

# Holy Week for Teens

---

Traditionally celebrated by many Christians throughout the world, Holy Week is eight days of celebration and worship that focuses on the last week of Christ's life, beginning the Sunday before Easter. Similar to our original version, which lists activities for smaller children ([mercyrivermusic.com](http://mercyrivermusic.com)), this outline for families with teens includes events day by day, ideas for short activities, scriptures, coordinating video links, and songs. It is not our intention that you use EVERY resource listed here. Pick and choose what will resonate with your family. The scriptures, videos, and hymns can be found at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org). Google should help you with the rest ;)

## **Day One: PALM SUNDAY**

**Invitation: SEEK AND SPREAD HOPE**

**Message:** *He can deliver you from anything.*

**Backstory:** Traditionally called "Palm Sunday," this day commemorates the Triumphant Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. He was welcomed by a joyful crowd waving palm leaves and shouting. His presence brought much hope.

**Song:** Hope in Front of Me, Danny Gokey

**Scriptures:** Mark 11:1-11 ; Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19

**Bible Video:** The Lord's Triumphant Entry

**Youth Videos:** The Power of Hope; Alek's Story

**Hymn:** All Glory, Laud, and Honor (a traditional Palm Sunday hymn throughout Christendom)

**Questions for Discussion:** What brings you hope? How does Jesus help you feel hopeful? What things do you hope for? Which of His promises give you hope? What do you think is the opposite of hope? Many kids your age are suffering from anxiety and depression. Why do you think that is? How can you help others who are suffering from a lack of hope?

**Activity Idea: Send a Text** Think of someone in your life who is discouraged, frustrated, or afraid. Send them an encouraging, hopeful text message.

**Activity Idea: "Picture" Christ** Ask each child to search online through different art work of Christ. Ask them to pick their favorite- the one that really captures the hope Christ brings to them personally. Later, obtain a copy of the print each child chose. Hang it in their bedroom. (Would make great gifts for their Jesus Baskets! Read about Jesus Baskets on Day 8.)

## Day Two: MIGHTY MONDAY

**Invitation: STAND UP, STAND OUT!**

**Message:** *“Set a standard for the rest of the world.” —President Nelson*

**Backstory:** We call this day "Mighty Monday" because (according to Mark) it's the day Jesus cleansed the temple by chasing out the money changers and over turning the tables. (Note: Matthew and Luke place this event on Sunday, but for my purposes I went with Mark's timetable.) In this account, Jesus sets the example by standing up for what was right, even when it was unpopular. Sometimes we know what is right, but we may feel afraid or embarrassed to stand up for it, especially if it will cause a scene or draw attention to ourselves.

**Song:** Unusual, Francesca Battistelli

**Scriptures:** Mark 11:15-19; Matthew 21:12-13; Luke 19: 45-48, 1 Peter 2:9

**Bible Video:** Jesus Cleanses the Temple

**Youth Videos:** Leave the Party; Dare to Stand Alone

**Hymn:** Come, O Thou King of Kings

**Questions for Discussion:** Have you ever had to stand up for what's right? How can we find the courage to stand? Can you think of an example in the scriptures, throughout history, or from someone you know who mightily stood up for what was right?

**Activity Idea: Make a Meme** Find an inspirational quote from general conference or a scripture that means something to you. Using a free online meme designer (Rhonna Designs, Word Swag, Canva), make an uplifting meme to share on social media.

**Activity Idea: Role Play** Your teens will resist this, but trust me, this is one of the MOST EFFECTIVE ways to learn. Kids usually feel uncomfortable “standing up” because they don't know what to say. Role play a few situations with them. For example, they're at a friend's house and someone suggests they watch an inappropriate movie. They will be much more prepared in these situations having rehearsed them first.

**Activity Idea: The Prophet's Invitations** In June 2018, President Nelson gave 5 challenges to the youth, one of which was to “Stand out. Be different. Be a light.” If your family is like ours, you may benefit from a refresher of these invitations. Review them again as a family and assess which invitations have been completed and which need some follow through.

