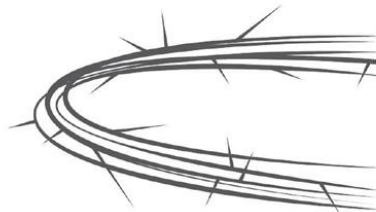




# WARNER FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

PASSION WEEK DEVOTIONAL

APRIL 15TH - 6:30PM



HOPE YOU CAN  
JOIN US!

**GOOD  
FRIDAY**

APRIL 17TH - 10:50AM



EASTER  
SUNDAY



WARNER FIRST  
BAPTIST CHURCH



## Introduction

### Behold: The Passion of Jesus

Easter is coming. In just a few days Christians from all over the world will worship together as we celebrate Jesus conquering sin and death. Although we as Christians celebrate this truth every day, there is something special about Easter Sunday and the days leading up to it. As we look to the week ahead, commonly known as Holy Week, we want to prepare our hearts for Easter by looking closer at a word that is often used during this season: "Passion."

You have probably heard the days leading up to Easter referred to as "Passion Week" or heard the phrase "Passion of Jesus", but why do we use this word? The first known use of the word "passion" was in the 13th century regarding the sufferings of Christ before His death on the cross. "Passion" leads us to reflect on the suffering Jesus endured for us. "Passion" leads us to remember how God loves us so much that He would give His only Son as a sacrifice for us.

As we prepare our hearts for the days ahead, we want to pay homage to the original meaning of Passion (the suffering of Christ), but we also want to recognize the meaning of the word Passion today. It is a word that has morphed into an entirely different, yet still helpful meaning. Merriam-Webster defines passion as a strong liking or desire for or devotion to something. We want to behold and stand in awe of who Jesus is and the desire and devotion He had to fulfill God's will for His life on His journey to the cross.

#### Prayer

*Most gracious heavenly Father, prepare my heart and mind this week as I remember how your Son suffered on my behalf. Help me see the passion He lived His life in devotion to you and help me emulate that same passion in my life. Amen.*

Sunday: 4/10

## Jesus' Passion for Humility

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*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*  
- Zechariah 9:9

### The Triumphal Entry

Today is referred to as “Palm Sunday,” the day Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem. On this day Jesus did something very interesting: He rode into the city on a donkey. Not just a donkey, but a colt that had never been ridden. This act boldly declared to the people that He had come to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah and that He is the one true King.

Now, the people believed He was a king, but not the kind they expected. They wanted a king who would ride in on a stately horse and save them from the suffocation of the Roman Empire. “Hosanna! Hosanna!” they cried, which means “save us!” But instead, Jesus came on a donkey in humility and peace.

Jesus' life reflected His passion for humility. “Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey.” Jesus did come as a conquering King, though His primary concern was not the Roman Empire but the sins of the people.





## Jesus' Passion for Righteousness

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*And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."*

*- Matthew 21:12-13*

### Jesus Cleanses the Temple

The next day Jesus entered the temple and was overwhelmed with righteous indignation at what He saw. The temple was a place of worship, yet greed, oppression, worldliness, and evil filled its courts. Jesus displayed His passion for righteousness by driving out those who bought and sold animals for sacrifices and overturning the tables of the moneychangers.

But why? On the surface, providing animals for sacrifices for those traveling into Jerusalem seems like an honorable transaction. Exchanging Roman currency for temple currency at the temple also appears to be an efficient and effective solution to an issue. But these merchants were charging exorbitant prices for animals, and the moneychangers were becoming wealthy from the added fees to change currency. The people were using the temple as a place to make themselves wealthy.

Jesus was appalled that God's temple had become a "den of robbers" instead of a "house of prayer" as it was intended. Jesus' passion for righteousness drove Him to drive out those who did anything to de-

file the temple. As believers we are now the temple of God as well (1 Corinthians. 6:19), so we must be careful not to allow anything to defile us either.

“

*“For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.” (Psalm 69:9)*

### Prayer

*Dear heavenly Father, I pray I would have the same righteous passion for holiness that Jesus has. I pray that you would cleanse my heart of any impure thoughts, motives, or desires. May this passion for righteousness consume our souls so that we would be a church passionate for you, Lord. Amen.*

### Reflect:

What does Jesus' actions in this scene reveal about His heart?

How does this scene lead us to handle sin differently in our own lives and in our church?

