

God So Loved

HOLY WEEK
FAMILY WORSHIP GUIDE

Doorpost Songs

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What is Holy Week?

Christians around the world have been celebrating Holy Week for almost two millennia. As we remember Christ's journey to the cross and the empty tomb, we are awestruck at the beauty of our Savior's sacrifice, and jubilant at his resounding victory over sin and death. It is the essence of the Gospel, the very foundation of our faith.

The journey of Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It continues through the early days of the week as Jesus teaches in the temple and the Jewish leaders plot to kill him. Holy Week picks up speed on Maundy Thursday as we remember the Last Supper and the garden of Gethsemane. Then comes Good Friday – Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial. On Holy Saturday we wait in breathless anticipation, and finally as Easter Sunday dawns we celebrate Jesus' resurrection and victory! (While technically Easter is not a part of Holy Week, it feels like leaving it out would be missing the point!)

Holy Week is a somber time, a time of reflection, remembrance, and even mourning. We remember that it was *our* sin Jesus bore on the cross. Among the many and varied church traditions during Holy Week are fast days, services of darkness, and the Stations of the Cross. And yet it is also a time of hope, because we know the end of the story. It is a time to remember God's incredible love for us, love that led

him to give his only Son to save us. And it's a time to rejoice in the passing away of old things – sin and death, guilt and shame – and the creation of something new - God's life inside us.

Understanding Holy Week is essential for our children as they grow in their faith. It's important for them to understand the core truths of the Gospel. It's okay for them to feel the sadness and grief of sin and Christ's suffering. And most of all they need to hear loud and clear the story of God's love for them, a love demonstrated in unfathomable ways during this remarkable week. Jesus' victory is *their* victory, too. Thank you for making it a priority to open God's Word with your family and walk through Holy Week together!

Using the Family Worship Moments

In a 2017 study, Lifeway Research sought to understand which childhood behaviors were the best predictors of spiritual health as an adult. They hoped to find the answer to a question that is close to the heart of most Christian parents: how can I help my child become a faithful follower of Christ as an adult? Of course, the answer to this question can't be boiled down to a statistical formula. There is no infallible equation for raising kids whose faith becomes their own in adulthood.

But the researchers did find that one childhood behavior had more positive effect on spiritual health than any other: reading God's Word. More than any other behavior – even some you might be surprised didn't make the list – a

child who reads and loves God's Word is most likely to become a spiritually vibrant adult.

This book is designed to help you open God's Word together as a family. Each family worship moment is a template for a fifteen-minute time of worship and discipleship based around a Doorpost Song, most of them from the Easter album *God So Loved*. All of the songs are available on Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and elsewhere. Each worship moment includes a passage of scripture to read, a memory verse to learn, lyrics to the song, a short devotional in a writing style designed for your children, discussion questions, and even suggested prayer topics.

You can use all of our suggestions or come up with your own. This isn't a magic formula; it's simply a place to begin, a way for you to step into your role as the primary spiritual leader for your children. It may seem like a daunting task – but it's not! Your role is simply to lead them into God's presence and then let HIM do the work! Fill your kids' lives with God's Word and watch what happens.

We want to encourage you to put this time of worship on your calendar. Find a time that works for your family. It might be gathered around the breakfast table in the morning. It might be the last few moments before bed. In our family it's usually an extension of dinner time. We all linger at the table, read a passage of scripture, talk about it, and pray together. Whatever you decide, set your appointment and keep it – even if you're tired, even it's been the most difficult of days. We promise you won't regret it!

Make your worship time interactive. If you have preschoolers, grab the plastic harmonica they got at church

or the toy xylophone that's been sitting in the corner since Aunt Ruth gave it to you last Christmas. Let them play (or pound!) along and make a joyful noise. If your older children are learning to play an instrument, encourage them to learn the songs. If your child is learning to read, let him or her read a section of the scripture or devotional. Encourage every family member to participate in a time of prayer.