## **Day Three: TEACHING TUESDAY**

**Invitation: SEE HIM EVERYWHERE**

**Message:** *Everything testifies of Christ!*

**Backstory:** I call this day "Teaching Tuesday" because of His teachings in the temple and the Olivet Discourse. Jesus taught in parables and symbols. "Learning to learn" in this way is an important skill to develop.

**Song:** Speak, Bethany Music

**Scriptures:** Matthew 22-25, Mark 11-13, Luke 20-21, and John 12 are full of His Tuesday teaching.

Here are some examples of specific teachings you could highlight: The Parable of 10 Virgins:

Matthew 25:1-13 The Parable of the Talents: Matthew 25: 14-30 Parable of the Fig Tree: Mark 13:

28-31; Matthew 24: 32-35; Luke 21: 29-33 Parable of the Faithful and Unfaithful Servant: Matthew 24:

45-51 The Widow's Mite: Mark 12:38-44, Luke 21: 1-4 Ye Have Done it Unto Me: Matthew 25: 31-46

**Bible Videos:** The 10 Virgins, The Parable of the Talents, Ye Have Done it Unto Me, The Greatest Commandment, Render Unto God, The Widow's Mite

**Youth Videos:** The Blessing of Scriptures

**Hymn:** Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth

**Questions for Discussion:** What is a parable? Why did Jesus often teach with parables and symbols? What is your favorite parable? How can you better prepare to teach others? What is your current study routine? Could it be improved?

**Activity: Symbol Game** Parables teach us on a deeper, symbolic level. Try your own hand at it! Gather 8-10 super random items around your house. For example, a cheese grater, a hairspray bottle, a dryer sheet, etc. The stranger the better! Put the items in a bag and ask each family member to choose one without looking. Each person then has to explain how their object is symbolic of a gospel principle and/or testifies of Christ. Their ideas will surprise you. This activity is insightful and makes even my 16 year old laugh ;)

**Activity: Texting Group** Invite teens to consider starting a texting group with 3-10 friends where they can share what they are learning from their scripture studies with each other. (Google "Texting Truth Youth Video" to find a video about this.)

## Day Four: SPY WEDNESDAY

### **Invitation: TRUST IN HIS LOVE**

**Message:** *God loves you, no matter what.*

**Backstory:** Wednesday is traditionally called "Spy Wednesday" because of Judas' agreement to betray Jesus. He "sold" Him for 30 pieces of silver.

**Song:** You Love Me Anyway, Sidewalk Prophets

**Scriptures:** Mark 14: 10-11; Matthew 26: 14-16; Luke 22: 3-6

**Youth Videos:** Guilt vs. Shame, Holes in Your Boat , Am I Good Enough?

**Hymn:** With Humble Heart

**Questions for Discussion:** Are there ways we "betray" Jesus in our own lives? What choices do we make when no one is looking? If you make a mistake, does God's love for you change? What is the difference between "worth" and "worthiness"? Is guilt a good thing or a bad thing? What is the difference between "guilt" and "shame"?

**Activity Idea: "I Am" Affirmations** There is power in our words, especially when we describe ourselves using His name ("I AM." See Exodus 3:14) Write 7 "I AM" statements about yourself (see examples below). These can be things you believe or things you wish were true. Hang them on your mirror where you can see them. Bonus points if you say them out loud everyday! (One fun idea is to open your Patriarchal Blessing and circle words that Heavenly Father uses to describe you and use these words.) Examples: I am kind. I am able to make wise decisions. I am choosing God everyday. I am strong. I am confident. I am allowed to be different from my friends. I am beautiful. I am calm. I am loved. I am happy with what I have. I am generous. I am grateful. I am enough.

