

EASTER

J. D. GREEAR

Session 1: Betrayed by Me

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Jesus’s primary mission was to forgive us and invite us all to follow him.

Head Change: To know Jesus is worth following, even when it costs us.

Heart Change: To feel the love of Jesus for us, even after we betray him.

Life Change: To seek to know Jesus above the things we ask from him.

OPEN

What is the most unexpected gift you have ever received? What was your response when you opened it?

When Jesus calls us to follow him, we often have expectations of what our life with Jesus will look like. We may expect him to give us comfort, prosperity, and a life of ease. But what if he asks us to follow him into difficulty? That may not be what we expected and can lead us to a point where we ask ourselves, “Is it really worth it to follow Jesus?” Today, pastor J.D. Greear from The Summit Church will show us a person who realized he was unwilling to follow Jesus down unexpected paths.

REVIEW

Many of us have a false image of Judas. We think of him as a sinister character, sneaking around the disciples and plotting Jesus's downfall. But, as J.D. showed us, Judas was a very respected disciple. **In what ways does the truth about Judas change the way you think of him?**

Judas was a committed follower of Jesus who got frustrated and fed up with Jesus's actions. Read Matthew 26:6–16. J.D. said when Jesus failed to meet Judas's expectations, Judas started to question whether it was worth following Jesus at all. **What, if anything, makes you frustrated with Jesus?**

When we get frustrated with Jesus it is because we, like Judas, misunderstand Jesus. J.D. noted that Judas believed the primary mission of Jesus was to make his life better and to punish those who wronged him. But Jesus's primary mission was to take our place, dying for our sin so that we might be forgiven. **Is there anything in your life you think Jesus is not paying enough attention to? Are there any ways you think he is holding out or not coming through for you as he should?**

What sorts of blessings do you expect Jesus to give you? What changes do you expect him to make in your life?

J.D. mentioned that, in essence, Judas made a deal with Jesus: if you get rid of the Romans, I will follow you. Many of us have similar deals with God: I'll go to church, pay my tithes, and read the Bible as long as Jesus gives me what I expect from him. **Do you, like Judas, have a price? Is there anything Jesus can do or take from you that would cause you to stop following him?**

J.D. said, "Jesus's value to you is shown by what you do when following him is not convenient. The value you place on something is shown by what you'll give up for it." **What would you do if Jesus asked you to give up what you want most? What would you do if he asked you to follow him where you do not want to go?**

For some of us, Jesus is asking us to give up something so that we can follow him. **What might you need to give up in order to follow Jesus? What could make it difficult for you to give those things to Jesus?**

Judas realized Jesus was not going to give him what he really wanted, and verse 26 tells that “from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.” Jesus was just a means to an end for Judas. **What is the difference between seeing Jesus as useful to your goals and serving Jesus because he is God? In what ways could each of these perspectives cause you to live?**

Judas was given a devastating verdict. Jesus said in Matthew 26:24, “It would be better for him if he had not been born.” The good news is Jesus’s words do not have to be your verdict. Jesus offers us forgiveness and an opportunity to follow him. **What, if anything, keeps you from surrendering to God’s plan for your life?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

During this session, we have seen that we are much more like Judas than we may have realized. But we do not have to be like Judas; we can be like Peter. Peter also betrayed Jesus, but his story ended very differently than Judas's.

Peter had claimed that his love for Jesus was stronger than that of all the other disciples in Matthew 26:33, but he was the one who rejected Jesus three times. For those of us who follow Jesus, we can loudly claim to love Jesus on Sunday and be swayed by our half-love of sin before we are out of the church parking lot. **What in your life competes with Jesus for your love?**

Read John 21:1–22.

Peter and a few other disciples had returned home to the Sea of Galilee and taken up fishing, their old trade. In essence, they were right where Jesus first found them. They were in no way expecting Jesus to return. To them, following Jesus was a thing of the past. But, in verses 4–8, he came to them. **What do you think made Peter and the other disciples give up on Jesus? In what ways can you relate to their situation?**

In verses 9–14, Jesus sat with his disciples to eat breakfast. It was peaceful, welcoming, and there was no hint of resentment from Jesus towards the men who had turned their backs on him. **How do you normally approach Jesus after you have sinned or turned your back on him? What do you think Jesus thinks of you in those moments?**

Notice the way Jesus treated Peter, his betrayer, in verses 15–19. In response to his three betrayals, Jesus asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?” For every betrayal, Jesus offered Peter a chance of recommitment. **What hope does it give you knowing that Jesus's capacity for forgiveness never runs out?**

What should your response be to Jesus after you sin? In what ways does Peter's example change the way you think about Jesus's forgiveness?