Parenting can be a rollercoaster of intense emotion! Sometimes it fills our hearts with incredible joy. And sometimes we feel helpless and alone. But don't forget that you are a dearly loved child of your heavenly Father! It is his calling that is on your life, and it is his power and strength that will accomplish it. Your children aren't the only ones who need to spend time in his presence. You do, too! Our prayer is that these simple moments of worship are life-giving experiences for both you and your children.

Now, call a family meeting, get out the calendars, and let's schedule a time for family worship!

If God Is For Us

ROMANS 1:16

Verse

If His only Son He did not spare
If His only Son He gave for us
How will He not also give all things to us

Pre-Chorus

So what then shall we say?
What then shall we say?

Chorus

If God is for us, who can be against us?
If God is for us, who can be against us?

Bridge

Who will bring a charge against
The ones whom God has justified?
And who is to condemn?
It is Jesus Christ the one who died
But even more was raised to life
Was raised to life

Palm Sunday

FAMILY WORSHIP MOMENT

Find It in Scripture

Want to know more about what happened on this day? Here are the important events as recorded in Scripture:

The Triumphal Entry: Matt. 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:29-44, John 12:12-19

Read It

Read the Scripture passage aloud as a family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

Romans 8:31-34 (NIV)

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No

one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Sing It

Play the song from the *God So Loved* album and sing together. You can find Doorpost Songs on Spotify, Apple Music, iTunes, Amazon, and more.

Memorize It

Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestion below or choose your own.

Romans 8:31-32 (NIV)

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all.

Learn It

What's the Big Idea?

God is on our side.

Can you imagine what it must have been like? On a Sunday long ago, Jesus rode into Jerusalem. As he rode, a crowd of excited, joyful people gathered. All along the hot, dusty road into the city they stood, waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!" It must have been an incredible scene, and it's why we call this day Palm Sunday.

Why were the people so happy when Jesus came to Jerusalem?

To answer that question, you have to know a bit of history. When Jesus lived, a group of people called the Romans ruled Jerusalem and Israel. They were *not* kind rulers. The people of Israel – Jews, like Jesus – suffered. Many were very poor. The Jews didn't want the Romans to rule them. They were waiting for the day when a strong leader would rise up and defeat the Romans. They read the prophecies in the Bible about the Messiah – the one who would save Israel – and believed that when he came, the Messiah would overthrow the Romans once and for all.

When Jesus began to teach and perform miracles, many people believed that *he* was the Messiah. They thought

this meant that God was on their side. And if God was on their side, who could defeat them? Certainly not the Romans. So, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday two thousand years ago, the people were cheering for a mighty hero, a Rescuer, who would stand up and fight for them.

And do you know what? They were *right*. Jesus was the Messiah, God was on their side, and Jesus *would* stand up and fight for them. But they were wrong about one very important thing. They were wrong about who the *enemy* was. Jesus wasn't going to defeat the Romans. He was going to defeat something much more powerful and terrible: sin and death.

The Bible tells us that sin brings death into our lives. It separates us from God. And *all* of us are sinful. We need a mighty hero, a Rescuer, to save us. When Jesus died on the cross, he took all our sin on himself. He took the punishment we deserve, and he did it because he loves us. When Jesus rose from the dead, sin and death were defeated once and for all.

Today's Bible verse is from Romans 8:31. It says, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" The writer of Romans, Paul, is reminding us that God is on our side. He gave his only Son, Jesus, to save us. And Paul is reminding us that because Jesus died for us and was raised to life again, he has defeated sin and death for good. Our most terrible enemy has been overthrown!

Doesn't that make you want to shout for joy?
*Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessed is the king of Israel! Thank you, Jesus, for saving us!*

Talk About It

Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. Why were the people excited to see Jesus? What did they think he would do?
2. How does it make you feel to know that God is on your side?
3. What has Jesus defeated once and for all?

Pray About It

Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank God that he is on our side.
- Thank God that because Jesus rose from the dead, sin and death are defeated once and for all.
- Ask God to help us praise him joyfully each and every day.