**Activity Idea: Write Letters To and From Heavenly Father** First, write a letter TO Heavenly Father. Be completely honest about what you're thinking and feeling. Close the letter with your name. On a separate paper (or on the back), begin a new letter. This one is to you FROM Heavenly Father. Write "Dear (Your Name)," and then whatever comes to your mind. Don't think about it too hard or over analyze what to write. Just try to be still and let words come to you. This may take some time and practice to really let the words flow through the pen, especially for someone who struggles believing they have value. The words that come will be pure love. This can be difficult for some of us to accept and feel. If this is the case for you or one of your children, another option is to write any negative feelings they have about themselves and then burn or tear and throw away the pieces.

## **Day Five: PASSOVER THURSDAY**

### **Invitation: DEFEAT THE DESTROYING ANGEL**

**Message:** *The blood of the Lamb helps us conquer death and sin.*

**Backstory:** It's Passover! In a final attempt to escape Egypt, God said the destroying angel would "pass over" each home of the Israelites with the blood of a perfect Lamb on their doorposts. For centuries after, the Jews would eat a ceremonial passover dinner. The night before Christ died, the apostles gathered with Him for the Passover meal, also known as the Last Supper. At that meal, Jesus announces He is the Lamb and the Law of Moses is fulfilled in Him. He takes the unleavened bread and wine and institutes the sacrament of the "new testament."

**NOTE:** One really cool thing to connect here for teens is the Word of Wisdom. What does the WOW have to do with the Passover, you might ask? The answer is in the very last verse of D&C 89 (everyone misses this!): "And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." Whaaaat?! Our modern day "blood on the doorposts" is the Word of Wisdom. Which means one form of the destroying angel is addiction. After you read this with your teens, ask them what they think the destroying angel could be and how the WOW keeps us safe.

**Song:** God so Loved the World, City of Enoch

**Scriptures:** Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13-18

**Videos:** The Last Supper, Gethsemane, (also fun to watch Prince of Egypt to get in the Passover spirit)

**Hymns:** The Sacrament, Reverently and Meekly Now

**Questions for Discussion:** What is the passover and why do Jesus and the apostles observe it? What do the different foods represent? What is the connection between the passover and the sacrament? What happened in the Garden of Gethsemane? How is the Word of Wisdom connected to the Passover (see D&C 89:21)?

**Activity Idea: Passover Meal** For this day, we have a family friendly "passover meal." Grape juice (for wine), pita bread (for unleavened bread), horseradish (for bitter herbs), and a few other foods that may have been on the table at passover: HoneyComb cereal (for honeycomb), fish (or fish sticks or Swedish fish), hard boiled eggs, raisins (or figs), grapes, and olives. (Cooking lamb is a little out of my comfort zone, so I usually just set a stuffed lamb on the table...) My teenagers LOVE LOVE LOVE this meal.

## Day Six: GOOD FRIDAY

### **Invitation: SHARE THE GOOD NEWS!**

**Message:** *Because Christ paid for our sins, we can repent. This is the best news ever!*

**Backstory:** Traditionally called "Good Friday," this was the day Jesus suffered and died on the cross. This is a day my kids really feel. They ask a lot of questions and we have some of our best Holy Week discussions on this day.

**Questions for Discussion:** Why did Jesus have to suffer and die for us? Why is this day called "GOOD Friday?" What "good news" comes from this day? Do you have to be perfect? How do you repent? Why and how should we share our testimonies of Christ with others?

**Songs:** Best News Ever, Mercy Me; What Love is This? Kari Jobe

**Scriptures:** Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 18, 19

**Bible Videos:** Jesus is Scourged and Crucified

**Youth Videos:** Repentance, a Joyful Choice; Good Things to Share

**Talk:** "Sunday Will Come"

**Hymns:** Help Us, Oh God, to Understand; Upon the Cross of Calvary

**Activity Idea: Social Media Share** Share the good news on social media! Find a talk, scripture, quote, or video about Christ to share on social media. Include your thoughts about His role in your life. Consider using one of the church's official hashtags: #BecauseofHim, #BecauseHeLives, #Hallelujah, ##ShareGoodness, #JesusChrist, #Christian, #ChurchofJesusChrist, #BookofMormon

**Activity Idea: Watch "The Lamb of God"** I try to make sure this happens every year. This video is powerful and always helps my kids "feel."

