



He Is Risen...I'm Not Afraid | Shawn Johnson | 4.12.20
Weekly Study

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What was your favorite part about Easter?

SHARE

Welcome to Group! You may not be in the same room, but how amazing is it that we can still meet together through technology? Easter week may have been difficult for you, so take some time to see how everyone is feeling about the COVID-19 by answering these questions.

What is one word you would use to describe how you've felt this week? Why did you pick those words?

What has been the most challenging part of social distancing for you this week?

What is one positive thing that has come out of this experience that you weren't expecting?

Take some time to pray for our world.

- Pray for those who feel lonely.
- Pray for provision for those who have lost work.
- Pray for wisdom for those who are sick.

GROW

Read Matthew 16:21-25

Did anything surprise you about this passage?

Why do you think Jesus let his disciples in on this information?

The resurrection isn't just something we hope happened. It is a historical event that we can trust because we have an overwhelming amount of evidence. Let's take a few minutes to talk through some of this evidence.

First of all, Jesus called his shot. In the passage you just read, Jesus told his disciples he was going to go to the cross and then rise again. In fact, throughout Matthew's Gospel, Jesus predicts his death and resurrection four times. We can trust that Jesus rose from the grave because He did what He said He was going to do.

Second, the resurrected Jesus appeared to over 500 eyewitnesses (1 Corinthians 15:6)! Think about that for a second. If you showed up for jury duty and one side had over 500 hundred eyewitnesses, the trial wouldn't last very long. The evidence would be too overwhelming. We can trust that Jesus rose from the grave because we have over 500 eyewitnesses.

In addition, one of those eyewitnesses, was James, the brother of Jesus. "Then he appeared to James" (1 Corinthians 15:7). What's interesting about James is he initially thought Jesus was "out of his mind" (Mark 3:21). But later in life, James was so convinced Jesus was the Messiah that he became one of the pillars of the early church. So, the question becomes, what would one of your siblings have to do to convince you they were God? The answer is something truly extraordinary, like rising from the dead!

We could fill hundreds of pages talking about the overwhelming evidence of the resurrection. And lots of people have (The Case for Christ by Lee Strobel is a great place to start). But for the rest of group, let's spend some time talking about what the resurrection means for your life!

What evidence for the resurrection do you find most compelling?

Despite the overwhelming evidence, why do you think there is still so much debate about the resurrection in the world?

MOVE

Read Matthew 28:1-10

What is your initial reaction to this passage?

Which verse stuck out to you the most? Why?

The passage you just read is the climax of the entire story. From Genesis to Revelation, all of Scripture points to this morning where the tomb is empty.

As Shawn reminded us this weekend, Easter Weekend is a reminder of three truths:

Truth #1: Jesus is who He said He was

Truth #2: Jesus did what He said He would

Truth #3: I can trust Him with my life!

The story begins at the dawn of a brand-new week. When the sun went down on Saturday, it must have felt like all hope was lost. But the Easter story is a reminder that when things are at their darkest, a brand-new day is dawning. It's proof that darkness is nothing more than a beautiful backdrop for the light to shine.

What does the resurrection mean to you?

Have you seen the truth of the Gospel play out in your own life? If so, how?

This Pandemic can feel like terrible timing because we can't be together this Easter, one of the Churches largest attended days of the year. But now more than ever, we need the reminder that the night is darkest just before the dawn. Jesus has made a way for us to have full, abundant life that begins right now and will continue for all of eternity. Because no matter how dark things may look, light always has the final say!

Let's keep that truth at the forefront of our minds this week by completing this take-home assignment!

Take-Home Assignment: Celebrate Easter Every Day

Celebrate Easter every day this week by writing these three truths out every morning:

1. He is who He said He was
2. He did what He said He would
3. I can trust Him with my life!

Once you've written these truths out, declare them out loud at least three times throughout your day. Observe how your week begins to change as you begin celebrating Easter every day!

P R A Y

We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time praying for each other. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate calls to share more freely.

T O G O

God made him who had no sin to be sin^[a] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- 2 Corinthians 5:21