

Easter

The Movie



Devotional Guide

4/15/12 - 5/5/12

GO DEEPER INTO

GOD'S WORD

*Thoughts and scriptures
for each weekly topic*

Easter

The Movie



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The Format:

This booklet is designed to allow your participation in worship to go a step further. For each topic covered in our weekly worship settings, there will be a page for reference and additional reflection. Included will be the main Scripture for the week, and space to write notes during worship. These could be conversation starters for your involvement in other groups both inside and outside the church or simply things to ponder yourself.

Take the time to grow into who God has made you.

The Series:

Many blockbuster movies today are bigger than one single movie. Think Harry Potter, Spiderman, Batman, Star Wars. These movie series are franchises, the story is too big to be contained. The same is true with Easter. The story does not end with an empty tomb. Jesus still had some things to say and do after his resurrection. This message series will look at some of the post resurrection appearances of Jesus in an attempt to help us as disciples, and the church understand our role in the story.

April 15, 2012
John 20:19-23

Episode 2 – The Mission Continues

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Notes From Today’s Worship

How do you show forgiveness?

Thoughts for the Week:

John sees sin as a blindness to God. When we retain sin, we are kept in darkness. When Jesus appears to his disciples, he tells them that their (our) job is to continue his mission of forgiveness, then he gives them the Spirit. Our Spirit enabled mission is to offer forgiveness to the world. For John, sin is not about moral right and wrong or moral transgressions, it is simply being separated from God. When we continue the work of Jesus, we set the world free through the forgiveness of Christ.

Scriptures to Explore:

John 3:19-21; 15:22-26; Genesis 2:7; Mark 9:50; 2 Corinthians 13:11;

Other Thoughts:

When Jesus gives the Spirit, he breathes into the disciples just as God breathed life into creation. This is a new creation, not to replace the old but to engage it!

The church makes it possible for the world to enter into a relationship with the God of limitless love. Our job is not to be arbiters of right and wrong, but to bear unceasing witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Activity:

- Think of someone who has hurt you in the past. The cause of your pain may simply be the result of that person not having a relationship with God.
- Find a way to show forgiveness to that person. The act of forgiveness is like a light that shines for people to see the goodness of God.
- If we stay in the pain, we retain the sin and remain in darkness.

April 22, 2012

Luke 24:36b-48

Episode 3 – An Understanding

Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

Notes From Today’s Worship

How is God made know to you?

Thoughts for the Week:

Peace in the New Testament is less about a personal inner tranquility and more about the relationships you have with other people. It also conveys a power that those relationships can give to you in the face of turbulent times. The disciples were scared. In all of the appearances of Jesus, he offers them peace. The world of the followers of Christ is marked by harmonious relationships.

- How does Christ bring peace to your life?
- How do you bring peace to others?

Scriptures to Explore:

John 13:7; Luke 24:30

Opened their Minds:

We often read stories from scripture and wonder why they don't get it. We have the benefit of 2,000 years of the Holy Spirit leading us and teaching us about God. Jesus is all about God revealing himself to us, revealing his goodness. It took Jesus to make the disciples understand how everything worked together. They became witnesses once they got it. As an Easter people, Jesus has revealed himself to us.

Witness

A witness is not only someone who sees something, they tell about what they see. Many of the post Easter stories use the past perfect tense where something was seen in the past, but what they saw continues to influence how they see now. As a witness to Christ, let what you have seen influence how you live your life now.

April 29, 2012
John 10:11-18

Easter Begins, The Prequel

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life— only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Notes From Today's Worship

What does it mean to have Jesus lay down his life?

Thoughts for the Week:

The job of the shepherd is to make sure the sheep are taken care of, get food, water, and sleep. The shepherd also protects the sheep from predators. What the Good Shepherd does is lie down his life for the sheep. He gets in between the sheep and danger. This goes way beyond someone who looks at this as a job. Christ gives us what we need, but also prevents us from being harmed eternally.

Scriptures to Explore:

John 10:1-5; John 15:13; 1 Samuel 17:34-35;

Other Thoughts:

Throughout this section, sheep is plural. We know how important a community of the faithful is. We cannot live a life of faith on our own. We are not a gathering of individuals, but rather a flock, the body of Christ. It provides us an arena of faith where we can grow and serve together all while having the shepherd leading us.

Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd works still to subvert our isolation, worthlessness, and despair, our pride and complacency, all of which grow out of the power of death. In so doing, he opens for us a space to know the victory of the resurrection; space to be led in the green pastures, beside the still waters, and to dwell in the blessedness of the Lord's House.

- How does Jesus keep you in the flock?
- How do you continue the mission of Jesus in growing the flock?
- Would you lay down your life for others?



Galenachurch.org
youbelong@galenachurch.org

Jeffrey R. Croft, Pastor
740.94JEFFC (53332)