

A banner for Passion Week Tuesday. The background is a collage of images: a landscape with green hills and a sunset sky on the right, and a close-up of a textured surface, possibly a cross or a wall, in the center and left. A purple rectangular box with a white border is centered over the collage, containing the text 'PASSION WEEK' in large, white, serif capital letters. Below this box, the word 'TUESDAY' is written in white, sans-serif capital letters.

# PASSION WEEK

## TUESDAY

Good morning. Today is Passion Week. Tuesday. The Gospel of Mark records Jesus' explanation as to why he cursed the fig tree. There were lessons in his actions.

Mark 11:20 in the morning. As they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, " Rabbi, look, the fig tree you cursed has withered." And Jesus responded, " Have faith in God." Let's make that our takeaway.

For have faith in God. Say that with me. Have faith in God. Good. Truly, I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, go throw yourself into the sea, and does not doubt in their heart, but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them.

Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. Jesus would model his teaching when he was nailed on the cross. Through horrific pain, he would pray, " Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." So, having been shown mercy, we express it to others.

We forgive those who sin against us. We forgive as we have been forgiven. That's another way we prove ourselves faithful to God. Now, Matthew 23 is the longest recorded teaching of Jesus for Tuesday. You may want to pause and read the entire chapter here.

I'll read a few excerpts, starting with verse 1. Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses seat. So, you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Everything they do is done for men to see. See the difference? When we come into God's kingdom, we live to please him. And that's the principle. From these woes.

Those who know God live to please Him. That's another way we prove ourselves faithful to Him. It's how we know these religious men do not belong to God. Verse 5. They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long.

They love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues. Do you see the vanity and vying for position? They love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them Rabbi, the ego. Again, Jesus teaches what he's already exemplified. Verse 11.

The greatest among you will be your servant. The chapter continues with more woes, but lest anyone miss Jesus' heart of love and compassion, he concludes with these words in verse 37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you. How often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you are not willing.

Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And with that, Jesus would head back to Bethany. But he has more to teach his disciples. He wants them to understand that he knows the future.

Continuing into chapter 24, verse 12. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. But he who stands firm to the end will be saved. Another way we demonstrate ourselves faithful to God. Verse 14.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached to the whole world as a testimony to all nations. And then the end will come. Those of us in the kingdom have been entrusted with a message and empowered by the Spirit to enthusiastically proclaim the good news of Jesus. May we be faithful to do so. And we joyfully persevere, knowing that at any moment our Lord could return.

Verse 27. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Sundown comes. Tuesday concludes, and today's exhortation is.

Have faith in God. Say that with me again. Have faith in God because he is faithful. Faithful is his name. He's trustworthy.

He's worthy of being trusted. So today, trust him for all things. Have faith in God. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for being a faithful, reliable Savior.

Forgive us when we doubt and distrust today. Remind us, empower us to trust you completely for everything. In everything.

Now you continue. God bless.