



SERMON: 40 Days of Discipleship – “Which Path to Take at the Crossroads?”

Watch [this week's sermon](#)

Read [Matthew 21:6-13](#) – “Jesus’ Triumphant Entry” & “Jesus Clears the Temple”

- As you picture this scene, with the crowds shouting, waving branches, and Jesus riding into Jerusalem, what stands out to you most? What feels joyful or surprising about the way this moment begins? Why do you think Palm Sunday starts more like a celebration?
- The crowd praises Jesus as king, but the sermon emphasized that they misunderstood what kind of king he was. Why do you think people wanted Jesus to fit their hopes so badly? Where do you see the temptation to want a Jesus who supports your goals more than a Jesus who leads you? How does this passage challenge the way you picture who Jesus is and what he came to do?
- Jesus moves from receiving praise to flipping tables in the temple, refusing to fit into corrupt religion or political agendas. What do you think this reveals about the kind of king Jesus is? Why is it important that Jesus came not just to comfort people but to confront what had gone wrong? Where might Jesus be overturning assumptions, loyalties, or priorities in your own life right now?
- The sermon described Palm Sunday as a crossroads where Jesus chose the path that led to the cross and then said, “Follow me.” What would it look like to follow Jesus when he is not leading toward comfort, victory, or worldly success? Where are you most tempted to ask Jesus to bless your path instead of surrendering to his? What is one specific area of your life where you sense Jesus inviting you to follow him more faithfully this Holy Week?

Read [Zechariah 9:9](#) – “Zion’s Coming King”

- What grabs your attention most in this picture of a king arriving gentle and riding on a donkey? Why do you think God would choose to announce his king this way instead of with obvious power and spectacle? How does this image compare to the kinds of leaders people usually look for?
- The sermon emphasized that Jesus did not come on a warhorse to fit the crowd’s expectations, but on a donkey to show what kind of king he really is. Why do you think people so often want a stronger, flashier, or more obviously victorious kind of savior? Where do you see that desire in the world around you or in your own heart? How does this prophecy challenge your assumptions about how God works?
- Zechariah says, “See, your king comes to you,” which means Jesus comes on God’s terms, not ours. What do you think it means to receive Jesus as he actually is rather than as the version of him you would naturally prefer? Where are you tempted to reshape Jesus into someone who supports your comfort, politics, priorities, or plans? How might following the humble king change the way you think about strength, success, and faithfulness?
- This prophecy points to a king who leads with humility, which means following him will probably take us down a different path than the world would choose. What makes the way of humility so hard to

trust when power, control, and winning feel more attractive? Where might Jesus be inviting you to take the lower place instead of fighting to secure your own way? What is one concrete step of humble obedience you could take this week because your king comes gentle and still calls you to follow him?

Read [Matthew 16:24](#) – “Jesus Predicts His Death”

- Jesus says, “If any of you wants to be my follower,” which makes discipleship sound like a real choice, not just a label. What do you think people usually assume it means to follow Jesus? How is following Jesus different from simply agreeing with him or admiring him? Where do you see this invitation becoming personal for you?
- The sermon kept returning to the image of a crossroads and the choice between asking Jesus to follow us or surrendering to where he is leading. Why is it so easy to want Jesus to bless our preferred path instead of changing it? Where do comfort, success, security, or control most compete with obedience in your life? How does this verse challenge the version of Christianity that fits neatly into the patterns of this world?
- Jesus says we must turn from our selfish ways and take up our cross, which means following him includes surrender. What do you think Jesus is asking us to leave behind when he says this? Why does the way of the cross feel so different from the way most people naturally want to live? Where do you sense Jesus asking for deeper surrender in your thinking, priorities, or daily choices?
- This verse does not just describe Jesus’ path during Holy Week, it becomes an invitation for us to follow him on that same path. What might it look like for you to take up your cross in a concrete way this week instead of just talking about it? Where are you being invited to trust Jesus even if the path feels costly, unclear, or uncomfortable? What is one specific step of obedience you can take this Holy Week to follow Jesus more fully?

Read [John 18:36](#)- “Jesus’ Trial Before Pilate”

- Jesus says, “My kingdom is not of this world,” which means he is defining his mission in a way that would have surprised almost everyone listening. What do you think people would have expected a king to say in that moment instead? Why is it so hard for people to imagine a kingdom that does not operate by the usual rules of power? How does this statement make you rethink what Jesus came to do?
- The sermon emphasized that people wanted Jesus to advance their goals, fix their side, and deliver the kind of victory they could recognize right away. Why do you think we are still tempted to turn Jesus into a tool for our causes, preferences, or politics? Where do you see that temptation in Christian culture or in your own heart? How does this verse challenge the idea that Jesus came mainly to help us win the world’s way?
- Jesus is not saying his kingdom is unreal or irrelevant, but that it comes from a different source and moves in a different way. What do you think it means for Jesus’ kingdom to be present in this world without being of this world? How does that help explain why he chose the path to the cross instead of the path of force, control, or immediate triumph? Where might Jesus be inviting you to trust a deeper kind of victory than the one the world usually offers?
- If Jesus’ kingdom is not of this world, then following him will probably put us at odds with the world’s definitions of success, security, and strength. What part of that feels most challenging to you personally? Where are you most tempted to measure your life by worldly wins instead of faithfulness to Jesus? What is one concrete way you could live this week as a citizen of Jesus’ kingdom rather than just going along with the kingdom of this world?

