



Monday: They Just Went Back Home

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: John 20:1-10

¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" ³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

UNDERSTAND: *What is the main idea of this passage?*

The disciples followed Jesus for three years. During that time, Jesus repeatedly told them that He would be crucified and resurrected on the third day. But they missed it. They didn't really understand what Jesus meant. They didn't want to believe that the Son of God would be killed. They wanted Jesus to conquer the world and restore peace to Israel. This is why Jesus had to repeatedly tell them what was going to happen. But even though they were told, they did not understand. So after seeing the empty tomb, they just went back home. **You can know the story of the Gospel and still do nothing with it.**

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Maybe you have heard the Gospel numerous times throughout your life. But, like the disciples, you struggled to understand what it means for you. Here's the good news. There is an appointed time when our eyes are opened and we fully submit our lives to Christ. At that point, everything begins to change.

Is there anything about the Gospel that you don't fully understand?

What are you doing with what you do know? - Read James 1:19-27

PRAY: Ask God to help you understand and live out the Gospel.

Easter

SUNDAY

Tuesday: Jesus Reveals Himself

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: John 20:11-18

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). ¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

UNDERSTAND: *What is the main idea of this passage?*

Why didn't Mary and the other disciples recognize Jesus? There are a couple options. Jesus' resurrected body could have looked different. Or Jesus was not allowing them to be able to recognize Him as we see in Luke 24 (specifically verses 31, 45). Once Jesus revealed Himself their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. In Mary's case, once Jesus called her by name she understood that He has risen from the dead.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

For those of us who believe, there was a point in our lives in which Christ revealed Himself to us. Even though we may have known the Gospel all along, at some point our eyes are opened and we believe. And like Mary, our response is to tell everyone about it!

When did Christ reveal Himself to you? What was the experience like?

Who in your life needs to hear about your experience?

PRAY: Ask God to give you the courage to tell others about the Gospel.



Wednesday: Hiding in Fear

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: John 20:19-23

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

UNDERSTAND: *What is the main idea of this passage?*

Imagine this for a moment. Your leader and your friends are the most popular group in town. Your leader gets arrested, executed, and buried. Three days later his body is missing and your group is probably being blamed for stealing the body. Do you think you would be afraid? Sure you would! But if your leader comes back from the dead and walks into your hiding spot, that certainly would change your fear to joy.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Immediately after appearing to a group of fearful disciples, Jesus gives them a job to do. He tells them that He is sending them out into the world the same way that God the Father had sent Him. The disciples were given a new purpose for their lives. And history tells us that they went all over the known world spreading the Gospel.

What do you think is your purpose?

How is your everyday life fulfilling or not fulfilling that purpose?

PRAY: Ask God to give you the courage to live out His purpose for you.

Easter

SUNDAY

Thursday: Doubting Thomas

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: John 20:24-29

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

UNDERSTAND: *What is the main idea of this passage?*

Like all the other disciples, Thomas doubted the resurrection. We can't single him out as the only skeptic. It was only when Jesus revealed Himself did they believe. The same is true for us today. We don't believe until Christ reveals Himself to us. Notice that when Thomas sees Jesus and believes, he calls Jesus "My Lord and my God!" True faith leads us to submit to Christ as Lord and not just as Savior.

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Everyone likes to pick on doubting Thomas. But if we were honest with ourselves we would have to admit that we are just like him. There was a time, a maybe still times, when we doubted. What you may not know is that before Thomas doubted he was confident and brave. Take a moment to read John 11:1-16. At one time, Thomas was ready to die with Jesus. In that sense, maybe Thomas was more committed than we originally thought.

What doubts have you been struggling with lately?

Is Jesus really your Lord, or just your Savior?

Is it even possible to separate those two titles?

PRAY: Ask God to help you with your doubts through studying His Word.



Friday: Life In His Name

PRAY: Ask God to speak to you from His Word.

READ: John 20:30-31

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by **believing** you may have **life** in his name.

UNDERSTAND: *What is the main idea of this passage?*

It's interesting to know that there is much more that Jesus did than we're told. John also tells us that "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (John 21:25). John tells us that he wrote his gospel so we would believe that Jesus is the Messiah. And when we believe, we will find life in His name.

- **Believing** (Greek: *pisteuō*): to entrust, to commit one's trust to something
- **Life** (Greek: *zōē*): absolute fullness proven by real and genuine devotion

APPLY: *What is this passage calling me to do?*

Based on the Greek words for "believing" and "life" we find a deeper understanding of what it means to have life in Christ. If we entrust ourselves to Christ we find absolute fullness in Him that leads to real and genuine devotion to Him. If that is not what we are experiencing, then have not truly believed in Christ.

Do you experience absolute fullness in your life?

Do you have a real and genuine devotion to Christ?

PRAY: Ask God to help you trust in Him and to continue to trust in Him.

EPHESIANS DAILY DEVOTION

WEEK FOUR EPH. 2:11-22

Saturday: Prepare for Sunday

REVIEW: Take a few minutes to make a list of what you've learned this week.

PRAY: Ask God to use this time to help you get familiar with Sunday's scripture passage.

READ: Ephesians 3:1-13

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles ² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. ⁷ I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. ¹³ I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

THINK: *Go ahead and underline key words and phrases.*

Start thinking about what this passage is saying.

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What do you think is the main idea?
- What parts are confusing or hard to understand?
- How might this passage help you to follow Jesus better?

PRAY: Ask God to prepare you for tomorrow's worship service.