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Tuesday: 4/12

## Jesus' Passion for Growth

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*In the morning, as he was returning to the city, he became hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once.*

*- Matthew 21:18-19*

### Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

After a night of rest at Bethany, Jesus was returning to Jerusalem "when he became hungry." As He was walking along the way, He noticed a fig tree with leaves on it. When a fig tree has leaves in full bloom, it would typically signify figs would be growing as well.

Jesus approached the tree with all its beautiful leaves, but He could not find a single fig. He immediately cursed the tree, saying, "May no fruit ever come from you again!"

At first, this story might seem odd. Did Jesus act out because He was hungry and angry that there was no fruit for Him to eat? No. Jesus' passion for growth resulted in Him cursing the fig tree and serves as a warning to His people, that He wants us to be fruitful.

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*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

*- 2 Peter 3:18a*

How do we produce fruit? It is through faith in Jesus Christ and submitting ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit that we are able to grow spiritually and produce good fruit. We can be at church every time the doors are open, and we can have a schedule full of ministry, but still be unfruitful. Only the Lord produces fruit as we abide in Him (John 15), so our hearts must be first and foremost fixed on Him.

**Prayer**

*Most gracious heavenly Father, I pray I would have a passion to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus and submission to the Holy Spirit that would lead me to fruitful ministry. Help my concern for appearances to not overshadow my love for you. Amen.*

**Reflect:**

Does your heart and mind reflect a growing relationship with Jesus Christ?

Jesus cursed the fig tree because it was deceptively unfruitful. What can we do to be fruitful and effective Christians?

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Wednesday: 4/13

## Jesus' Passion for Serving

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*Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet ...*

*- John 13:3-5*

### Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

Jesus knew the Passover meal would be the last meal with His disciples. He knew His hour had come, and He would soon depart from this world to return to His Father. In this one beautiful gesture, Jesus was able to show them His love by serving them. Jesus lovingly washed the feet of each of His disciples—even the one that would betray Him.

This one act showed His disciples the love He had for them, but it also showed them His passion for serving. Jesus said to them,

“

*“Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master...”*

*- John 13:12b-16a*

Jesus is the Messiah—the King of Kings—and He lowered Himself to the position of a servant and lovingly and tenderly washed His disciples' feet. Jesus gave us this example of His passion for serving so that we would follow it as well.

## Prayer

*Holy Father, thank you for giving me this beautiful example of how to lovingly serve. Help me to always have a servant mindset, seeking ways in which I can help others. I pray I would have the same passion to love and serve as Jesus did.  
Amen.*

## Reflect:

Do you seek out ways to love and serve others?

Is God leading you to serve, but you've been reluctant to obey? If so, write down how you feel led to serve, and pray for obedience to that call.

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Thursday: 4/14

## Jesus' Passion for Prayer

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*And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

*- Luke 22:44*

### Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

When Jesus and His disciples had finished eating the Passover meal, they went to a place called Gethsemane to pray. “And when he came to the place, He said to them, ‘Pray that you may not enter into temptation.’” Jesus went a little further into the garden, and He knelt on the ground and began to pray.

Jesus would frequently go off by Himself to pray because He had a passion for the close connection with His Father, but this time was different. He knew why He had come to earth, and He knew all His earthly ministry would culminate in great suffering. Jesus prayed, saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.” The book of Luke says that an angel appeared to Him and strengthened Him. Yet still, in agony too great to comprehend, Jesus prayed even more earnestly, and “His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Jesus knew the suffering He would endure, and He prayed the Father would spare Him. But Jesus also knew whatever His Father’s answer would be, He would willingly obey.

There will be times in all of our lives that we will face suffering. Jesus reminds us to passionately pray to the God who hears our prayers, but also be ready to obey His response willingly.

## Prayer

*Gracious heavenly Father, in times of joy or in times of suffering, help me to passionately bring my prayers before you as Jesus did. Help me to remember to pray for your will, not mine to be done, and help me to willingly obey. Amen.*

## Reflect:

Do you have a passion for prayer?

Without prayer, our communion with God is stifled. How can you be more intentional about setting time aside to pray?

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*“...Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; seize him.”*

*- Matthew 26:47-48*

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*Then all the disciples left him and fled.*

*- Matthew 26:56b*



Friday: 4/15

## Jesus' Passion for Forgiveness

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*And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”*

*- Luke 23:33-34*

### Jesus on the Cross

After Jesus was seized, He was led into the high priest's house, where He was mocked and beaten. He endured trial after trial until Pilate finally delivered Jesus over to the crowd and condemned Him to death by crucifixion. Yet after all the suffering Jesus had endured at the hands of His enemies, He asked His Father to forgive them: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Jesus had a passion for forgiveness. This was one of the main reasons He came to earth, wasn't it? He came to take on the sins of the world.

