

**The Resurrection Is A Game Changer**  
**Next Steps Devotional Guide**  
**Sermon Series: Easter 2024**  
**Sunday, March 31, 2024**  
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This devotional guide is designed to be used either in a small group setting or as an individual devotional guide throughout the week. If you are using this as a personal devotional guide, divide the points below up so as to be able to work on a few each day to get you through the whole week.

1. Most people never consider what 2024 means. 2024 is a reference to the birth and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The birth and resurrection of Christ was such an historical event that it split history into two parts: BC and AD. Your birth is dated by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. What does this say to you?
2. Jesus Christ is the single most influencer ever in the history of the world. Millions of books and songs have been written about Him. Think about how much architecture, buildings and art are about Jesus. You do not see that with any other historical figure. Why do you think this is true?
3. The church started with 12 and grew to 120 and then to about 100,000 in Jerusalem at one church and now today — to 2.3 billion people. This means about 1 out of every 3 people in the world claim to be a Christian. The church is larger than Europe and China put together. The church is the largest organization in the world. The church and Christians are in more countries and the Gospel is spoken in more languages than at the United Nations. Explain this.
4. The earliest Christians were contagious. They went from 12 then to 2.3 billion today? Why? — The Gospel — which means “good news.” That good news appeals to people to say, “*I want Jesus.*” Why?
5. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a game changer. That is the good news. Why? First, the good news is I don’t have to live with guilt and shame any more. One of the main issues counselors say they have to help people with is guilt and shame due to regret, mistakes and sins. Read [Ephesians 1:7](#) in your sermon outline. What is this to you?
6. There is no way for us to understand the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual agony, torture and pain Jesus endured during His crucifixion. The Persians invented crucifixion but the Romans perfected it. It was designed to cause a slow death over days.
  - a. First, Jesus was exhausted. They had kept Him up all night going through six illegal trials. Then they scourged Him with a “Cat of Nine Tails” (39 long leather straps with bone, metal and glass in them designed to rip out flesh ones struck). That was a minimum of 351 strikes on Jesus’ body. Rome had learned that with more than 39 strikes most people died due to blood loss. Then they blindfolded Jesus and began to strike Him, spit on Him and pull out His beard, demanding He tell them which soldier was doing it. What kind of pain was this for Jesus and why?
  - b. When Rome crucified someone, they knew that suffocation would occur rather quickly. Rome wanted you to suffer. While hanging that long, the muscles in your chest develop atrophy and become paralyzed. You could breathe in but you could not breathe out. To breathe out, the crucified one had to push their body up with their feet that were nailed to the beam — thus causing horrendous pain and suffering. The one crucified did this over and over to breathe. They typically lasted for days before they died. On the cross in all of that pain Jesus wasn’t thinking of Himself, He was thinking of you, your guilt and shame. What does this mean to you that Jesus was thinking of you on the cross and why?
  - c. The first words Jesus say from the cross are found in [Luke 23:34](#). Read this in your sermon outline. Scripture is clear that the first one to put Jesus on the cross was God. Jesus said He came to die for us. Jesus didn’t come to be a great teacher, but a Savior. Read [Isaiah 53:6-10](#) in your sermon outline. This was written 700 years before Jesus. Notice the specificity of this passage and how it matches what happened to Jesus. It is one of the nearly 300 prophecies in the Old Testament about Jesus. What are the odds of this being fulfilled completely to the detail in Jesus’ crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection?
  - d. The second answer has to who put Jesus on the cross is you and I did. Read [Romans 4:25](#) in your sermon outline. This verse affirms why we do not have to feel guilt and shame. What does this verse say to you?
  - e. The Jewish leaders were afraid the disciples would steal the body of Jesus so could claim Jesus was resurrected from the dead. In those days, they did not bury people in the ground as we do today. They buried people into the sides of hills in caves. To make sure this did not happen, first, they had a huge stone rolled over the entrance. Second, they had a Roman seal put on the stone. To break that seal, was punishable by death. And Third, they had a troop of Roman soldiers there to guard the tomb. How does this tell you about the Resurrection being a game changer?
  - f. Where were the disciples during all of this? Hiding in secret for fear they would be next. To them, Jesus was dead and it was over. This lets us know the disciples were not great men of faith. What does this tell you and why?
7. What if you saw someone you had buried and 3 days they come walking and talking to you? Seeing Jesus, was a game changer for the disciples. They went from being depressed to being deliberate in sharing the Gospel. And within 300 years, Christianity was the official religion of the Roman Empire. Why? The Resurrection happened and it changed the disciples. All of a sudden they are courageously confident, contagiously joyful, and continuously hopeful. Why? Because they had witnessed the Resurrection first hand. Not second hand or third hand. How does this make a difference for you and why?
8. The second reason the resurrection is a game changer is we don’t have to fear death. Studies show death is the #1 fear of people because they don’t know if that is it. They don’t know what is going to happen to them after death. Is there an afterlife?

