



WEEKLY STUDY

Easter

Christ is Risen! We celebrated Easter this weekend at Providence (well, so did the whole world!). Jesus' heart began to beat again and the possibility for us to come back to life—to live forever with him—became real. Death and sin have been defeated! And if you've heard those words before, read them again with full awareness of what is going on in the world today. Death and sin have been defeated! Do not despair. We will rise up in the end.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

*Christ is Risen!
Thank you, God, for this gift beyond measure.
We don't deserve your grace.
But you have seen us in the dark places of our lives and have
reached down with your Son to lift us up.
Alleluia! I believe!
Amen.*

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: JOHN 20.1-10

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.

- Read the passage again. The pace of the story seems frantic. There is running in both directions, to and from the tomb. A race (if it really was meant to be a race) was won by John, but Peter went into the tomb first. Then it says John followed Peter into the tomb...and believed. He believed yet did not understand. Does that define you at any stage in your life of faith? Believe, yet don't understand? There's room for that, God can work with that!
- *God, this story in the middle of the Christian faith is at once awe-inspiring and yet too much for me to comprehend. Thank you for loving me beyond my understanding.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 20.11-18

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb¹² 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.

- Can you relate to Mary's raw emotion at the tomb? She must be exhausted in every way. Her heart is up and down with grief and hope. She has run back and forth to the tomb. Her tears are caused by a mix of feelings. But the angels of God steer her towards the risen Jesus. "Why are you crying?" seems like a silly question from a grieving friend. But it makes perfect sense if your friend (Savior, Messiah, King, Lord) is alive and present with you.
- *God, break me out of my season of tears and let me see Jesus. I will proclaim, "I have seen the Lord!"*

WEDNESDAY: ROMANS 6.3-4

...don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

- Paul writes to early believers that our baptism means that we participate in the death and burial of Jesus. It is a powerful symbol of the invitation Christ gives to lay down our own lives so that we might have new life in him.
- *Jesus, your death and resurrection point the way to new life for me. May my new life point others to you.*

THURSDAY: ROMANS 6.5-7

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

- What does it mean to have a resurrection like his? Paul is not just using a metaphor. Yes, we can experience new life now—we can be changed and our lives can have kingdom-focused purpose. But we can also have resurrection life beyond death. Our ultimate hope for heaven is in a resurrection *like his*!
- *God, I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.*

FRIDAY: ACTS 4.33

With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all...

- The early church in Acts set the tone for the primary aim of the church that still exists today—to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus—that is our work. How does your life testify to the resurrection? How does the church demonstrate the grace and power of God?
- *Lord Jesus, your church is alive because you are alive and have sent your Spirit. Strengthen and empower us to testify to your resurrection.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 118.15-17

Shouts of joy and victory

resound in the tents of the righteous:

"The LORD's right hand has done mighty things!

¹⁶ *The LORD's right hand is lifted high;
the LORD's right hand has done mighty things!"*

¹⁷ *I will not die but live,
and will proclaim what the LORD has done.*

- The Psalmist wrote these words long before the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, yet we can relate to these words as Easter people. The Lord has done great and mighty things for us! And he can do it again. The reason we have been given the gift of life beyond death is so that we can proclaim with shouts of joy and victory about the great works of God in Jesus Christ.
- *Jesus, may all of my shouts today be shouts of victory that bring you glory.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In the Easter message, Pastor Jacob said,

“We are not saved by studying up and getting all the answers right. We are not saved by living a good life. We are not saved by a strong record of church attendance. We are saved by Jesus’ work on the cross and his resurrection to life. And if you believe, you will live.”

- Why do these words sound so counter-cultural? Where might we hear the message that working hard is our path to salvation?
- What words would you use to share this good news with another person? How do you describe what Jesus did for us on the cross and through the empty tomb?