“

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”*

*- John 3:16-17*

As Jesus hung on the cross, darkness covered the whole land until the ninth hour. At that time, the curtain of the temple, which separated

the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, was torn in two, from top to bottom. Jesus committed His spirit into His Father's hands, and He breathed His last breath.

Jesus' passion for forgiveness led Him to the cross. His blood was the sacrifice needed to cleanse us and make us pure in God's sight. When the veil of the temple was torn in two, it signified that Christ's work was finished. We now have access to God Himself! But the cost of this glorious gift was profound, as Jesus' body was taken to a tomb to be buried.

**Prayer**

*Father in Heaven,  
thank you for  
the gift of Jesus.  
Thank you for  
loving me so  
much that you  
would send Jesus  
to take my sin and  
my shame upon  
Himself. Help  
me, Lord, to have  
a passion for  
forgiveness that  
would lead  
me to the foot  
of the cross.  
Amen.*

**Reflect:**

What does it mean to forgive someone the way Christ has forgiven you?

Is there someone you need to show forgiveness to?

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Saturday: 4/16

## Jesus' Passion for Peace

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*For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*  
- Colossians 1:20

### Jesus in the Tomb

Jesus' body lay peacefully in a tomb that Sabbath day awaiting proper burial.

His disciples, however, were anything but peaceful. They were consumed with grief, fear, anger, and so many questions. They had followed Jesus for three years! They were His dedicated students and closest friends who had immersed themselves in His teachings. Did they not remember Jesus' warnings that this would happen? After spending so much time with Jesus, they still did not understand who He really was and what He came to do. The picture that seemed so clear to them was now a muddled mess of memories, because instead of being with them, Jesus' body lay in a tomb.

Even if you have followed Jesus for a long time, you will encounter hard things that can easily consume you just like the disciples. Today remember the peace that only Jesus can give, and how He is worthy of all our trust.

“  
*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” - John 14:27*

“

*“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulations. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”*

*-John 16:33*

**Prayer**

*Most holy heavenly Father, You are the only one who can give me peace that surpasses anything I can understand. I pray I will turn all my worries, all my troubles, all my doubts, Lord, over to you. I pray I would lay them down at your feet and know that “You have overcome the world.” Amen.*

**Reflect:**

Have you ever experienced God’s peace that surpasses your understanding?

Are you going through something that has made you worried or afraid? Write it down and lay it at the feet of Jesus. Ask Him for the peace only He can give.

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Sunday: 4/17

## Jesus' Passion for The Gospel

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*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*

*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

*- Matthew 28:19-20*

### The Great Commission

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary arose early in the morning to see the tomb. There was a great earthquake and an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and rolled the stone away. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said..." The Marys quickly left the tomb, full of fear but also great joy, anxious to tell the disciples this amazing news. While they were on their way, Jesus met them and said, "'Greetings!' They went to Jesus and took hold of His feet and worshipped Him." (Matthew 28:1-9)

How often do we take the time to realize how much Jesus did for us? He was living in heaven with the Father, when He was sent to this world full of sin. He came to earth and lived a perfect and holy life despite the same temptations we face every day. He was ridiculed and mocked. He was laughed at and lied about. He was beaten, put on trial, and nailed to a cross. For what? To bring glory to God and provide the way for us to be rescued from sin.

He hung on that cross to pay the debt for our sins, and proclaimed, "It is finished!" Jesus' work was finished, but the cross was not the conclusion. The cross was not the end of the story because three days later the miracle that changed everything occurred: He rose from the dead.

After this miraculous event, Jesus went to the disciples and they worshipped Him. And Jesus said to them,

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*“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:8-20)*

Jesus is passionate about the spread of the gospel. He wants everyone, in every nation, to know the good news of what He has done for them.

**Prayer**

*Our Father in Heaven, thank you for sending Jesus to us. Thank you for loving me so much that you would allow your only Son to suffer and endure the penalty that I deserve so I can have a relationship with you. I praise you for what you have done. May I respond by following your commands.  
Amen.*

**Reflect:**

The cross was God’s will for Jesus’ life. How can you discover and follow God’s will for your life?

What are ways you can spread the gospel both locally and globally?

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