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Two-Week
Family Easter
Devotional



Mission Accomplished

SCOTT JAMES

Illustrated by A.E. MACHA

“*Mission Accomplished* by Scott James is a valuable resource for families. You and your children will be engaged by this devotional that shows the beautiful meaning of the Easter season. With activities, songs, discussion questions, and guided prayer times, James helps focus our hearts to appreciate all that Christ did for us in his death and resurrection.”

JESSICA THOMPSON, Author *Exploring Grace Together*;
frequent conference speaker

“Our hearts are often like a car out of alignment; when we take our hands off the wheel, it begins to swerve to the right or left. *Mission Accomplished* is a resource for the family to keep the affections of our heart aligned on the beauty of Christ leading up to Easter and far beyond. Theologically rich and incredibly practical, this is a fantastic resource for all families!”

JASON GASTON, Family Ministries Pastor, The Summit Church

“The approach of Easter gives families a distinctive opportunity to focus their devotional time on the purpose and implications of Jesus’s atoning work. Scott James provides families with a concise and engaging two-week focus on the mission Jesus accomplished and the mission he is now calling us to for spreading the good news to the nations.”

STEVE WATTERS, Editor of Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood’s family channel; coauthor with Candice Watters of *Start Your Family: Inspiration for Having Babies*

“When it comes to leading spiritually in the home, the barrier for most parents is not a lack of desire, but a lack of equipping. That’s why I’m thankful for *Mission Accomplished* by Scott H. James. In addition to helping parents teach their children about the resurrection of Christ and its implications for us, this devotional also gives parents on-the-job training on leading their families.”

JOHN MURCHISON, Director of Children’s Ministry, The Austin Stone Community Church

“*Mission Accomplished* is a fresh and inspiring presentation of the most Important Story featuring the Most Important Person who accomplished the most Important Rescue Mission on earth—the conquest of sin and death. Written in fourteen brief and creative segments, Scott offers families a meaningful and easy-to-use volume to consider and celebrate the Risen King together.”

JOHN TICE, Children’s Minister at The Church at Brook Hills; founder and president of Impress Kids

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Introduction

Nearly two thousand years ago, a wooden cross and an empty tomb served as the setting for the greatest rescue mission in history. Of course, this mission is none other than the gospel of Jesus Christ—the good news of a loving Father going to great lengths to save his broken children. The sad truth is that because we turned away from God and went our own way (Isaiah 53:6), each and every one of us has shattered our relationship with him. But the good news is that because of his compassion and mercy, God sent his very own Son on a mission of rescuing love to win us back. Every year at Easter, with a joyful shout of “Christ is risen!” we declare again the climax of this great story—Jesus has conquered sin and death! Although Easter Sunday comes only once a year, these truths should shape our lives every day.

The goal of these devotions is to help you lead your family in reflecting on Jesus’s last days on earth and

understanding the good news of his death, resurrection, and ascension. Starting on Palm Sunday, you'll spend two weeks walking with Jesus as he accomplished the mission his Father had given him. You will follow Jesus during the final days before his death, mourn with his followers as he is laid in the grave, and watch their fear give way to joy as they encounter the risen Lord. Then, you will see how God calls these same men and women on a Spirit-filled mission to spread the good news to the nations. Finally, you will consider together how God calls us to continue spreading the news of his gospel, promising us that his presence and power will fuel us as we go.

By going through the Easter story day-by-day, you and your children will be able to see how Jesus's death and resurrection are not far-off events that have no meaning for us, but are the basis for our daily life of faith and our confidence that our sins are forgiven and eternal life is ours. Just like adults, children struggle with guilt over the things they have done wrong, fears about death and judgment, and questions about their purpose in life. So as you read these devotions together, take the time to remind your children of the good news that their sins are forgiven, their future is assured, and they too have been given a mission from God to share the gospel with others.

How to Use This Book

For the week starting with Palm Sunday, you can use your Bible and these fourteen devotions as a framework for your family worship. Each devotion includes a Bible passage to

read together, notes to help you discuss the passage with your child (“Think about It”), questions and answers to guide your discussion (“Talk about It”), and suggestions for a short time of prayer. Each devotional time could take anywhere from ten to twenty minutes.

