

Easter Devotions



EASTER

DEVOTIONS TO PREPARE OUR HEARTS,
OUR FAMILIES, AND OUR CHURCH

What does your preparation for Easter usually look like? Perhaps it's making sure you've purchased your favourite easter eggs, organising family catch ups, making lists of jobs to do over the long weekend... What about preparing your heart for Easter, what does that look like for you?

While much of culture miss the point of Easter, I think it's wonderful that it's still celebrated. Rows and rows of Easter eggs line supermarket stores. Hot Cross buns have been on sale since Boxing Day! Let us not get lost in sultana filled rolls and foiled covered chocolate eggs. Let's be intentional in preparing our hearts in the lead up to Easter this coming week.

A few years ago, we prepared an Easter devotional booklet to help us prepare our hearts, our families, and our Church. The booklet includes daily Bible readings, meditations, suggested songs to listen to, prayer points, and a family activity for each day. The booklet is designed to be used by individuals and families starting this Monday (25th March) and ending on Easter Sunday (31st April).

It is our hope and prayer that as you follow along with this booklet, God would show you the excellency, riches, and immense depth of His love and mercy that is revealed to us and showered upon us in the death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace,

Emma Sunderland & Caroline Brandon

DAY 1: *Jesus Saves*

Read

[John 12:12-16](#)

[John 12:44-50](#)

Meditate

The word 'hosanna', as interpreted in this passage, is a combination of the Hebrew words yahsa ("deliver, save") and anna ("beg, beseech"). When used together these words literally mean "I beg you to save!". So, we can read the shouts of the people in [John 12:12](#), those who welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as; "I beg you, Jesus, save us! You are blessed! You who come in the name of the Lord." Of course, those who were asking Jesus to save them had their cries for salvation a little confused. They were begging to be saved from the Romans. But God had a much greater plan to save them, and to save us! Later in [verse 47](#) Jesus says that he came "to save the world". Jesus responds to the cry of the people to be saved with a resounding yes, but to save them from much more than Romans. He came to save us from sin and death!

You and I can pray with confidence that Jesus can save us from financial hardship, relational pain, sickness, and all else. However, Jesus' ultimate purpose is that we are saved from sin and death!

Pray

- Thank God that His ways are greater than our ways and His thoughts deeper than ours.
- Ask God for courage and assurance to know and rely on the certainty of His presence with us on earth, and of the eternal hope and promise of His saving grace.
- Ask God to bring a new and fresh understanding, captivation, and awe as you remember what Jesus did for us this Easter.

Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

O Praise the Name
(Hillsong)
In Christ Alone
(Passion)
Oh the Mighty Hand
(CityAight)
Jesus Paid it All
(Shane & Shane)



*"The sting of death is
sin, and the power
of sin is the law. But
thanks be to God,
who gives us the victory
through our
Lord Jesus Christ."*

1 Corinthians 15:56-57

For Families

Read it together:

[John 12:12-19](#)

Make it together:

Supplies: assorted sizes of empty tin cans, paint, string, nail, hammer

- Paint cans as desired (with leaf motif or 'Hosanna' would be fun)
- Use nail to poke a hole in one end of can
- Place string through hole and tie around nail
- Pull string from top to stop the nail and hang

Talk about it together:

When everyone saw Jesus they started waving tree branches at him and shouting, "Hosanna!" which means "Save us!"

Even though they were talking about being saved from the Romans, their words show us why Jesus really came. He came to save us from sin and death.

How would he save us? By dying on the cross for us. Every time we **hear** our windchimes, let's say, "Hosanna!" and thank Jesus for saving us.



DAY 2: *Jesus Served*

Read

[John 13:1-17](#)

[Mark 10:45](#)

Meditate

Jesus' life is an example of how we are to serve others. In [John 13:1-17](#) we see that Jesus humbles himself by performing a task usually undertaken by the lowliest of servants; washing feet. Jesus washed the feet of his followers. The one to whom all creation will one day bow in humble adoration, came to be a servant to all.

Read [Mark 10:45](#) again: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom to many." Read it once more. Jesus, the Son of God and God the Son, came to earth to serve. He came to give His life as a ransom. In other words; He came to serve you and to give his life for you.