After Peter's recommitment, Jesus told Peter what his future would look like and commanded him to follow him. Peter immediately looked at John and asked about his

future. He wanted to compare his seemingly dire future with those around him. **In what ways do you compare your walk with Jesus to those around you? In what ways are you tempted to think God treats other people better than you?**

Jesus loves us all the same, showing no favoritism. But he does call us into very different circumstances. In verse 22, read Jesus's response to Peter comparing himself to John. **How would you summarize Jesus's response? What can you do to replay this response in your heart and mind when you are tempted to compare your difficulties to the blessings of other Christians?**

J.D. pointed out that both Peter and Judas gave up on Jesus. Peter humbled himself and accepted Christ's salvation. Judas could never bring himself to that point of humility. It can be difficult to give up control of our lives, to admit we are sinners in need of a savior. But the point of the Easter story is that we have a God willing to die for us so that we can be forgiven. **What would it look like for you to give up the things in your life that keep you from submitting to Jesus?**

LAST WORD

We are far more like Judas than we could have imagined. At the same time, we are far more loved by Jesus than we could ever dream. Despite our sin, betrayal, misunderstandings, and false expectations, Jesus loves us and offers us forgiveness.

Though we are like Judas, we don't have to share his fate. We can be like Peter instead and rush into his open arms. Which will you choose?

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read John 21:1–22 and Matthew 27:3–10. Contrast the responses of Judas and Peter to Jesus after their betrayals. In what ways can you follow Peter and avoid Judas’s example?

Pray: Pray for the nearness of Jesus when you are disappointed where he leads you. Pray for peace in difficult circumstances. Pray that he would be enough for you when the world tells you that you need more in order to be happy.

Memorize: Memorize Romans 5:8, “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Session 2: Forsaken for Me

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Jesus was forsaken in our place so that we could be at peace with God.

Head Change: To know Jesus will never turn his back on us.

Heart Change: To feel assured about and at peace in our eternal relationship with Jesus.

Life Change: To trust in and patiently wait for Jesus, even when it seems like we are alone.

OPEN

What helps you feel comfortable around your closest friends? What about your relationship with them lets you know that there are there for you?

There are some friends we know will always be there for us. No matter what happens, all we need to do is reach out, and they will come to help us. We have a friend like that in Jesus. But there are times in our lives where he may feel distant from us. What do we do when it feels like he isn't listening to our prayers?

In today's session, we will see that Jesus was forsaken so that we could be brought near to God. Because of what Jesus endured for us, we will never be far away from God.

REVIEW

J.D. took a deeper look at Matthew 26:36–44 in the video. Read this passage—out loud if you are with a group—to familiarize yourself with the story of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus is afraid, alone, and anxious. But, as J.D. taught us, he chose to be separated from God so that we would never have to be. As a result, we see Jesus experiencing what many of us go through when we endure difficult times. **When was a time you felt afraid, alone, and anxious? Where did you turn for hope during that time?**

J.D. quoted what a pastor once shared about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: Jesus’s darkest hour is our darkest hour. There may be times in our lives when it feels like God is far away or not listening to our prayers. **Have there been times in your own life where you felt like God wasn’t listening to you? If so, what made you think he was not listening to your prayers?**

Jesus chose to be forsaken by God so that we would never have to be. Jesus did not turn away from us in his darkest hour. Therefore, we can be sure that he will not turn away from us in our darkest times. **Even if God feels distant from you, what could you do to live in faith that he is listening and able to help you?**

When we feel like God is not listening to us, we may feel tempted to give up on waiting for God’s help. We may feel like Peter, who chose to draw his sword and fight when Jesus wouldn’t. **When are you tempted to give up on God’s timing? What may make it difficult for you to wait on God when you feel anxious and afraid?**

Those who follow Jesus will never have to know the full anguish that he felt in the Garden of Gethsemane. We will have difficult chapters in life, but we can rest assured that God has not abandoned us in life or into eternity. **What would it look like for you to rest in the assurance of your faith in Jesus over your present circumstances? Over what your feelings may be telling you about Jesus?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Psalm 22 is a prophetic Messianic psalm written by King David. Even though it was written hundreds of years before Jesus was born, it foreshadows and foresees specific circumstances around Jesus’s crucifixion. In fact, Jesus quotes Psalm 22 while on the cross—see Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34.

