

# holy week

## AT HOME

AN 8-DAY EASTER DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL



*Holy Week at Home: An 8-Day Easter Devotional Journal*

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# INTRO



*"Christ is risen!"*



*"He is risen,  
indeed!"*

People have greeted one another with these words every Easter for hundreds of years. But what does it mean that Christ has risen? These simple words contain so much joy and describe the incredible, life-changing story of God's love for us. This Easter devotional journal is designed to help prepare your heart to celebrate Christ the Risen King.

## HOW IT WORKS

This journal contains eight days of devotions and activities to help you focus on Christ as you journey through Holy Week and celebrate Easter.

Here you'll have an opportunity to walk through Jesus' final week on Earth, focus on the kind of king Jesus is, study the Bible with engaging tools, dig deeper into the heart behind your favorite Easter hymns, and take on challenges that help you get a closer look at what Christ's death and resurrection mean for you. At the end of the week, you'll find a FAMILY DAY. This is an opportunity to share what you're learning and celebrate Easter with friends and family.

Remember, you'll get out of this journal what you put into it. The challenges you'll encounter won't always be easy—they're designed to stretch you! Take a risk and use this journal to run hard toward God. When we make ourselves available to him, he'll transform us and use us in ways that will blow our minds!



# holy week

AT H▲ME

# DAY 1

## The Entrance Matters

Grand events have grand entrances. Think about the red carpet for award shows, where famous people stroll down velvet walkways lined by fans and reporters trying to snap a photo. Or the aisle of a church that's covered in rose petals for a bride to make her entrance to the altar. The entrance sets the stage. It builds anticipation and prepares you for what's about to happen. Even today, the entrance matters.

So go back a few thousand years, to a different kind of entrance. One where Jesus, the King of all Kings, stood on a hill that overlooked the skyline of Jerusalem. Jesus knew the significance of what was about to happen. He knew there would be no bigger event in history. And so, the carpet was rolled out—not a velvet red, but a carpet of cloaks and branches brought by a crowd of people. The humble King—not in a carriage, but on a young donkey—made his entrance to the event that would turn the world upside-down.

### **JOURNAL YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

As you enter into Holy Week, what are you preparing for? What are the events or traditions that are a part of Holy Week for you?

For most of us, this week will be celebrated differently than any other year. What will be some of the differences?



Holy Week traditions are really meant to prepare and remind our hearts that Jesus is our Savior and King. How are any of the events or traditions you wrote down, designed to reflect what's happening in our hearts?



What's one thing you could do during this week, to roll out the carpet for Christ the King in your life, making him first?





## DAY 2

### Clearing Out the Clutter

Overturning tables in the temple courts isn't the first thing that comes to mind when we think about Christ the King. But the day after Jesus makes his grand entrance into Jerusalem, he's faced with people who have completely missed the point—they had turned an extraordinary place into something very ordinary—and overturning the tables is exactly what he does.

There are probably a lot of reasons the temple courts had turned into this marketplace that Jesus walked into—convenience, good business opportunities, or maybe people just didn't care. But Jesus took quick action and cleared out all the clutter that didn't belong in a place meant to connect with and worship God.

Think about the clutter in your own life and heart that might need to be cleared out as you read **Matthew 21:12–17** using the **OPA method** for Bible Study: Observation, Principles, and Application. *Helpful tip: the more effort you put into making observations, the easier the principles and application will be to see.*

#### **OBSERVATION**

Compile all the facts found in these passages. Try to make 15–20 observations about what you read.

## **PRINCIPLES**

Draw a few principles from the observations you made. What is God trying to teach you in this passage?

## **APPLICATION**

How will you apply these principles to your life? Be specific—a good application will tell who, what, and when.

### **Questions for Group Study:**

- What are some things that have become “clutter” in your life, and have gotten in the way of your relationship with God?
- How does “clutter” creep into your life in the first place?
- How can you make room for Christ the King and clear out the “clutter” that has built up?

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## DAY 3

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### Tune My Heart

#### *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

*Come, Thou fount of every blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
Sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,  
Mount of Thy redeeming love.*

*O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.<sup>1</sup>*

This well-known hymn has stood the test of time, despite some old-fashioned language. Maybe that's because it's filled with timeless truths about God's pursuit of us and the words resonate with almost every believer. It was written in the 1750s by a young man named Robert Robinson, shortly after he became a believer. Some of the verses seem to describe a time in Robinson's own life when he first left home and started hanging with a notorious gang and living a depraved lifestyle.<sup>2</sup> With the phrase "Prone to wander," Robinson perfectly captures the daily struggle we all feel to stay 100% devoted to Christ in all aspects of life.

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**BONUS:** Search the internet for your favorite version of this song.

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**READ THROUGH THE VERSES THAT WE'VE INCLUDED ABOVE. TAKE TIME TO FOCUS ON AND RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING LYRICS:**

***Tune my heart to sing Thy grace.***

With God's help, how can you prepare your heart to praise him this week?

