

A SEVEN-PART SERIES ON THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS

Sermon Outline Collection

Walk through Jesus' final days—from the temple to the empty tomb—with concise outlines for preaching and preparation.

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Preaching order: Monday–Friday, then Palm Sunday and Resurrection Sunday. Palm Sunday is intentionally message six; no Saturday message is included.

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MESSAGE 01 | MONDAY

A Holy Disruption

Primary Scripture: Mark 11:15–19

Central idea: Jesus confronts whatever crowds out genuine worship so that our lives can become places of prayer and surrender.

Opening direction: Begin with Jesus entering the temple during His final week. His disruption grows out of deliberate inspection and a desire to restore worship.

1. Jesus Inspects

Mark 11:11

Before overturning tables, Jesus looks around. Invite listeners to let Him examine their motives, habits, and worship beneath the outward appearance.

2. Jesus Disrupts

Mark 11:15–16

Jesus removes what has corrupted the temple's purpose. His loving correction challenges the compromises and distractions we have grown comfortable keeping.

3. Jesus Refocuses

Mark 11:17

God's house is meant to be a place of prayer for all nations. Jesus restores attention to communion with God and access to His presence.

4. Jesus Reveals

Mark 11:18

The leaders resist while the crowd is astonished. Our response to correction reveals whether we want Jesus' authority or merely His approval.

Closing response: Ask: What tables need to be overturned in my life? Call for repentance, renewed prayer, and a willingness to receive Jesus' correction.

Scripture references
Mark 11:11, 15–19. Old Testament quotations in Mark 11:17: Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11.

MESSAGE 02 | TUESDAY

When Truth Confronts Comfort

Primary Scripture: Mark 11:12–14, 20–25; 13:1–37

Central idea: Jesus looks beyond religious appearances and calls His people to fruitful faith, discernment, and readiness.

Opening direction: Use the leafy but fruitless fig tree to introduce the difference between looking spiritually healthy and bearing the fruit of a life rooted in God.

1. What Jesus Sees

Mark 11:12–14, 20–21, 27–28; Jeremiah 8:13

Jesus sees what outward appearances conceal. Spiritual activity and impressive leaves cannot replace a heart that produces genuine fruit.

2. What Jesus Exposes

Mark 13:1–2

The temple's impressive stones cannot guarantee lasting security. Jesus exposes the danger of trusting religious structures more than the God they are meant to honor.

3. What Jesus Warns

Mark 13:5–8, 13, 26

Jesus warns of deception, trouble, and the need to endure. Direct attention toward faithfulness and His promised return rather than speculation about dates.

4. What Jesus Expects

Mark 13:33–37

Stay awake and remain faithful to the work God has entrusted to you. Readiness grows through prayer, Scripture, and obedience rather than fear.

Closing response: Invite listeners to examine their roots, surrender hidden compromise, and replace comfortable appearances with watchful, fruitful faith.

Scripture references
Mark 11:12–14, 20–25, 27–28; 12:13–17, 28–34, 41–44; 13:1–37; Jeremiah 8:13. Referenced principle: 1 Samuel 16:7.

MESSAGE 03 | WEDNESDAY

The Slow Fade of a Soul

Primary Scripture: Matthew 26:14–16; Mark 14:1–11; Luke 22:1–6; John 12:1–8

Central idea: Unaddressed compromise can harden a heart even in the presence of Jesus. Judas' betrayal calls us to honest confession and wholehearted devotion.

Opening direction: Contrast Mary's costly devotion with Judas' calculation. Introduce spiritual drift as a series of tolerated choices rather than one sudden decision.

1. The Subtle Drift

Mark 14:10, 18; Matthew 26:22

Judas belonged to the Twelve, yet closeness to ministry did not mean surrender to Jesus. Invite honest self-examination rather than confidence in a role or reputation.

2. The Secret Sin

John 12:3–6

Judas concealed theft behind concern for the poor. Sin that is excused and hidden becomes easier to repeat and harder to confront.

3. The Spiritual Entry

Luke 22:3; John 13:2, 27; Ephesians 4:27

The betrayal includes real spiritual opposition. Warn against giving evil a foothold, and call listeners to resist temptation and bring hidden compromise into the light.

4. The Serious Consequences

Matthew 26:14–16

Thirty pieces of silver expose what Judas is willing to trade for immediate gain. Contrast his bargain with Mary's willingness to give freely in devotion to Jesus.

Closing response: Ask what compromise has become normal. Invite confession and surrender today, choosing Mary's devotion over Judas' calculated self-interest.

Scripture references
Matthew 26:14–16, 22; Mark 14:1–11, 18; Luke 22:1–6; John 12:1–8; 13:2, 27; Psalm 41:9; Ephesians 4:27.

MESSAGE 04 | THURSDAY

Love on Its Knees

Primary Scripture: John 13:1–7; Luke 22:14–20; Matthew 26:36–46

Central idea: On the night before the cross, Jesus reveals love through humble service, willing sacrifice, and surrender to the Father.