So, how can this psalm help us? When we read Psalm 22, we find unique insight into the faith of David amid his pain, and, as a result, we can learn how to trust God when all hope seems to be lost.

Read Psalm 22.

In Jesus’s day, the psalms did not have names or even numbers. Most psalms were known by their first line. When Jesus cried out “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” he drew attention to Psalm 22. It is as if he was saying, “This is what is happening right now.” As you read through the psalm, notice all the places the psalm reflects Jesus’s final days. **What stands out to you in this psalm? What can we learn about Jesus’s experience on the cross from reading this psalm?**

There are many places in Psalm 22 that read as if it was written by Jesus while on the cross. Most notably, he was forsaken (v. 1; Matthew 27:46), he was insulted and mocked (v. 6–7; Matthew 27:28–29), his physical anguish is described in detail (v. 14–17), and his executioners rolled dice for his clothing (v. 18; John 19:24). **While you will never be in his exact same situation, in what ways have you felt like Jesus—abandoned, surrounded by enemies, and struggling to find hope?**

The first eighteen verses of Psalm 22 give us a bleak picture, but everything changes in verse 19. Look at verses 19–25. **Where is David finding strength and hope in the middle of his crisis? What does he promise to do after God rescues him in verse 22?**

Verses 22–24 show us that remembrance leads to worship. When we think of all the ways God has noticed and helped us in the past, we become humble, thankful, marveling at God’s provision. **In what ways has God noticed you and come through for you when you needed him most?**

Remembering God’s intervention and help in the past can help us face the future with courage. **What can your past teach you about God’s faithfulness to you?**

Verses 26–31 invite us to participate in worshipful celebration after God answers our prayers. David encourages us to feast, to praise God, and he invites all the nations of the earth to worship the Lord. **In what ways do you typically celebrate when God answers your prayers? What would it look like for you to have a Psalm 22 celebration when God delivers you from trouble?**

As Christians, we are the ones telling “future generations” about what God has accomplished. Our experiences with God’s faithfulness are a living testament to his goodness. **In what ways could you use your experiences with God’s faithfulness to share God’s goodness with those around you?**

Even though he was forsaken, Jesus never turned his back on God. Even in his last cry, he was professing his trust in the Father. **What can you do to practice that kind of radical faith even when you feel lost and hopeless?**

LAST WORD

Jesus was forsaken so that we could be accepted by God. Jesus took our place so that we would never have to feel the punishment for our sin. That is good news! It is a free gift, but a gift that we must choose to accept.

If you know Jesus, if you have accepted him as your savior, you can rest in the assurance that no matter where you go, no matter what happens, no matter how dark life gets, God will never forsake you. In short, there will always be hope.

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read Matthew 26:30–56. Notice what Jesus went through so that he could take your place. Jesus was forsaken so that you would never have to be alone and he will never turn his back on you.

Pray: Pray that you will trust more deeply in God when life is difficult. If you struggle to feel God’s nearness, ask him to make himself clearly known to you.

Memorize: Memorize Lamentations 3:21–24. “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The Lord’s loyal kindness never ceases; His compassions never end. They are fresh every morning; your faithfulness is abundant! ‘My portion is the Lord,’ I have said to myself, so I will hope in him.”

Session 3: Accused for Me

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Jesus was accused of our sin so that we could be found innocent.

Head Change: To know Jesus was accused in your place, taking the guilt of our sin onto himself.

Heart Change: To feel deeply loved by God who sent his son to stand trial in our place.

Life Change: To give up any pride or distractions keeping us from fully surrendering to Jesus.

OPEN

What is the most outrageous thing you have ever done to help a friend? Is there anything you would not do for him or her?

We do a lot of things to help our friends. We don't mind being inconvenienced, especially if it helps them. That's what friends are for! But would you ever go to jail for them? What if they committed a crime—would you go to jail in their place?

Jesus knew we were guilty of sin, and he still stepped into our place and took the penalty for our sin.

VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in J.D. Greear’s teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how J.D. answers the following questions.

Why was Jesus silent during his trial?

What are the three groups of people J.D. highlights in this session?

Watch Session 3: *Accused for Me* (12 minutes).

Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines for taking notes.

REVIEW

In today's session, we take a deeper look at Jesus's trial. Before we start the discussion, read Matthew 27:11–31 to familiarize yourself with the story.

