

March 25 | Sunday

Renegade Gospel: The Saddest Parade Ever

Read Luke 19:28-44



26 | Mon – Confronting disrespect in the Temple | Read Mark 11:1-11 and 12-19

Jesus' final week has been recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Yesterday Jesus rode into Jerusalem amid cheering crowds on what we celebrate as Palm Sunday. Today (Monday) Jesus went to the temple as he often did to teach but this time he confronted the dishonest religious vendors who fleeced those coming to worship God and make atonement for their sin. Does that kind of disrespect ever happen in the church of today?

27 | Tue – Teaching, healing and anointing | Read Mark 11:20-33, 14:3-9 and Matt. 21:14

On Tuesday Jesus went again to the temple to teach. A brave act after making more enemies on Monday. When he finished teaching and healing for the day, Jesus went back to Bethany for supper at Simon's house. What unusual thing happened during the meal? People had two reactions. If you were present, which category would you have fallen into? What does this teach you about judging without first trying to understand?

28 | Wed – The plot against Jesus | Read Mark 14:10-11, 66-72 and Matthew 27:1-5

Have you ever been betrayed by someone you trusted? Was it accidental or was it deliberately premeditated? As you read these verses, you can see how Jesus understands what you've experienced. Have you ever betrayed someone *else* unintentionally? Compare Judas' betrayal before the arrest with Peter's the next night. Afterwards, both showed remorse but then went in opposite directions. What was different in their apparent beliefs about Jesus?

29 | Thu – Jesus' final meal and the encounter in the garden | Read Mark 14:12-72

After someone dies unexpectedly, do you find yourself thinking about the last time you saw them or your final conversation? Take time to notice things Jesus said and did on this Thursday evening before his death. Check out his last conversation with the disciples in John 13-17. What did Jesus want them to know before his arrest and execution? Does anything stand out to you that you hadn't noticed before?

30 | Fri – Crucifixion and burial | Read Matt. 27:32-66/Mk 15:1-47/Lk. 23:44-49/Jn. 19:26-56

On this Good Friday, take some extra time to read all four accounts of Jesus' death and burial. Reflect not only on what it cost Jesus to redeem us but on what it cost his Father. If you've experienced grief over something that may have happened to your child, you have some understanding of God's broken heart as He was forced to turn His face away. Knowing this story has a wonderful ending does not mitigate the great sorrow experienced in the middle of tragedy. How do these reflections affect your understanding of this event?

31 | Sat – The saddest Saturday in the history of the world | Read Revelation 1:17-19

Saturday was the Jewish Sabbath. Everyone else was observing the Sabbath traditions, but Jesus' disciples were in seclusion, numb with grief, trying to make sense of the last 36 hours. And where was Jesus? Not in the tomb - only his outer shell rested there. Jesus was paying a visit to Satan, knocking down the doors of hell, wrestling the keys of death from his defeated foe. If you or someone you know is experiencing great sadness and despair, remember this: Sunday is coming (maybe sooner than you think) so hang on to hope!