



“The Way”

Session 5 – The Final Week & Epilogue

March 24, 2024 4:00 PM

This afternoon, we focus our attention on Jesus' final week – what we now celebrate as Holy Week. We will look at Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, His encounters in the Temple and surrounding areas, His final meal with the Disciples, His arrest and crucifixion, and His ultimate victory through the Empty Tomb.

Opening Prayer

Take a few moments and read Philippians 2:5-11 below. Spend a few moments in silence as you reflect on the words. We will then close by reading the passage together.

⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature^[a] God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature^[b] of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Session 5 – A Map of Jerusalem and the Surrounding Areas

As we look at Jerusalem, let's remember that it sits atop a large hill and is surrounded on three sides by deep valleys. Across one of these valleys – the Kidron Valley – is the Mount of Olives. The hilltop made Jerusalem very defensible and was one reason David chose this location as the capital city. The Temple Mount is located in the Northeast corner of the city. Just north of the Temple Mount is the Antonia Fortress, a Roman fort. The Romans were very aware that the Temple and Temple court was the center of Jewish life and culture and could become the center of protests and uprisings; thus the location of a large garrison of soldiers. The Mount of Olives is a quarter mile east of the Temple Mount, but the walking distance twice that far. (It is likely that Jesus and the Disciples could see the crowd carrying torches coming towards first coming down the Temple Mount and then up to the Mount of Olives the night He was arrested.)

Session 5 Video – “The Final Week”

In the video, Hamilton recounts the events during the last week of Jesus' life before the Resurrection.

Follow Up Questions...

- What do the structures in the video say about the building practices in the time of Jesus and before?
- What do the massive size and workmanship of the stones suggest?
- In what ways does this style of architecture make Jerusalem an eternal city, one that even the Roman army could not destroy?

Scripture Focus: Jesus' Arrival in Jerusalem

Let's Read Mark 11:7-10.

- How did Palm Sunday set the stage for all that followed during Jesus' final week?

- Do you think the arrest, trial, and crucifixion could have taken place without Palm Sunday?
- What did the Palm Sunday events communicate to both the Jewish religious establishment and the Roman authorities?
- Recall that the Romans were an occupying force that taxed the local population heavily. How do you think the Romans and the local religious authorities would have responded to large crowds greeting a stranger as a king, with shouts of “Save us! Save us!”

Book Study and Discussion

Jesus overturned the tables of the moneychangers, saying they had made the temple a “den of thieves”. And Jesus condemned the scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites, like “whitewashed tombs.” These are examples of what some people have called “bad religion”.

- What examples of bad religion do you see in our world today? Do you think there is more bad religion now than there was in Jesus’ time? Why or why not?
- Hamilton asserts that Jesus’ actions on Monday sealed his fate. What does he mean by this statement? What does it tell us about Jesus’ ministry and message?

On Friday, Jesus was forced to carry his cross to Calvary, a hilltop beside a garden along the main roadway. There he was crucified, dying a long, painful death.

- What does it mean to you when we say that Jesus died for our sins? What could it mean?
- Hamilton writes that the cross is a mirror held up to our souls. What do you think he means? When you look in that mirror, what do you see?

Jesus' crucifixion and subsequent resurrection serve as pivots on which the entire history of humankind rests. The Crucifixion demonstrates the absolute epitome of humankind's inhumanity to humankind. Scholars point out that no more hideous and painful form of execution has even been devised.

- What kind of king would submit to such torture?
- Why did Jesus pray that the cup might pass from him? What human emotion was he demonstrating in this prayer?
- Why did Jesus pray for the forgiveness of those who executed him? What was his relationship with them?

Not the End: The Epilogue

Scripture Focus – Jesus' Appearance to the Disciples

Let's read John 20:19-23.

- Why were the disciples meeting behind locked doors? Who were they afraid of? What do you think they were doing when Jesus appeared?
- Do you think at this point the disciples were determined to stay together or were they about to go there separate ways?
- Do you think the disciples could have gone back to life as it had been before they encountered Jesus?
- What were Jesus' first words to them? Why these words?
- What did Jesus give to the disciples in that locked room? What were the conditions of that gift?
- What does Jesus' gift to the disciples say about what He offers to give us?

Final Video – The Epilogue

Wrap Up

Over the next few days, as we celebrate Holy Week, answer the following questions...

1. What key insights am I taking away from our study “The Way”?
2. As I observe and celebrate Holy Week, what do the significance of each event signify for my faith journey with Christ?

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, through your only Son you overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life. Grant that we who celebrate our Lord's resurrection, by the renewing of your Spirit, arise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

NEW STUDY!



“Don’t Give the Enemy a Seat at Your Table

A Six-Week Study by Louie Giglio

Begins Sunday, April 7 4:00 PM

Led by Leslie Cornell & Phil Thompson