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***Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it, Mount of Thy redeeming love.***

What am I "fixed" or focused on the most today? In other words, what do I spend the most time thinking about/doing?

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***O to grace how great a debtor, Daily I'm constrained to be!***

Where do I need God's grace today?

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***Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, Bind my wandering heart to Thee.***

How/where is my heart wandering away from Christ my King?

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***Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.***

What part(s) of your heart is God asking you to (re)commit to him this week?

## DAY 4

### Sold Out

Judas was one of the twelve disciples. He spent time with Jesus, followed him, witnessed his miracles, and was part of his ministry. After three years of devotion to Jesus, Judas suddenly decided to betray his teacher and friend. But why?

The Bible tells us that Judas was paid by the chief priests, but other than that, it doesn't give us many details about Judas or why he chose to betray Jesus. One thing is clear, though—he wasn't fully sold out for Christ. He allowed other things to come between him and Jesus. Judas's heart wasn't completely given to God, so there was room for Satan to get in and tempt him away. You'd think that somebody who spent so much time with Jesus wouldn't betray him, but that's exactly what happened. And if it can happen to Judas, it can happen to us. We all have things that come between us and Christ. While we may not literally betray Jesus like Judas did, if we're not careful, our sin can destroy our devotion to God and lead us away from him.

#### **JOURNAL YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

Think of a time you felt betrayed or let down by someone you trusted. Why was it hurtful?



Have you ever betrayed someone (knowingly or accidentally)?

Why is betrayal such a big deal?

What comes between you and Jesus?

How can you wholeheartedly follow Christ the King?



## DAY 5

### Love One Another

Maundy Thursday. Have you ever wondered why it's called Maundy Thursday? Maundy comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means command. It's a reference to when Jesus washed his disciples' feet, then commanded them to "love one another" as he had loved them. Love entails service and sacrifice, and Jesus gave us the perfect example of both. He served his disciples by washing their feet (a filthy job a servant would normally do) only hours before his arrest and death. And he sacrificed his life out of abundant love not only for his disciples, but for all people.

Christ the King sacrificially served his followers because he loved them, but also because he wanted them to become more like him. He also loves you and wants you to become more like him. Jesus wants you to follow his example of loving other people through service and sacrifice. The only way you can do that is as an overflow that comes from personally knowing Christ's deep love for you.

Read **John 13:1–35** and study it using the **SPECK method** for Bible study.

#### **SINS TO AVOID**

Make a list of any sins—wrong actions, attitudes, or thoughts—mentioned in the passage.

## **PROMISES TO CLAIM**

Make a list of the promises in this passage. Promises give us confidence when we doubt God or face difficult times.

## **EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW**

What examples do you find in the passage? Is there a right way of thinking or acting described in the passage that you should take as an example for your life?

## **COMMANDS TO OBEY**

Write out all the commands you find. If a passage encourages you to take a certain action, take it as a command and write it down.

## **KNOWLEDGE OF GOD TO APPLY**

What does the passage tell you about God that you can apply to your daily life? God's character shines throughout Scripture.

## **Questions for Group Study:**

- How do you show love to your best friends?
- When is it hard for you to show love to someone?
- Think of someone you know (not your best friends) who might not know they are loved. What's one specific thing you can do today to show love to that person?

## DAY 6

### The Good of Good Friday

At a glance, it seems weird that our calendars call today “Good Friday.” After all, isn’t it the day that Christ, the King of Kings, was beaten, mocked, and horrifically murdered for all to see? How could this be called *Good*?

Well, the *Good* is the part of the story that you and I experience. Jesus willingly went to the cross and sacrificed his life so that we could experience the most *Good* thing that ever happened—a relationship with God. Not a broken, twisted separateness that started with sin in the Garden of Eden, but a holy, deep connection with the God of the universe. Jesus went through the bad so that we could experience the good.

Today, we’re going to look at the Good that happened on the cross and how it affects the bad in our lives. Here’s what you’ll need:

- a good playlist of worship music
- a pencil
- a marker

**NOTE: This is an activity that’s easy to do with the whole family. Your family could even make a larger cross out of cardboard or poster board and assign someone to compile a playlist of favorite worship songs.**

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1. Turn on your worship music and take a look at the outline of the cross on page 18. Think through the things that have taken priority over Christ as king in your life. Maybe it's some of the clutter you wrote down on Day 2, sins that have crept into your life, or things that have become "idols." Write these things in pencil on the cross—one word answers are fine.
  2. Now that you've written these things down, take a minute to confess them to God. Ask for forgiveness and a renewed heart.
  3. Lastly, let's bring the Good News into this activity. Below are some gospel truths that God gives us. Read through them, look up the verses, and add to the list if you think of any.

