



# MADE NEW

A 28-DAY  
**JOURNEY**  
OF FAITH



Made New: A 28-Day Journey of Faith

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# INTRODUCTION

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a  
new creation. The old has passed away;  
behold, the new has come.*

—2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

The Bible is clear that through belief in Jesus Christ—His life, death, and resurrection—we can be born again . . . given a fresh start, a do-over. We can be Made New!

That is what this devotional book is about; over the next twenty-eight days (or longer—you can read at your own pace) we will journey together to learn more about Jesus and His death and resurrection. We will learn about our role as children of God, adopted into His family and co-heirs to His kingdom. We will examine how to let go of our past mistakes so we can move forward in a new way, with a new life and new purpose!

Each day's reading will include a Bible verse to read, contemplate, and maybe even memorize; a short devotional story; and three questions to consider or discuss with your family, friends, or small group.

## Introduction

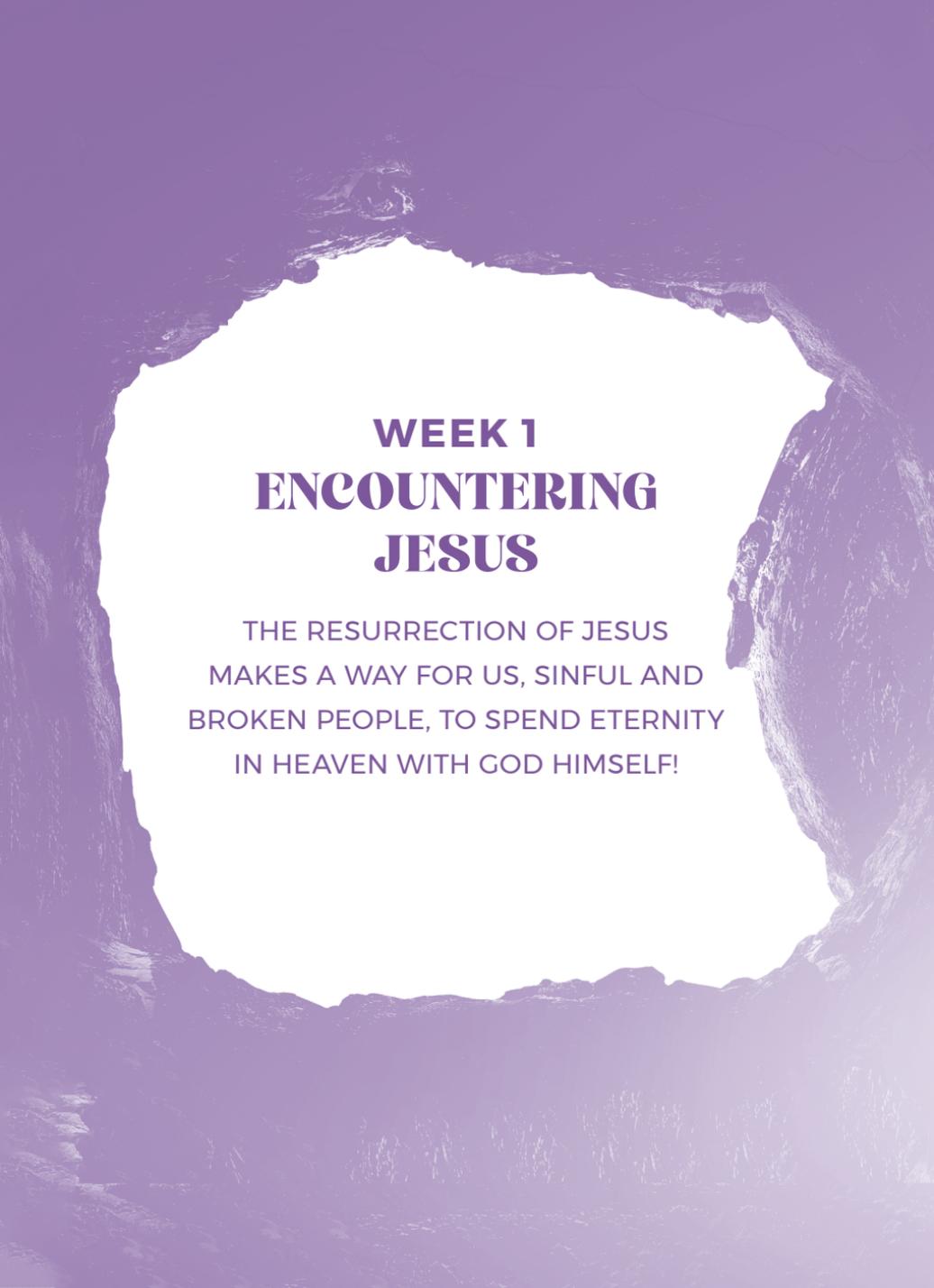
If you're just exploring, we encourage you to pray for God to reveal Himself to you. You, too, can be Made New. He loves you and wants to get to know you.