Pray

- Take time to be still and silent and let your heart be filled by the love of Jesus.
- Pray for opportunities to follow Jesus' example by serving others.
- Ask God to give you opportunities to serve others with your time and your treasure.



Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

Come Unto Jesus (Getty, Story, Kauflin)
Glorious Day (Casting Crowns)
I Will Boast (Hillsong)
O Come to the Altar (Shane and Shane)

*"For God so loved the
world that he gave his one
and only Son, that whoever
believes in him shall not
perish but have
eternal life."*

John 3:16

For Families

Read it together:

[John 13:1-17](#)

Do it together:

Supplies: bowls or pans of water, soap, towels

Wash your kids' feet and have your kids wash yours! This can be a serious ceremony, or it can be dramatic play. Either way will be memorable.

Talk about it together:

Was it funny to have someone wash your feet?
What did it **feel** like to wash someone's feet?
What do you think it was like when Jesus washed the disciples' feet?

Jesus was really being nice to them, wasn't He? He was showing them how to love and serve other people. Jesus showed us how to be a servant and how to love others by dying on the cross for us. He is God, but He is also a servant!



DAY 3:

Jesus is King

Read

[John 19:1-16](#)

Meditate

This meditation is titled 'Jesus is King'. But the first words in today's Bible reading are: "Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him" ([v.1](#)). What kind of king suffers such trials? What king humbles himself to wear a crown of thorns and a mocking purple robe? What king takes responsibility for and bears the consequences for their people and endures the punishment which they deserve, the punishment of death? The answer is Jesus. Jesus is our humble and loving King. He served us because of His great love for us. For while we were still sinners, Christ died for us ([Romans 5:8](#)).

The song 'How Many Kings' captures the truth of Jesus our servant King so beautifully;

...how many kings step down from their thrones?
How many lords have abandoned their homes?
How many greats have become the least for me?
And how many gods have poured out their hearts
to romance a world that is torn all apart?
How many fathers gave up their sons for me?

Pray

- Spend some time reflecting on what Jesus endured for you, and offer your humble thanks.
- Ask God to help you lay down 'crowns' for yourself and change you to be more focused on Himself and others.

Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

This is Amazing Grace
(Phil Wickham)
How Many Kings
(Downhere)
Man of Sorrows
(Hillsong)



"Christ Jesus: who, being very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. "

Philippians 2:5-7

For Families

Read it together:

[John 19:1-16](#)

Make it together:

Supplies: liquid soap, water, purple cellophane

- Combine two parts soap to one-part water
- Cut cellophane in squares, hearts, strips or other shapes
- Spread soap and water on window
- Press cellophane into the soap mixture
- Place in a cross shape

Talk about it together:

The soldiers weren't putting the purple robe on Jesus because they thought He was the King; they did it to make fun of Him. They did not believe Jesus was the King of Kings.

When we **see** the purple cross on our window, let's remember that Jesus really is our King. Let's thank Him for loving us enough to be beaten, made fun of and even die for us.



DAY 4:

Jesus Sacrificed

Read

[John 19:23-30](#)

[1 Peter 2:23-25](#)

Meditate

In this account of Jesus' death ([John 19:23-30](#)) we see further torture and humiliation; we see Jesus' heart towards those who loved him and whom he loved; we see Jesus given vinegar during the last moments of his life; we see him declare "It is finished"; and we see him breathe his last breath.

Because of His great love for us, Jesus endured all of this willingly. He willingly carried out God's plan of salvation perfectly, in obedience to his Father and for us. He was rejected and despised. He was stricken by God and afflicted by man. He was humiliated, mocked, and insulted. He was alone, abandoned, separated from the Father. Jesus took upon himself our sin, sickness and shame. His great sacrifice on the cross provides the way for us to be cleansed from our sins, healed from our diseases, and reconciled with the Father.

Pray

- Take a moment to quiet your heart and reflect on Jesus' perfect love.
- Give thanks to Jesus, "who for the joy that lay before Him endured a cross".



Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me
(CityAlight)

How Deep the Father's Love for Us
(Austin Stone)

It is Well (Jeremy Riddle)

Living Hope (Phil Wickham)

"For our sake he
made him to be sin
who knew no sin,
so that in him we
might become the
righteousness of
God."