APPLICATION: Pick one to put into practice this week.

1. **Name the crossroads clearly.** Set aside 10 quiet minutes sometime before Good Friday to ask, “Where am I most wanting Jesus to bless my path instead of following his?” Write down one specific area such as comfort, control, image, money, politics, resentment, or success. Then pray honestly about that one area and tell Jesus you want to follow where he leads, not just where you prefer to go.
2. **Practice one act of humble surrender.** Choose one concrete way to take the lower place this week because Jesus came gentle and riding on a donkey. Apologize first, let someone else get credit, serve without being noticed, give something up for someone else’s good, or stop pushing to get your way in one situation. After you do it, take a moment to reflect on what it revealed about your heart and how it helped you follow Jesus more closely.
3. **Let Holy Week lead you to the cross on purpose.** Do not rush from Palm Sunday to Easter. Attend a Holy Week service or read Matthew 21–27 across the next few days in smaller sections. Each time you read, ask, “What kind of king is Jesus showing himself to be here, and what would it look like to follow him today?” End the week by naming one specific step of obedience you believe Jesus is calling you to take next.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS & QUESTIONS

View this week's [Daily Bible Readings](#)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
30	31	1	2	3
Matthew 25:1-30	Matthew 25:31-46	Matthew 26:1-16	Matthew 26:17-75	Matthew 27:1-28:10

Monday, March 30: Matthew 25:1-30

1. In these two parables, some people are ready when the moment comes and others assume there will still be more time. What do you think Jesus is trying to reveal about the danger of delay or spiritual complacency? Where do you see the temptation in your own life to assume you can get serious about God later?
2. The faithful servants are not praised for flashy results but for trustworthiness with what they were given. What do these parables suggest about how Jesus defines faithfulness? What is one gift, responsibility, or opportunity God may be asking you to use more faithfully right now?

Tuesday, March 31: Matthew 25:31-46

1. Jesus describes the final judgment in terms of how people responded to the hungry, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner. What surprises or unsettles you most about that picture? How does it challenge the idea that faith can stay private or disconnected from the way we treat vulnerable people?
2. The righteous seem unaware that in serving "the least of these" they were serving Jesus himself. What do you think that reveals about how Jesus identifies with people in need? Where might you be overlooking an opportunity to love and serve Christ because he is coming to you in a form you did not expect?

Wednesday, April 1: Matthew 26:1-16

1. In this passage, one woman pours out something costly in love and devotion while Judas moves toward betrayal for money. What do those two responses reveal about the different ways people can stand near Jesus and still move in completely opposite directions? Where do you see those same competing instincts in your own heart?
2. Jesus says the woman's act is beautiful because she recognizes his worth before others do. What makes extravagant devotion to Jesus seem wasteful or impractical to people? What would it look like for you to honor Jesus in a way that is costly, sincere, and not driven by what others think?

Thursday, April 2: Matthew 26:17-75

1. This chapter holds the Last Supper, Gethsemane, Judas' betrayal, the disciples' fear, and Peter's denial all in one long night. As you read through it, what part of the story feels most human or painfully familiar to you? Where do you see yourself in the mixture of devotion, weakness, fear, and failure?
2. Jesus remains steady and surrendered to the Father even as everyone around him seems to unravel. What stands out to you about the way Jesus faces suffering, betrayal, and injustice? How might his example reshape the way you respond when obedience becomes painful or costly?

Friday, April 3: Matthew 27:1-28:10

1. These chapters move from condemnation and crucifixion to resurrection and joy. As you sit with that whole movement, what do you notice about how quickly despair can give way to hope in God's hands? Why is it important that the Christian story does not stop at the cross but goes through it into resurrection?
2. The risen Jesus meets the women and tells them not to be afraid. What do you think it means that some of the first witnesses to the resurrection are grieving, overwhelmed followers who simply stayed near? How does the resurrection speak into the places in your life that feel defeated, final, or beyond repair right now?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Daily devotions](#)
- Podcasts:
 - [Pastor Mike Drop!](#)
 - ["Gospel" – Word with Webb podcast](#)
- Videos:
 - [BibleProject: Matthew 14-28](#) (7:10)
 - [BibleProject: Gospel of the Kingdom](#) (4:50)
 - [BibleProject: The Gospel](#) (5:38)
- Articles:
 - ["What are the Gospels?" by Tim Mackie \(BibleProject\)](#)