**Activity Idea: Bake Hot Cross Buns!** Hot Cross Buns are traditionally baked on Good Friday and given to friends. A little service on this day does our hearts good! (*recipe on [mercyrivermusic.com](http://mercyrivermusic.com)*)

## **Day Seven: SPIRIT WORLD SATURDAY**

### **Invitation: CONNECT TO YOUR ANCESTORS**

**Message:** *You are surrounded by loved ones on the other side, ready to help you.*

**Backstory:** I call this day "Spirit World Saturday" because this was the day Jesus taught in the spirit world. Spencer J. Condie's, "The Savior's Visit to the Spirit World" is an excellent resource.

**Song:** Undeniable, Mercy River

**Scriptures:** 1 Peter 3:18-4:6; D&C 138

**Video:** "Jesus Visits the Spirit World." It's a bit old, but the only video I've found that shows a representation. Take it or leave it ;)

**Hymn:** Families Can Be Together Forever

**Questions for Discussion:** Why did Jesus teach in the spirit world? Where do our loved ones go when they die? Are they near us? Are angels real? Can we ask for angels to help us? Do my ancestors know and care about me? Why is family history work and temple work important? How can our family participate more in this work? (Resources: Elder Holland's talk, "The Ministry of Angels." Sister Wendy Nelson's article, "How Angels Can Help Us More in Our Lives.")

**Activity Ideas: Temple Trip or Family History** We love to visit a temple on this day. Older children can do baptisms for the dead and younger children can walk around the temple grounds and visitors center or help index names for the temple. Or, you could share family history stories, write in your personal journals, or visit graves of deceased loved ones.

## **Day Eight: EASTER SUNDAY**

### **Invitation: RISE!**

**Message:** *"Whatever Jesus lays His hands upon, lives."* -Howard W. Hunter (Your confidence, your grades, your relationships, anything!)

**Backstory:** Our favorite day! The day Jesus was resurrected and rose from the tomb.

**Song:** Forever, Nathan Pacheco; I Will Rise Again, Jason Gray

**Scriptures:** Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20

**Bible Videos:** Jesus is Resurrected; He is Risen

**Teen Videos:** He Lives; Where Justice, Love, and Mercy Meet

**Hymn:** He Is Risen, That Easter Morn, Christ the Lord is Risen Today

**Questions for Discussion:** What does the resurrection have to do with YOU? Why are you grateful for the resurrection? What in your life needs reviving? Confidence? Grades? Good desires? He can breathe life into anything.

**Activity Idea: Jesus Baskets** Give your children "Jesus Baskets" instead of Easter Baskets. Everything in a Jesus Basket points to Christ. Our teenagers absolutely love these. Jesus Baskets look a lot like Easter baskets. They are full of color and candy and eggs. But everything in a Jesus Basket is either a symbol OF, or brings us closer TO Christ. (Think books, ties, journals, mission prep items, family games, thank you notes, etc.) My kids love these, no matter their age. (Google "Jesus Baskets Mercy River" for more details.)

**Activity Idea: Bake Empty Tomb Rolls** These are a soft, homemade roll that have a cinnamon sugar, butter dipped marshmallow inside. After baking, the marshmallow is gone and the roll is hollow and empty. Sweet, sticky, and delicious. (Google "Oh Sweet Basil Empty Tomb Rolls" for the recipe.)

\*\*\*

### **Other super cool songs to add to a teen Holy Week playlist:**

Still Rolling Stones, Lauren Daigle

For All You've Done - Mercy River

How Deep the Father's Love for Us - Mercy River

Because He Lives - Matt Maher

Man of Sorrow - Shane and Shane

Walking with Christ through the last week of His life may be just the thing your teenagers need this Easter season. Happy Holy Week!