

Devotions Leading Into Easter

Easter Means You'll Never Be Alone

INTRO:

- Have you ever had a time where you felt lost or alone?
- We all know how it feels to be on our own.
- And when we feel like we're on our own, **we start to believe things that seem true in the moment, but generally aren't.**
- When we feel alone, we tend to feel overwhelmed.
- Here's what's crazy about that: Loneliness feels so bad to us because God wired us that way.
- God doesn't want us depressed or sad, but we were created and wired for close relationships.
- It makes sense that when we don't have that, when we don't have what we were created for, things don't feel right to us.
- There are times when being alone and even *feeling* alone is just an unavoidable part of life. So, how do we handle it?

SCRIPTURE

- The very first Easter allowed Jesus' closest friends feeling overwhelmed in a similar way.
- Jesus' closest friends and followers had walked away from jobs, family members, finances, and safety just to follow Him. *And then He died!*
- We know how the story ends, but at the time, they didn't. So, imagine their surprise and *relief* at seeing Jesus alive again!
- That is, until Jesus left again. Jesus died, came back to life, and then left again. But this time, their response was completely different.
- This is what Jesus said in the final meal with His disciples before He was arrested:

John 16:7 NLT *"But in fact, it is best for you that I go away because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you."*

- The term **advocate** usually refers to someone who helps, comforts, and defends others.
- This "advocate" Jesus is referring to is what we call the Holy Spirit.
- Once the Holy Spirit arrived, the power and spirit of Jesus could be EVERYWHERE, not just in Jesus.
- And so, right before Jesus ascends into Heaven and leaves for the second time, He reminds His disciples of what He said the last meal together:

Acts 1:8 NLT *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

- Of all the things Jesus could have reminded His disciples of, He chose to remind them that The Holy Spirit was on the way.
- It was a reminder that even though He was leaving, they wouldn't be alone.
- Jesus' promise was not just for His first disciples. When Jesus promised an Advocate who would give us power and be with us, that was true for everyone who would ever believe in Him. That means that you and I have access to that very same Spirit!
- Easter means you're never alone.

CLOSING THOUGHT

Knowing the Holy Spirit is with us in the moments we feel on our own means that we can be confident of a couple things . . .

- You can talk to Him any time, any place, for any reason.
- You're stronger than you think you are.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's one unpopular opinion you think you might be alone in having? (For example: "Star Wars Episode 1 was the best!" or "Taylor Swift is only just 'okay.'")
2. When is being alone a good thing and when is it a bad thing?
3. In what area of your life do you feel alone?
4. How can the way you see situations change when you know you are never alone?
5. What are some reasons you might think that Jesus said to the disciples that it's better to have the Holy Spirit rather than Him?
6. When you start to feel alone, what are some ways that you can remind yourself that you are never alone?
7. **Don't miss this:** Why is it still hard to face difficult situations even when you know you're not alone?
8. **For upperclassmen:** Talk about a time when God showed up for you through other people.
9. **Don't miss this:** In what area of life can your small group be there for you right now?