2 Corinthians 5:21

For Families

Read it together:

[John 19:23-30](#)

Make it together:

Supplies: rice vinegar

Let everyone in the family taste a spoonful of vinegar

Talk about it together:

Jesus drank the vinegar just before He died. Did you like the taste of the vinegar? Was it good? Yuck! No way!

Not only did Jesus drink the vinegar, the Bible shows that Jesus took all our sin, sickness and shame into Himself. It's like He drank our sin. It's like He took the cup of our sin and put it into Himself ([2 Corinthians 5:21, Isaiah 53:5](#))

When you remember how horrible the vinegar **tastes**, remember how horrible sin is. Remember that Jesus took that bitterness, that sin into himself. He drank it for you.



DAY 5:

Jesus Died

Read

[Luke 23:35-47](#)

[Psalm 139:23-24](#)

Meditate

One of the criminals who hung next to Jesus acknowledged that he was rightly receiving the due reward of his deeds (the punishment of breaking the law) but that Jesus had done no wrong ([Luke 23:41](#)). This man understood that Jesus hung on the cross as an innocent man. Why did innocent Jesus die on the cross? He did so to save us. He died on the cross receiving the due reward for our deeds. We have broken God's law through sin and "...the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ our Lord" ([Romans 6:23](#)).

The thief who repented had his heart changed as he experienced the truth about Jesus. Jesus said to him "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" ([Luke 23:43](#)). Just like the thief, we can't save ourselves, but thanks be to God, he can and he does. God has given us this breathtaking promise through Jesus.

Pray

- Reflect on what Jesus did for you, ask Him to renew your sense of awe and gratitude.
- Take a moment to openly and honestly confess and ask for forgiveness of your sins.



Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

The Old Rugged Cross
(Anthem Lights)
Christ Our Hope in Life and Death
(Getty & Papa)
I Stand Amazed (Nathan Drake)

"Truly, truly, I say
to you, whoever
hears my word and
believes him who sent
me has eternal life.
He does not come into
judgement, but has
passed from death to
life."

John 5:24

For Families

Read it together:

[Mark 15:42-47](#)

Make it together:

Supplies: string, streamers or rope

Use the string to close off a doorway, hallway or other entry of your house

Talk about it together:

When Jesus died, no one expected Him to come back to life. The disciples went away sad. Joseph of Arimathea wrapped him with linen cloth and spices, which is how the Jewish people took care of dead bodies. Pilate sent Roman soldiers to guard the tomb so no one would steal his body. They sealed the tomb so no one could get in.

Jesus was dead. He really died. This death is what sin brings ([Romans 6:23](#)). It's the death we are supposed to have. But Jesus took our sin (remember the vinegar?) and died in our place.

We've sealed up one of the doorways in our house to remind us of Jesus being dead and sealed up in the tomb. We'll keep it up for several days so that when we **see** it, we can remember that Jesus was dead for 3 days.



DAY 6:

Jesus Secure

Meditate

The day after Jesus was buried, the officials (chief priests and Pharisees) set out to secure the tomb. They had recalled Jesus saying that after three days he would rise again, and they were concerned “lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’” ([Matthew 27:64](#)) So, the chief priests and Pharisees made the tomb secure by sealing the stone at the entrance and setting a guard ([Matthew 27:66](#)).

They thought that a big boulder and a couple of strong men could stop the Son of God! However, as was foretold and as we know; nothing was going to secure his body or the promise of his resurrection! The stone rolled in front of the tomb would not remain there, the only thing secure was he was going to rise again. Jesus’ resurrection wasn’t just something that happened in history; it was something Jesus foretold and was prophesied in the Old Testament. Jesus’ resurrection is a sure reminder that God is for us.

The classic song ‘Stone’s Been Rolled Away’ from the 90’s captures the joy of this so well (do yourself a favour and listen to it today!)

