>The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. <sup>8</sup>She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. <sup>9</sup>Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.” <sup>10</sup>Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. <sup>11</sup>They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

## THE LAST SUPPER

<sup>12</sup>On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus’ disciples asked him, “Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?” <sup>13</sup>So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. <sup>14</sup>Say to the owner of the house he enters, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ <sup>15</sup>He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.” <sup>16</sup>The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. <sup>17</sup>When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. <sup>18</sup>While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me.” <sup>19</sup>They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, “Surely you don’t mean me?” <sup>20</sup>“It is one of the Twelve,” he replied, “one who dips bread into the bowl with me. <sup>21</sup>The Son of Man will go just as it is written about

him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.” <sup>22</sup>While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.” <sup>23</sup>Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. <sup>24</sup>“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them. <sup>25</sup>“Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” <sup>26</sup>When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### **JESUS PREDICTS PETER’S DENIAL**

<sup>27</sup>“You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’” <sup>28</sup>But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.” <sup>29</sup>Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.” <sup>30</sup>“Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times.” <sup>31</sup>But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the others said the same.

### **GETHSEMANE**

<sup>32</sup>They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup>He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup>“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. “Stay here and keep watch.” <sup>35</sup>Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup>“Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” <sup>37</sup>Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour? <sup>38</sup>Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” <sup>39</sup>Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. <sup>40</sup>When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to

say to him. <sup>41</sup>Returning the third time, he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup>Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

## **JESUS ARRESTED**

<sup>43</sup>Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. <sup>44</sup>Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” <sup>45</sup>Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. <sup>46</sup>The men seized Jesus and arrested him. <sup>47</sup>Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. <sup>48</sup>“Am I leading a rebellion,” said Jesus, “that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? <sup>49</sup>Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” <sup>50</sup>Then everyone deserted him and fled. <sup>51</sup>A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, <sup>52</sup>he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

## **JESUS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN**

<sup>53</sup>They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together. <sup>54</sup>Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire. <sup>55</sup>The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. <sup>56</sup>Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. <sup>57</sup>Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: <sup>58</sup>“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.’” <sup>59</sup>Yet even then their testimony did not agree. <sup>60</sup>Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?”

<sup>61</sup>But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” <sup>62</sup>“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.” <sup>63</sup>The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. <sup>64</sup>“You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?” They all condemned him as worthy of death. <sup>65</sup>Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

### **PETER DISOWNS JESUS**

<sup>66</sup>While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. <sup>67</sup>When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. “You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus,” she said. <sup>68</sup>But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway. <sup>69</sup>When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” <sup>70</sup>Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” <sup>71</sup>He began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about.” <sup>72</sup>Immediately the rooster crowd the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

---

One of the things that strikes me in reading of that last night of Jesus’s life is how lonely it all must have been: he is misunderstood and then abandoned by his friends, and then mistrusted and humiliated by the very people he came to save. And he knew it would end with crucifixion.

*Spend time today meditating of the courage of Jesus, and the loneliness of the Passion.*

**FRIDAY, APRIL 7**

**GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE | 7PM | SANCTUARY**

Before the boisterous celebration of Easter comes the solemnity and silence of Good Friday. Easter is incomplete if we move too quickly over the events of Good Friday. Plan to join us in the sanctuary for our Good Friday Service.

**MARK 15:1-47**

**GOOD FRIDAY**

**JESUS BEFORE PILATE**

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate. <sup>2</sup>“Are you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate. “You have said so,” Jesus replied. <sup>3</sup>The chief priests accused him of many things. <sup>4</sup>So again Pilate asked him, “Aren’t you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.” <sup>5</sup>But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed. <sup>6</sup>Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. <sup>7</sup>A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. <sup>8</sup>The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did. <sup>9</sup>“Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, <sup>10</sup>knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. <sup>11</sup>But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead. <sup>12</sup>“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them. <sup>13</sup>“Crucify him!” they shouted. <sup>14</sup>“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!” <sup>15</sup>Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

**THE SOLDIERS MOCK JESUS**

<sup>16</sup>The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. <sup>17</sup>They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. <sup>18</sup>And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the

Jews!” <sup>19</sup>Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. <sup>20</sup>And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

## THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

<sup>21</sup>A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. <sup>22</sup>They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). <sup>23</sup>Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. <sup>24</sup>And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get. <sup>25</sup>It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. <sup>26</sup>The written notice of the charge against him read: “The King of the Jews”. <sup>27</sup>They crucified two rebels with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>[28]</sup> <sup>29</sup>Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, <sup>30</sup>come down from the cross and save yourself!” <sup>31</sup>In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! <sup>32</sup>Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

## THE DEATH OF JESUS

<sup>33</sup>At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>34</sup>And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). <sup>35</sup>When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.” <sup>36</sup>Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,” he said. <sup>37</sup>With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. <sup>38</sup>The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup>And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!” <sup>40</sup>Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome.



<sup>41</sup>In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

## THE BURIAL OF JESUS

<sup>42</sup>It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, <sup>43</sup>Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. <sup>44</sup>Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. <sup>45</sup>When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. <sup>46</sup>So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. <sup>47</sup>Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

<sup>[28]</sup> Mark 15:28 - Some manuscripts include here words similar to Luke 22:37.

---

There is a terrible, transfixing power to the Gospel accounts of the Crucifixion of Jesus. The whole account slows down, step by horrifying step, in an understated, matter-of-fact description of the final hours, and then the final minutes of the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

We live in a noisy world, with voices screaming at us to get our attention. On Good Friday at least, let us pull back our attention from cable news and scrolling timelines and just sit in stillness and silence and attend to Mark's account of the Crucifixion.

Today needs to be different.

*Turn off. Unplug. Read and re-read.*

## SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Saturday is a day of waiting. We now know the end of the story, but

on that first Saturday, no one knew what would happen at dawn on Easter Sunday.

What if God is trying to teach us something important about waiting in hope, *even when hope makes no sense?*

## SUNDAY, APRIL 9

### EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

6:30 AM SUNRISE | 9 AM | 11 AM | SANCTUARY

Join us for cake pops, bunnies, and the three greatest words in all of history—HE IS RISEN! We can't wait to celebrate with you!

*Whom are you bringing?*

### MARK 16:1-20

#### EASTER SUNDAY

#### JESUS HAS RISEN

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. <sup>2</sup>Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb <sup>3</sup>and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" <sup>4</sup>But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. <sup>5</sup>As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup>"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. <sup>7</sup>But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" <sup>8</sup>Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

<sup>9</sup>When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

<sup>10</sup>She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. <sup>11</sup>When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it. <sup>12</sup>Afterward Jesus ap-

peared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. <sup>13</sup>These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. <sup>14</sup>Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. <sup>15</sup>He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. <sup>16</sup>Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; <sup>18</sup>they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." <sup>19</sup>After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs. that accompanied it.

**THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT WORDS IN HISTORY:**  
**"HE IS RISEN!"**



Join us for the Easter prayer vigil in the Chapel. Keep watch. There are 30 minute shifts running from Friday evening until dawn on Easter Sunday, and you can sign up at [asburitytusa.org/easter](http://asburitytusa.org/easter) or just show up. The vigil runs around the clock, and there is security present. Take one of the watches of the night. Pray for our church and our world and for our Easter services.