To say this trial was unfair is an understatement. In the video, J.D. pointed out six ways the trial was not only unjust but also broke legal conventions. In many ways, Jesus's trial was illegal. But Jesus, who knew the Law inside and out, never spoke out against the injustice being done to him.

What is your reaction when someone wrongly accuses you of doing anything, big or small?

Most of us get defensive when someone tries to blame us for something. Imagine how you would react if you were on trial and your life hung in the balance. If we were in Jesus's place, we might have protested or pointed out the illegality and injustice of the trial. We would have denounced the Sanhedrin and put Pilate in his place.

Jesus was silent because he was taking our place, willingly being accused of crimes he never committed so that we might walk free.

In what ways do you feel that you are guilty or innocent of sin? Do you feel that Jesus needed to take your place? Why or why not?

Generally speaking, there are three ways we react to the previous questions. First, we may get defensive, trying to explain how we are good people with a resumé of good behavior. **What, if any, good behaviors or moral habits do you believe balance the scales in your favor?**

What, if anything, do you believe God owes you for your efforts?

The truth is there is nothing we can do to earn God's favor. Even if we were to add up all of our good works, they would fall short of holiness. All we deserve from God is judgment. Pride can blind us, like the Sanhedrin, to our sin and need for a savior.

The second reaction is indifference. Maybe you haven't thought about guilt, sin, Jesus, or religion much at all. We

Even though Christians are fully forgiven, we still sin and give in to temptation. As J.D. said in the video, sometimes the voices that condemn us of sin may be telling the truth. Our sins do not nullify Christ’s work for us, but we must confess and repent of our ongoing sins. But we don’t need to be afraid; we have been reconciled to an endlessly loving God who is eager to forgive us. Reread Romans 8:32–39. **In what ways does this passage give you confidence in your relationship with God despite your sin?**

What might it look like for you to confess and repent from sin moving forward, knowing that your relationship with God is unshakable?

LAST WORD

Jesus was not just accused for us; he was accused instead of us. He, the innocent, stepped into our place and took our guilt. It was unjust. It was unfair. It was scandalous. But he did it all for us. Jesus willingly stepped into our place so that we, the sinners, could be spared of guilt and God’s wrath.

More than that, God is not ashamed of us. He loved us so much that he willingly took our condemnation so that we could spend eternity with him. Don’t let your pride or the distractions of life keep you from that love.

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read Ephesians 2:1–10. Read it as many times as you need to internalize the truth of what Jesus has done for us.

Pray: Pray that you might rely on Jesus and his work when you feel guilt, shame, or pride wedging a divide between you and God.

Memorize: Memorize Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Session 4: Punished for Me

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Jesus carried our sins on the cross so that we could escape the penalty of sin and be forgiven by God.

Head Change: To know Jesus’s mission was to endure the penalty of sin in our place.

Heart Change: To feel seen and known by God, who endured suffering for our sake.

Life Change: To recognize Jesus as the Son of God and to trust in his work for our salvation.

OPEN

Have you ever had an experience of mistaken identity—thinking a stranger was a friend, assuming someone was waving at you when they were waving at the person behind you? What was that experience like?

We have all had that awkward moment where we mistake someone’s identity, confusing them for someone else. It is uncomfortable, to say the least, but something we can move past. You may even be able to laugh about that situation today.

But what if mistaking someone’s identity was more serious? What if God came to you, and you wrote him off as “just some guy”? That may sound extreme, but we do it to Jesus all the time. Today, as we examine Jesus’s crucifixion, try to answer this question: who do *you* say Jesus is?

REVIEW

In this session, we see how Jesus was punished for and instead of us. The crucifixion often causes a physical response in us. We recoil from the pain Jesus endured, the barbaric forms of abuse and torture the Romans devised, and the violence of the whole event. Instead of focusing on the specifics of execution, let's look at the ways people reacted to Jesus. When we do that, we will see ourselves in their reactions.

Read Matthew 27:27–56.