I’ve been forgiven,
I’ve been set free
Restored and sanctified
In Christ I’ve been released

Read

[Matthew 27:62-66](#)

[Hosea 6:1-3](#)

And I am free
The stone’s been rolled away
I’ve been delivered
I’ve been released
Been washed and purified
My God has set me free
I’ve been released
The stone’s been rolled away

Pray

- Reflect on what Jesus did for you, ask Him to renew your sense of awe and gratitude.
- Take a moment to openly and honestly confess and ask for forgiveness of your sins.



Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

The Stone’s Been Rolled Away
(Darlene Zschech)
King of Kings (Hillsong)
This I Believe (The Creed) (Hillsong)

"Jesus said to them,
"The Son of Man is
about to be delivered
into the hands of
men, and they will
kill him, and he will
be raised on the
third day.'"

Matthew 17:22-23

For Families

Prepare and bake these resurrection cookies the night before Easter Sunday. Be sure to turn the oven off and leave the biscuits in overnight, sealed in the oven, just as Jesus' body was sealed in the tomb.

Supplies:

- 1 cup whole pecans
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 egg whites
- pinch of salt
- wooden spoon
- zip lock bag
- tape
- Bible

**Make it and
Read Together**
*instructions on
the next page...*



Make it and Read Together:

- Preheat oven to 150 degrees. Place pecans in zip lock bag and let the children beat the pecans with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, he was beaten by the Roman soldiers. **Read: [John 19:1-3](#)**
- Let each child smell the vinegar. Put one teaspoon of vinegar into the mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, he was given vinegar to drink. **Read: [John 19:29-30](#)**
- Add egg whites to the vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us eternal life. **Read [John 10:10-11](#)**
- Sprinkle a little salt in each child's hand. Let them taste it and put a pinch into the bowl. Explain this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers and the bitterness of our own sins. **Read [Luke 23:7](#)**
- So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to him. **Read: [John 3:16](#) and [Psalm 34:8](#)**
- Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color of white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sin have been cleansed by Jesus. **Read [Isaiah 1:18](#) and [John 3:1-3](#)**
- Fold in the broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto baking paper covered cookie sheets. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. **Read [Matthew 27:57-60](#)**
- Put the cookies in the oven, close the door and **turn off the oven**. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. **Read [Matthew 27:65-66](#)**
- Explain that they might feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. **Read [John 16:20](#) and [22](#)**

DAY 7:

Jesus Victorious

Read

[Matthew 28:1-9](#)

[1 Corinthians 15:55](#)

Meditate

There are so many reasons for us to celebrate Jesus' victorious resurrection. We can be filled with joy as we consider what Jesus death and resurrection means for us!

- He experienced the greatest of humiliations and horrific torture for us to hold our head high again ([Isiah 53:3-10](#))
- Jesus destroyed sin's power: we are free from its slavery and can access salvation ([John 8:36](#))
- Jesus was separated from His Father to reconcile us with our Creator ([Hebrews 10:19-22](#))
- Jesus conquered death to give us eternal life ([Romans 6:23](#))

Our victory is in Jesus. Our victory is in his life, his death, and, praise God, his resurrection. His victorious resurrection validates that Jesus was who he said he was. It validates that we are who he says we are. The resurrection gives us unbreakable and unshakable hope.

Pray

- Take a moment to marvel in Christ's power and victory.
- Celebrate the new life you have in and through Jesus.
- Join in this prayer together: "Our Father, I thank you for this priceless gift, for giving the life of your Son to save mine. I want to give You my life and follow You. I thank and praise You. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

Listen

[Listen on Spotify](#)

Thank You Jesus for the Blood
(Charity Gayle)
Because He Lives
(Celtic Worship)
O Praise the Name
(Hillsong)
New Doxology
(Gateway Worship)



*"Where, O death,
is your victory?
Where, O death is
your sting?"*

1 Corinthians 15:55

For Families

Read it together:

[Matthew 28:1-9](#)

Do it together:

Open the oven and give everyone a cookie.

Talk about it together:

Notice the cracked surface, it looks a bit like the rocky tomb. Let's take a bite and see what it looks like inside? It's hollow! It's empty inside, just like the tomb was on that first Easter morning. Jesus wasn't dead in the tomb anymore, He was alive!

Let's spend some time now thanking God and celebrating the truth that Jesus is alive!





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