Gathering together each day for a worship time will help communicate to your family that God is worth your time and attention. Family worship looks different in different households, so don’t worry about whether or not you’re doing it correctly. Simply focus on engaging your children with great and praiseworthy truths from God’s Word. As an example, in my home we gather together at bedtime, sing a few hymns or praise songs, read and discuss a Bible passage, pray, and then close by singing the Doxology and reciting the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). To keep it fresh, we incorporate a variety of other elements from time to time, including Scripture memorization, catechism questions, and a missionary prayer board. However you choose to do it, just keep it simple and engaging. This book is designed to help you read, understand, discuss, and pray through God’s Word, so it should fit easily with a broad range of family worship formats. We’ve also included the lyrics to familiar hymns that you can sing together. In addition to the devotional material, we’ve provided activities that your family may enjoy doing together along the way.



WEEK ONE



Walking with
Jesus to the Cross

Do you remember everything you did last week? What did you have for lunch last Tuesday? What day was it that you started that new unit in math class? It's hard to remember everything that happened, right? Well, in these first seven devotions we will walk day by day with Jesus during the week leading up to a very important day. But how can we remember what he did two thousand years ago if we have trouble even remembering what we did last week? Thankfully, it's no mystery because Jesus's followers wrote it all down for us. So let's take a look at this important week in Jesus's life.



DAY 1

The King Has Come!

It's Palm Sunday and the King has come, just as God promised he would. Read about it in Luke 19:28-40.

Think about It

Jesus had a mission. As Passover week began, Jesus was heading into Jerusalem to do a very specific job—a job only he could do. Jesus's mission was to glorify God by rescuing his people from sin and bringing them back into God's family. Long ago, God created the very first man and woman, Adam and Eve, to be perfect—to love God and love each other. Sadly they decided to disobey God and do what they wanted instead of what God said would be best (Genesis 3). That's what the Bible calls sin. All the sad and bad things in the world started right then and there. Ever since, people have been running far away from God's loving care, thinking they

would be happier doing things their own way. But they soon found out that life apart from God is not best. Disobeying God, they became lost and couldn't find their way back to him. Jesus came to give his life so that his lost people could be saved from sin and death and become God's children.

Jesus's mission wasn't a secret mission. God had been telling his people from the very beginning that a Rescuer would come (Genesis 3:15). Sure enough, Jesus came exactly as God promised he would, telling everyone that God was making a way for people to be reunited with him. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem to finish the most important part of the rescue plan, many recognized him as the saving King sent from God. They praised him and gave him a royal welcome. Some people didn't like that Jesus was being worshiped in this way. Jesus, however, told them that he deserves praise; in fact, if the people didn't praise him, the rocks themselves would cry out and give him glory!

Talk about It

- Do you remember what happened in Israel's history that is celebrated at Passover (see Exodus 12)? Do you think it means anything that Jesus rode into Jerusalem as Passover week was starting? (*The Passover was when a spotless lamb died in place of Israel's firstborn sons. During this Passover celebration, Jesus, the Lamb of God, was coming to die in the place of sinful people. Just as God had rescued his people out of slavery in Egypt, he would now act to save them—to save us—from a different kind of slavery—slavery to sin.*)

- Why was Jesus the only one qualified to carry out this rescue mission? *(The mission needed a perfectly sinless person to die as a punishment for other people's sin. Only God could live a perfectly holy life, but only a man could suffer and die a physical death. Jesus was uniquely qualified because he is fully God and fully man [Philippians 2:5-8].)*
- Can you think of a time when you did something that showed how much you need to be rescued by Jesus too? *(Share with your child how Jesus rescued you. Encourage them to consider how they need to be rescued too.)*

Pray about It

Thank God for keeping his promise to send a Rescuer.

Sing about It

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Words by Joachim Neander

VERSE 1

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near,
Join me in glad adoration.

VERSE 2

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
Shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what he ordaineth?

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

VERSE 3

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee!
Surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew what the Almighty will do,
If with his love he befriend thee.

VERSE 4

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again;
Gladly fore'er we adore him.