J.D. pointed out three specific groups of people around Jesus's crucifixion. The first group is called the angry—those who respond to Jesus like the two criminals who hung on crosses next to Jesus. **What makes you upset with God?**

J.D. said the criminals were upset with Jesus for not delivering them from their pain. We may be tempted to do the same when we are struggling. When we go through difficult circumstances, we often want God to rescue us immediately. If he does not, we may doubt his goodness or ability to save us. **When you are in pain or difficulty, in what ways does your view of God change? What can make you believe he is not listening to your prayers?**

While we may not understand the purpose of our pain, in Christ we see that God deeply cares about us and our salvation. He willingly endured extreme pain so that he might rescue us. J.D. said, "If God saved me from my greatest condemnation, he won't abandon me in my struggles." **If you are angry with God, is it possible that God has a greater purpose for your circumstances? What could it look like for you to trust him in your pain?**

The second group J.D. noted was made up of those who misunderstood Jesus: the religious leaders who mocked him and his mission. While you may not mock Jesus or laugh at those who follow him, if you think Jesus was just a good man or teacher or spiritual guide and not the savior and Son of God, you have misunderstood him and his mission. **Who do you think Jesus was? What do you think was his purpose? What evidence do you have for your position?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

In the Old Testament, God promised to send a Messiah, a savior, to his people. We know that person is Jesus, but those who lived before Jesus were eagerly looking for the Messiah. God described the Messiah through prophets so that God's people could look forward to God's coming Messiah. But these passages are not just for ancient Israelites. When we read passages about the Messiah, we are able to learn more about Jesus and his mission.

Read Isaiah 53.

This prophetic chapter of Isaiah describes the mission of the Messiah hundreds of years before Jesus was born.

What was the Messiah's mission, according to verses 11–12? What would he do for his people?

In what ways is the Messiah unusual? Is he what you would expect from a strong savior? Why or why not?

Everything done to the Messiah is negative: he is mocked, people hid their faces from him, he was despised, etc. God prophesied that his people would do *nothing* good for the Messiah. His suffering was completely undeserved. Even so, he offered his people forgiveness that they, in turn, did not deserve or earn. His sacrifice "made us well" and "healed" us. **What does this unfair exchange tell you about God's love for his people?**

We have the advantage of knowing who the Messiah is: Jesus Christ. In fact, the name Christ is the Greek word for "Messiah." Since we know Jesus, we can see him in this chapter of Isaiah: everything the Messiah does is for us and everything done to the Messiah is done by us. Look at everything the chapter says about "us." **In what ways are these statements true about you before you knew Jesus?**

This chapter makes it clear that salvation does not come from our own effort, but from the work of God's servant, Jesus. Many of us try to "be good enough for God." We think we can balance the scales of our sin or maybe even work off the debt our sin has incurred. **In what ways have you tried to work off your sin? Do you think your scales of good and bad are balanced?**

The truth is all of our good efforts to win over God don't prove our righteousness. Instead, they reveal a deeply held belief that we don't need Jesus or his work. We don't think of ourselves as the rebels of Isaiah 53. **What, if anything, keeps you from accepting that Jesus intervened on your behalf?**

Jonathan Edwards said it best, "You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary." Jesus, the Messiah, stepped into the middle of our mess, carried our sin to the cross, and was wounded so that we might be healed. Isaiah 53 is good news! **In what ways does this good news change the way you live?**

LAST WORD

Jesus went to the cross after an unjust trial for you. The wounds, the taunting, the suffering were endured in your place so that you would not have to experience God's wrath for sin. If you think God is not paying attention to you, look at Jesus who loved you so deeply that he stepped into your place and took your punishment.

Jesus completed his work, tearing the veil of sin that divided you from God. In him, God is reaching out to you, but if you only think Jesus was a "good man" you will miss the gift he is offering you today.

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read Isaiah 53 on your own. Spend time in each verse, noticing everything Jesus did for you, in your place.

Pray: If you know Jesus, pray that you might trust him in times of suffering. If you are angry or upset with him, if it feels like he is not listening to you, pour your heart out to him.

Memorize: Memorize 1 Peter 2:24, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

Session 5: Alive in Me

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: Jesus’s resurrection gives us purpose today and hope for tomorrow.

Head Change: To know the Great Commission and the purpose God has given us to share the hope of Jesus.

Heart Change: To feel confident in our hope and calling in Jesus.

Life Change: To reject the fear we have in addressing our doubts and sharing the hope we have in Jesus.

OPEN

What do you love most about Easter? What family traditions or events do you look forward to most?

Easter is full of celebration and joy. We find it in a basket full of gifts, the abundant new life of spring, or gathering with families at church on Easter Sunday. In all of these activities, we see the story and hope of Jesus. He has offered us gift upon gift in what he did for us. When we trust in him, we find an abundance of new life and hope. And, in all we do, we are called to worship and celebrate him.

At Christmas, we celebrate Jesus’s coming and look forward to his return. During Easter, we celebrate everything Jesus has done for us and look forward to the ways we can serve him here on earth.