Opening direction: Set the scene of Jesus' final evening with His disciples. Knowing what lies ahead, He continues to love them to the end.

1. Love That Serves

John 13:3–5, 14–15

Secure in His identity, Jesus takes the servant's place and washes His disciples' feet. His example calls us to humble service without demanding recognition or deserving recipients.

2. Love That Sacrifices

Luke 22:19–20

The bread and cup point to Jesus giving His body and blood for others. His love willingly pays the cost of our redemption. This point offers a natural place to observe the Lord's Supper.

3. Love That Surrenders

Matthew 26:36–46; Luke 22:44

In Gethsemane, Jesus brings His anguish to the Father and submits to His will. Surrender means trusting God enough to obey even when obedience is costly.

Closing response: Invite listeners to receive Christ's love and respond by serving someone, remembering His sacrifice, and surrendering an area they have held back.

Scripture references
John 13:1–7, 14–15; Luke 22:14–20, 44; Matthew 26:36–46. Referenced conversation about greatness: Luke 22:24–27.

MESSAGE 05 | FRIDAY

The Weight of the Cross

Primary Scripture: Mark 15:16–39; Isaiah 53:3–6; 2 Corinthians 5:21

Central idea: At the cross, Jesus willingly bears the weight of our sin and judgment, revealing the depth of His redeeming love.

Opening direction: Move beyond the physical weight of the cross to what Jesus carries on our behalf. The innocent Savior takes the place of the guilty.

1. The Weight of Sin

Isaiah 53:5–6; 2 Corinthians 5:21

The sinless Christ bears our guilt and the consequences of our rebellion. His substitution makes forgiveness and a right relationship with God possible.

2. The Weight of Judgment

Mark 15:33–34, 38; Psalm 22; John 19:30

The darkness and Jesus' cry reveal the gravity of the cross. His finished work and the torn curtain point to the cost of redemption and the access to God His sacrifice opens.

3. The Weight of Love

John 10:18

Jesus gives His life willingly. The cross displays His love for the Father and for undeserving people whom He came to rescue.

Closing response: Use Barabbas' release to picture grace: the guilty goes free as Jesus takes his place. Invite listeners to respond with the repentant criminal's trust and the centurion's recognition of Jesus.

Scripture references
Mark 15:6–39; Isaiah 53:3–6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Psalm 22; 1 Corinthians 5:7; John 10:18; 19:30. Related narratives referenced: Luke 23:39–43; Matthew 27:51–53; Exodus 10:21–23.

MESSAGE 06 | PALM SUNDAY

The King We Didn’t Expect

Primary Scripture: Matthew 21:1–11

Central idea: Jesus comes as the King we need, even when He does not fit the king we expected. Faith receives Him on His terms.

Opening direction: Introduce the contrast between a triumphant crowd and a King arriving humbly on a donkey. His entrance fulfills prophecy while challenging expectations.

1. The King They Wanted

Matthew 21:8–9

The crowd welcomes deliverance, but its expectations do not fully grasp Jesus’ mission. Ask whether our allegiance depends on Him arranging circumstances the way we want.

2. The King Who Came

Matthew 21:4–5; Zechariah 9:9

Jesus arrives in humility and peace. His mission reaches beyond immediate political relief to the deeper bondage of sin and death.

3. The King They Missed

Luke 19:41–44; John 12:16

Jesus weeps over a city that fails to recognize its visitation. Being near religious activity does not guarantee that we understand or receive the King Himself.

Closing response: Invite listeners to surrender their expectations and follow the King who actually came. Ask: Am I welcoming Jesus for who He is or only for what I want Him to do?

Scripture references
Matthew 21:1–11; Zechariah 9:9; Luke 19:41–44; John 12:16.

MESSAGE 07 | RESURRECTION SUNDAY

The Best Day Ever

Primary Scripture: Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–12

Central idea: The resurrection changes history, opens the way to eternal life, and offers personal transformation through the living Jesus.

Opening direction: Begin with the women coming to the tomb in grief and finding it empty. The announcement that Jesus has risen changes what they thought was the end of the story.

1. The Resurrection Changed History

Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–12

Jesus' resurrection is the decisive event at the center of the Christian message. The crucified Savior is alive, and death does not have the final word.

2. The Resurrection Changed Eternity

1 Corinthians 15:17; Romans 6:23; 10:9

Without the resurrection, faith would be futile and sin unresolved. The risen Christ offers forgiveness and eternal life to those who trust Him.

3. The Resurrection Can Change You

John 11:25–26; Romans 8:11

Jesus' promise of resurrection and life calls for a personal response. Through faith in Him, we receive new life and the Spirit's power to live differently.

Closing response: Invite listeners to confess Jesus as Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead. Call them to receive His forgiveness and begin living in resurrection hope today.

Scripture references
Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–12; 1 Corinthians 15:17; John 11:25–26. Additional passages quoted or echoed: Romans 3:23; 6:23; 8:11; 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:13–14; John 14:6; Acts 1:8.