- *You are a child of God (2 Corinthians 6:18)*
- *You are loved by God, more than you can imagine! (Ephesians 3:17–19)*
- *God forgives us (1 John 1:9)*
- *You are a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)*
- *Jesus died to set you free (Romans 8:2)*
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4. Now consider what you've already written on the cross in light of these gospel truths. Take your marker and write over your sins with the gospel truths that are connecting with you right now. Spend a few minutes thanking Christ your Risen King for the Good he did on the cross for you.





## DAY 7

### Waiting Expectantly

#### *Here Is Love, Vast As The Ocean*

*Here is love, vast as the ocean,  
Lovingkindness as the flood,  
When the Prince of Life, our Ransom,  
Shed for us His precious blood.  
Who His love will not remember?  
Who can cease to sing His praise?  
He can never be forgotten,  
Throughout Heav'n's eternal days.*

*On the mount of crucifixion,  
Fountains opened deep and wide;  
Through the floodgates of God's mercy  
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.  
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,  
Poured incessant from above,  
And Heav'n's peace and perfect justice  
Kissed a guilty world in love.<sup>3</sup>*

Imagine what it was like for the disciples the day after Jesus' crucifixion. He died! He was buried! That first Easter, the disciples weren't sure what was going to happen. Luckily, we know the end of the story—Christ rose again!

The day between Good Friday and Easter Sunday is traditionally a day of waiting. Some church traditions include an Easter Vigil between sunset on Holy Saturday and sunrise on Easter Sunday, a time of expectant waiting to celebrate Christ the Risen King while remembering his death on our behalf.

Today, we'll examine a hymn to help us wait expectantly for Christ's movement in our lives while reflecting on his death on the cross.

- **SEARCH THE INTERNET FOR YOUR FAVORITE VERSION OF THIS SONG.**
  - **PLAY THE SONG AND LISTEN A FEW TIMES.**
  - **AFTER LISTENING, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**
- 

This hymn describes Christ's love in many ways. Which is the most meaningful to you and why?

How do you remember Christ's love in good times vs. hard times?

Think of the struggles you're facing. Where are you waiting for heaven's peace or perfect justice in your life?

Spend time in prayer about these struggles, committing them to God and expressing your desire to wait expectantly for your Risen King.

## DAY 8

### He Is Risen!

Hallelujah, Christ is risen! That's something to celebrate! Even if you can't be with other people today, because of Jesus' resurrection, he is always with you. His resurrection brings hope and the promise of final victory. Even in the hardest circumstances or deepest pain, you can have confidence that God is good and that there is something better coming. That's the hope of Jesus' resurrection. Christ our Risen King didn't stay dead and defeated, and neither will you if you believe in him!

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#### **ACTIVITY: CELEBRATION BANNERS**

Easter is all about celebration, so take some time today to fill in these banners with things you can celebrate. It can be something as small as a good meal or as wonderful as Jesus' resurrection. Get your whole family in on the celebration and think of things together.







You did it! Over the past week, you've taken the deep dive into understanding more about Christ your Risen King. You've accepted challenges, revisited Jesus' final days with a fresh perspective, heard Easter hymns in a new light, and learned all about what the Bible says we get to celebrate this time of year.

Remember, God showed the depth of his love and grace for us through Christ's death and resurrection. But we don't have to wait until it's Easter to celebrate. No, we get to experience God's love and grace every day. Christ is our Risen King and he's worthy of worship, so let's continue giving him our whole hearts and sharing him with the world.



*"Christ is risen!"*



*"He is risen,  
indeed!"*

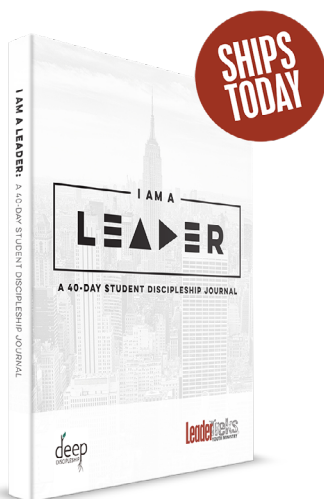


## ENDNOTES:

1. Robert Robinson, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing," *Wikipedia*, The Free Encyclopedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Come\\_Thou\\_Fount\\_of\\_Every\\_Blessing&oldid=948345880](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Come_Thou_Fount_of_Every_Blessing&oldid=948345880) (accessed March 15, 2020).
2. Michael Hawn, "History Of Hymns: "Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing"," *Discipleship Ministries*, accessed March 15, 2020, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-come-thou-fount-of-every-blessing>.
3. William Rees, "Here Is Love, Vast as the Ocean" *Hymnary*, trans. William Edwards, accessed March 15, 2020, [https://hymnary.org/text/here\\_is\\_love\\_vast\\_as\\_the\\_ocean/](https://hymnary.org/text/here_is_love_vast_as_the_ocean/).

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