REVIEW

Throughout this study, we have learned about what Jesus has done for us. In this final session, we learn about what Jesus is doing for us today. Jesus not only died in our place but is also alive in us. Because of this, we have security in our salvation, purpose today, and hope for tomorrow.

J.D. has challenged us to think about the ways we respond to Jesus. In each session, we had to wrestle with how we understand, how we relate to, and what we expect from Jesus. **In light of everything you have learned so far, who do you believe Jesus is?**

In what ways have you been challenged to change the way you think about and relate to Jesus in this study?

The resurrection should leave us in complete awe. It means that Jesus is exactly who he claimed to be. J.D. said, “The resurrection should be a cause of unbounded joy because it means the promises of Jesus are true. God really does love us!” **In what way does the resurrection—proof of God’s love for us—give you joy and hope for today?**

The resurrection is more than a simple happy ending; our entire faith rests on the fact that Jesus conquered death and rose from the grave. First Corinthians 15:17–19 says if the resurrection is not true, “[Christians] should be pitied more than anyone.” So, how can we *know* it happened? While J.D. offered us some compelling evidence of Jesus’s resurrection in the video, we may still have doubts about our faith. J.D. told us some of the doubts he wrestles with. **What questions do you have about Jesus’s resurrection?**

J.D. shared a few examples of evidence for Jesus’s resurrection, each pointing to the truth of Jesus being alive. **Which of these proofs is most influential to your understanding of the resurrection?**

Charles Spurgeon said, “Doubt is a foot poised to go forwards or backwards in faith.” We often think doubts can only drag us backward, away from God. As a result, we often do not voice our doubts and opt to wrestle with them in silence. But we should not be ashamed of our doubts. Even the disciples wrestled with doubt. You may

even find that people within your church community have wrestled with the same doubts and are willing to help you with your questions. **What could it look like to talk about and wrestle with your doubts alongside others?**

In what ways could you and your community seek answers for your doubts together?

J.D. talked about the way many people today are unwilling to accept the evidence of Jesus's resurrection because of its implications. People know that there is something special about Jesus but allow their doubts to keep them from their savior. He challenged us to "doubt our doubts."

What would be your reaction if you could not find a satisfactory answer to one of your questions? What might it look like to trust God in the midst of your doubt?

The resurrection is not only good news for those who know Jesus, but also good news for all people. **In what ways has the good news of Jesus's resurrection changed your life? In what ways is it still changing your life today?**

What could you do to share that good news this Easter?

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Before he ascended into heaven, Jesus gave his disciples a purpose, called the Great Commission. It is the way all of those who follow Jesus are called to live.

Read Matthew 28:18–20.

In what ways have you participated in the Great Commission?

What makes you nervous about evangelism and making disciples?

The first thing Jesus does in the Great Commission is remind us of his authority. If he is in charge of everything, then his mission for us is of supreme importance. He ends the commission with an assurance: he will be with us, no matter what. The King has given us a mission in his kingdom and will not abandon us. **In what ways does Jesus’s authority comfort any fear or anxiety you have when it comes to evangelism and discipleship?**

He then gives us the practical steps of our mission: make disciples, baptize in the Triune name of God, and teach them everything Jesus commanded. **In what practical ways can you teach the people around you (Christians and non-Christians) about Jesus and his commands?**

Sometimes in discipleship, we ask people to copy our pattern of living rather than focusing on Jesus and emulating him. **What could it look like for you to point people to Jesus through your pattern of living?**

In what ways could you teach others about what it means to follow Jesus?

Every follower of Jesus is called to make disciples for him. It is not something only mature Christians take part in, and it is a calling that we never retire from. **In what ways are you making disciples today? Who has God placed in your life that he could be asking you to disciple? How might you answer that calling?**

LAST WORD

Jesus's work did not end two thousand years ago. He took our place in his life, death, and resurrection and is alive in his church—his people—today. His work is still going on today, and he wants you to be a part of building his kingdom.

God is calling us to more than Sunday Christianity. He is calling us to help one another grow in faith, to tell people who do not know Jesus about the things he has done for us, and to follow him. Jesus's work for us is good news; let's share it with the world.

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read Matthew 28. Take note of the way people react to Jesus and think about the way you react to his resurrection.

Pray: First, pray about your doubts. Ask God for clarity, wisdom, and other believers to help you wrestle through those doubts. And second, pray that God would make you aware of the people and opportunities he has given you to fulfill the Great Commission.

Memorize: Memorize Matthew 28:18–20, “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”
