



March 23 The Preparation
March 30 The Trial
April 6 The Crucifixion
April 13 The Death
April 20 The Resurrection



Pastor's Introduction

Dear Wallace family,

“The Greatest Weekend” occurred in the city of Jerusalem almost 2,000 years ago. The weekend of Jesus’ death and resurrection is the “greatest weekend” because it is the weekend that changed everything in history. It was in the fullness of time when God sent His Son, Jesus, to be the atoning sacrifice for sin. Jesus lived on the earth for around 33 years, the last few years being spent performing ministry and discipling a group of followers who would continue to proclaim His kingdom after His ascension to heaven. On this weekend, all of the Old Testament prophecies found their fulfillment. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Because of what He did on this weekend, we can now have a relationship with God through the forgiveness of sin and redemption that He accomplished on the cross.

“The Greatest Weekend” is a 5-week sermon series through Luke’s account of the events of these most important few days. We will cover the prayer in Gethsemane, the trial of Jesus, the crucifixion, the death and resurrection of Jesus. My prayer is that as we prepare our hearts for Easter 2025, this study will enrich our faith and inspire us to tell the world the good news about “The Greatest Weekend!”

Sincerely,
John

Ed. TG



Participant Guide for March 23, 2025

The Preparation

Luke 22:39-46

Highlight

Action Step:

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Have you ever been in a position of dread? Perhaps you knew something difficult was on the horizon, and the weight of that event caused you great anxiety. What was that like for you? What did you do to deal with that fear?
2. In Luke 22:40, Jesus instructs the disciples to pray that they “wouldn’t fall into temptation.” What temptations did those disciples face over the next several days of their lives? What unique temptations do we face in our time during the Easter season?
3. In verse 42, Jesus asks the Father if there is any way for “This Cup” to pass from him. What does Jesus mean by the “Cup?” (Hint: Try looking up Jeremiah 25:15-38, Isaiah 51:17, Lamentations 4:21, Ezekiel 23:28-43, and Habakkuk 2:16) How does this help us understand what happened to Jesus during the crucifixion and the following days?
4. How does Jesus' prayer in the Garden teach us to approach the difficult situations in our lives?
5. Do you know someone who is facing a difficult situation? Make a plan to pray for them and support them this week.

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated?**

- ◆ Easter is a story of hope and new beginnings. Think about what that message means to you personally. Share a brief, genuine sentence or two about why Easter is important to you with someone this week. You don't have to give a whole sermon; just share your heart. Then, simply invite someone to experience that hope with you at our Easter service.

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Participant Guide March 30, 2025

The Trial

Luke 22:63-71

Highlight

Action Step:

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Have you ever been falsely accused of something? How did that make you feel? Did you defend yourself? What was the outcome of the accusation?
2. In this final passage of Luke 22, Jesus faces a false trial. He has done nothing wrong, yet he doesn't defend himself. Why are the chief priests and Pharisees willing to go to this length? Why was Jesus such a threat to them?
3. Read John 8:12-59. The accusations of the Pharisees and Priests are similar in both narratives. Why was Jesus' identity the cause of their condemnation both times?
4. How can Jesus' reaction to false accusations and unfair condemnation encourage us when facing difficult situations?
5. Have you ever falsely accused someone of something? Was it on purpose or by accident? Did you ever apologize and repent to that person?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Do you know anyone who might be going through a tough time or who seems to be searching for something more? Easter is a message of hope and renewal, which could be precisely what they need. Consider who in your life might benefit from hearing this message and extend an invitation to them.

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Participant Guide for April 6, 2025

The Crucifixion

Luke 23:32-43

Highlight

Action Step:

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Have you ever helped someone who turned out to be ungrateful or even resentful over your help? What was that like? Did it cause you to regret helping that person? Did it make you reconsider helping again in the future? Share that story with the group if you're able.
2. In verse 34, Jesus pleads to the Father for mercy on behalf of those who were crucifying him. Have you ever stuck your neck out for someone, even if they were in the wrong?
3. Why is it so much harder to forgive and advocate for those who won't admit they're in the wrong? How can we forgive others even if they choose not to admit their guilt?
4. Read verses 35-38. Many at the crucifixion chose to mock and belittle Jesus as he died for them. How did this fulfill many of the prophecies that were made about Jesus? Where do we find those prophecies? (Hint*** If you have a reference Bible, cross reference verses should be listed on the page for you to check!)
5. In verses 38-43 we see the two criminals who were crucified with Jesus having very different reactions to their situation. One demands that Jesus immediately change his circumstances. The other recognizes who Jesus is and admits his guilt. What does this teach us about how to approach Jesus? How can we use this story to teach others about approaching Jesus in our evangelism efforts?
6. The two criminals both received punishment, but one also received mercy. When we consider actions and consequences, it often feels like justice and mercy are opposed to each other. How can we be dedicated to both? How do we show mercy and forgiveness without enabling sin and denying justice?

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Easter is at the heart of the message of forgiveness—a fresh start, a clean slate. We all carry burdens, whether big or small, and Easter offers the hope of release. If you know anyone longing for forgiveness or needing to experience the freedom that comes with it, invite them to our Easter service.



Participant Guide for April 13, 2025

The Death

Luke 23:44-49

Highlight

Action Step:

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Have you ever had to make a sacrifice to achieve a goal? (Fitness, financial, professional achievement, relational.) What did you have to give up to achieve your goal? Was it worth it in the end?
2. Verse 45 tells us that the curtain in the temple “split down the middle.” What was the purpose and meaning of this curtain? (Hint** Exodus 26: 31-33) What is the significance of its destruction during the crucifixion?
3. Verse 47 tells us the account of the centurion who presided over this execution. Why is it significant that the one doing the execution recognized the innocence of Jesus? Why is this one testimony particularly significant in Luke’s Gospel?
4. Verse 48 tells us that those who witnessed the crucifixion left “Striking their chests,” or perhaps the easier translation is that they “left with great sorrow.” (NLT) Then, in verse 49, we are told that those who were his followers “watched at a distance.” How does knowing Jesus’ purposes reframe our emotions at his death? How can we process the sorrow and joy of these events in the coming week leading to Easter?
5. Split up into groups of 2 or 3. Practice telling your group members the story of the crucifixion and why it matters.

Respond

→ **Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?**

- ◆ Easter is next week! It’s your last chance to invite your friends and family. Be sure to grab some invite cards. Grab a few, keep them in your car, pockets, or purse, and when the opportunity arises, hand one out and say, ‘We’d love to see you at church for Easter.’”



Participant Guide for April 20, 2025

The Resurrection

Luke 24:1-12

Highlight

Action Step:

Which verse(s) spoke to you this week?

Explain

Sermon and discussion notes:



Apply

1. Have you ever dealt with a massive disappointment? You thought something would work out, but it took a very different turn. What happened? How did you react?
2. The angels asked the visitors, “Why do you search for the living among the dead.” Even after hearing Jesus' prophecy of his death for months, his followers still did not understand. What are the common misconceptions in our culture about who Jesus is and what he came to do?
3. Each resurrection account in the four Gospels is slightly different. (Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18) Split up into subgroups and read each one. What are the similarities, and what are the differences?
4. Find a partner. Make a plan to tell someone about the resurrection of Jesus this week. Set a time for a follow-up conversation with your partner for accountability.

Respond

→ Challenge - What are you going to do in response to the truth communicated today?

- ◆ The resurrection is a call to new life. What 'old ways' do you need to leave behind? What 'new life' is God calling you to embrace this week?

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