

Leader Guide

Easter

Spring 2025 | Week 3

Message Date 4/20/2025

THE GOAL

Happy Easter! He is risen! I love Easter. This is probably one of my favorite holidays because it causes me to reflect on the love of God. It makes me think about the implications of what His resurrection means for my future, for my friends and for my family. I always feel so encouraged and blessed *after* Easter, too. That's one of the things that Craig talked about this past Sunday—the concept of “if this, then that.” It's one of the ideas we're going to explore and unpack this week. The goal this week will be to look at different things the resurrection means and how the resurrection impacts our lives.

MY STORY

- 1) What is your favorite Easter tradition?
- 2) If your personality could be summed up by a type of weather, what would it be and why?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

This week we will be unpacking the concept of “because of this, then that” within the context of the resurrection. We will explore some different implications of what the resurrection means and how it applies to our lives.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus:

Romans 1:3–5 (NLT)

³*The Good News is about his Son. In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line,*

⁴*and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord.*

⁵Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority as apostles to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name.

4) What is the implication from this passage about the resurrection?

The implication is that Jesus is the Son of God; that's the first thing. Jesus' death and resurrection are direct fulfillments of a prophecy He made about Himself and also other prophecies found in the Old Testament about what the Messiah would do. If you're interested in more, read Isaiah Chapter 53:1-17.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus:

1 Corinthians 15:13–19 (NLT)

¹³For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either.

¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.

¹⁵And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead.

¹⁶And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised.

¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.

¹⁸In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost!

¹⁹And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

5) What does this verse say about Jesus' resurrection, and what does that mean for us?

It disputes the claim that there is no resurrection from the dead. This is something that was going around in the Corinthian church. It makes the claim that without the resurrection of Jesus, we are still dead in our sins and have no hope. The implication is simply that we have hope because He *did* rise from the dead, and that we will rise like Him and have bodies like Him. I love this passage—it's one of my favorites.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus:

John 15:13–14 (NLT)

¹³There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command.

6) These are Jesus' words from the book of John Chapter 15. How is this the ultimate expression of love? What does it mean about His death and resurrection? Is that He loves me all I need to know?

Jesus laid down His life for those who didn't deserve it. You and I don't deserve forgiveness or mercy. What we deserve is consequences for our sin. But Jesus stepped in front of that for us. That's why He died to pay our penalty. It's an amazing act of love. The implication is that it's the greatest act in all of history to prove the love of God to people. It's still fulfilling God's holiness and requirements, and more importantly, it

satisfies them completely so that when God looks at you and I He only sees the innocence of Jesus. This is amazing love. I don't need to feel warm and fuzzy. Don't get me wrong—that's nice—but the cross is the ultimate evidence that God loves me.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus:

Colossians 3:1–4 (NLT)

¹*Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand.*

²*Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.*

³*For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.*

⁴*And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.*

7) What's the implication, and what should we do with it?

The implication is that we have already been raised with Christ. We are seated with Him even though we are here on earth. We should "set our sights" on heaven. The idea of setting our sights isn't just thinking about it. It's like looking through a scope of a rifle; it becomes a single point a vision that we're looking at. It's not the broad horizon around us; it becomes the focus of our attention. I know we can't do this all the time because it's not realistic. But we can challenge ourselves to think more about the realities of heaven because it's more real than the world we live in now. And one day, we will sit with Jesus and share His glory.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus:

Acts 1:6–8 (NLT)

⁶*So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"*

⁷*He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.*

⁸*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

8) In this passage Jesus is about to ascend back into heaven. He's already been resurrected. What is His promise, and what is the result?

The promise is that we will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon us. We know this happens when we first meet and surrender our lives to Jesus. This is when we are given the Holy Spirit and sealed by Him. It means that we will be His witnesses. We will talk about Him all over the world to friends, family, people we know, and acquaintances. This is what it means to bear fruit—to pass your faith in Jesus on to others.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus:

Romans 6:7–13 (NLT)

⁷For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.

⁸And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him.

⁹We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him.

¹⁰When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God.

¹¹So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.

¹²Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires.

¹³Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.

9) What else does the gift of the Holy Spirit mean in our lives?

It means that we can be free from sin—not just in heaven, but here on earth. The power of the Holy Spirit empowers us to live a different life. We need to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. This goes back to the last question with regard to keeping our eyes focused on Jesus and on heavenly things.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus. Read John Chapter 20.

- 1) What observations do you have from this passage?
- 2) What are the implications of the observations?
- 3) Is there anything that Jesus wants you to start or stop doing because of these things?