- a. Read 2 Peter 1:16 in your sermon outline. What does this tell you about Peter? What does this say to you about not fearing death and why?
  - b. Read Acts 1:3 in your sermon outline. How does this help you not fear death and why? Within a few years, the church in Jerusalem grew from 12 to 120 and then to 150,000. How does this help you not fear death and why?
  - c. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 in your sermon outline. Look at the vast number of people who saw the resurrected Jesus. This is why they did not fear death. In a court of law, eyewitness account and testimony is what is called in legal terms "irrefutable definitive evidence." Christianity grew quickly because there were so many eyewitnesses to the resurrected Jesus over a 40 day period before He returned to heaven. This is why the church grew from 12 then to 2.3 billion people today. How does this help you no longer fear death and why?
9. The third reason the Resurrection was a game changer is we get God's Holy Spirit in us. Jesus promised us that we should not be alone. He would reside in us through His Spirit after He returned to heaven.
- a. Read Acts 1:8 in your sermon outline. The reason Christians were so contagious is because they were not living in and through their own power — especially when it came to facing Roman persecution. God never intended for you to go through life alone or on your own. He wants His power inside of you. Do you have the means to change? Your willpower is not enough. You may change for a brief period, but typically it will not last. All those things you do not like in you, the Holy Spirit gives you power to change those things. Have you experienced this? Explain.
  - b. Do you ever feel like: You're at the end of your rope? Giving up? Out of gas? Running on empty or on fumes? Are you ever sick and tired of being sick and tired? If so, receive the resurrected Christ and His power as well. Will you do this? If have, are you currently relying on that power? Why or why not?
  - b. The power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead is available to you on a daily basis. Read Ephesians 1:19-20a in your sermon outline. What does this tell you?
  - c. The power of the resurrection is the power to be free from your past. It's the power to start over. What does this tell you about the Resurrection being a game changer?
  - d. The power of the Resurrection is the power to keep going when you feel like giving up, the power to conquer problems and habits that you can't break, and the power to heal your marriage. It's the power to transform your finances and achieve your dreams. It is God power and it is available to any Christian that is willing to yield to His Holy Spirit in your life. How is this good news for you?
10. The fourth reason the Resurrection is a game changer is because it proved God loves me unconditionally. You can't make God love you any more than He does right now. You can't make God love you any less than He does right now. He made you so He could love you. Every thing good in your life is by God's hand. You can't take credit for it. Christianity exploded because it is about love, not legalism. It is not a message of anger, fear, or hate, but love.
- a. Read John 3:16-17 in your sermon outline. That's why Christianity spread and changes people. When and where have you experienced this verse?
  - b. Read John 13:34-35 in your sermon outline. The major proof you are a Christian is your love, not because you go to church or have a bumper sticker that says you are. Why is this so important?
  - c. Read 1 John 3:10-11 in your sermon outline. The Apostle Paul went from Saul, persecutor and destroyer of the church, to Paul, church planter and spreader of the Gospel. He went from hate to love. What does this tell you about the Resurrection being a game changer?
11. The fifth reason the Resurrection was a game changer is God helps me live with a purpose and meaning. You were made by God and you were made for God. Until you understand that, life isn't going to make sense.
- a. Most people have no idea what they're living for. They have a lot to live on in life. They have nothing to live for in life. Most people have never clarified what they're willing to die for in life. You're not ready to live until you know what's worth dying for in life. Have you clarified this? If so, how?
  - b. Read Mark 8:35 in your sermon outline. What does this tell you about the Resurrection being a life changer?
  - c. Read Acts 15:26 in your sermon outline. 11 of the 12 disciples were martyred for their faith by Rome, including Paul, who wrote 2/3 of the New Testament from prison. Read 1 Corinthians 4:17-18 and Philippians 1:21. What do you think about Paul's word and how this makes the Resurrection a game changer?
  - d. Last year, 5,000 Christians were martyred and 360 million Christians live in areas where they are persecuted. In North Korea, 400,000 Christians are being held in labor camps. In 2023, China closed over 40,000 churches. What does this tell you about the Resurrection being a game changer?
12. The sixth reason the Resurrection was a game changer is I have a certainty I will go to heaven when I die.
- a. Most people have no idea what they're living for. They have a lot to live on in life. They have nothing to live for in life. Most people have never clarified what they're willing to die for in life. You're not ready to live until you know what's worth dying for in life. Have you clarified this? If so, how?
  - b. The first Christians were contagious because they fearless even when facing death because they knew they would go to heaven. Read 1 Peter 1:4 in your sermon outline. What does this tell you about the Resurrection being a game changer?
  - c. Read 1 Corinthians 2:9 in your sermon outline. There have been some books written by Christians who say they died and went to heaven, but what does this verse tell you about describing heaven?
  - d. Read John 14:6 in your sermon outline. Jesus made it clear that is not one of several ways to heave, but the only way. Jesus made it clear that He did not come to point us to the truth. He said He was the truth. Not Buddha, Not Confucius. Not Mohammed. No. He said He was the only truth? Jesus didn't say He came to show how to find life! He said He was the only life. What does this tell you about the Resurrection being a game changer?
  - e. Read Romans 10:9 in your sermon outline. If you have not done this, why? If you have, how does it prove the Resurrection is game changer in your own life?