If you've been on your faith journey for a while, we hope you will be reminded of your first love for Jesus and be refreshed and encouraged enough to share this book with someone else when you are finished.

This devotional book, and really the entire Christian journey, begins with the death and resurrection of Jesus. He was God's own Son, who came to earth to live as a mere mortal to teach us about God's love and to fulfill God's plan of redemption. He lived a sin-free life but was a willing, perfect sacrifice, paying the price for all of our sins by dying on the cross.

But the story doesn't end there . . . three days later Jesus defeated death and rose from the dead! His resurrection made the way for people like us to reconcile to God and have eternal life in heaven.

So, let's start at the tomb on that first Easter morning, and like Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna, encounter the risen Jesus and discover that through Him, we are eternally Made New!



**WEEK 1**  
**ENCOUNTERING**  
**JESUS**

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS  
MAKES A WAY FOR US, SINFUL AND  
BROKEN PEOPLE, TO SPEND ETERNITY  
IN HEAVEN WITH GOD HIMSELF!



# 1

## HE IS RISEN

*He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: "The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again."*

—Luke 24:6-7

When you think of Easter celebrations, you probably think of Easter egg hunts and the Easter bunny. But in order to fully understand this celebratory day, we are directed back to this significant passage from Luke's Gospel account. At this point in the story, Jesus has been crucified and buried. And on this particular morning, some women went to visit the tomb where Jesus lay. But, to their surprise, Jesus was not there, for He had risen from the dead!

If the story of Jesus would have ended on a cross or in a grave, then the promise would have been incomplete. However, what we know now, and what those early believers learned two thousand years ago on Easter morning, is that Jesus *is* alive. He *is* risen. The promise has been

## Week 1: Encountering Jesus

fulfilled. This is something worth celebrating! If Jesus is alive, that means His words are true. And if His words are true, they can indeed be trusted. When God makes a promise, He keeps that promise.

The resurrection of Jesus makes a way for us, sinful and broken people, to spend eternity in heaven with God Himself! This is where our hope lies; this is what we must remember each day; this is truly the Good News.

- Why is it important that the tomb was found empty on Easter morning?
  
- How is the resurrection of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins good news for you?
  
- How does the promise of heaven give you hope today?

## 2

# GOD'S GIFT OF LOVE

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

—John 3:16

This verse is widely considered the most well-known verse in all the Bible. Maybe you memorized it when you were very young. The reason for its popularity is because, in a nutshell, it is the Gospel message! Before Jesus died on the cross or was resurrected from the grave, God the Father gave Him to us. Why? To display His love for His people. Have you ever received a gift like this?

I will never forget my twelfth birthday. My parents had a rule that I could not have my own cell phone until I was twelve years old. Well, when my birthday rolled around, sure enough, that amazing, majestic, indestructible flip phone was all mine. Did I want that gift? You bet I did! In fact, it was probably the only thing on my list that year. But even more than me wanting that phone, my

## Week 1: Encountering Jesus

parents decided that I needed it. I was having more and more soccer practices in the evenings, and my parents did not want me to wait out in the cold. So, the phone had become necessary.

God decides to send Jesus to earth at just the right time as the only way we could possibly be saved. Imperfection could never save and rescue imperfection. But Jesus, the perfect Son of God, displayed God's love for us and provided a way to stay connected with God. Thanks to His salvation, we can be Made New!

- Why did God need to send Jesus?
- What part of this well-known verse jumps out at you the most?
- When you think of God's love, what qualities come to mind?

### 3

## SUFFERING WITH JESUS

*I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power  
of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings,  
becoming like him in his death.*

—Philippians 3:10

Who are you inspired by? Maybe it's a professional musician whom you have admired for years and years. Maybe it's someone in your family who you know works harder than anyone. Maybe it's a teacher or coach who has mentored you. Regardless of who you look to for inspiration, there is something special about that person that initially grabbed your attention.

In this verse, the Apostle Paul is talking about his view of Jesus Christ, someone he personally encountered face-to-face on the road to Damascus. This was a mysterious encounter that happened after Christ had already been resurrected (see Acts 9). Paul says that he doesn't just want to know Christ, but also the power

## Week 1: Encountering Jesus

that raised Jesus from the dead. But this statement takes a wild turn when Paul goes on to say that he wants to suffer with Him and share in His death. What? Why would he want that?

The answer lies in this fact: without death, there cannot be resurrection. Without death, we cannot be made new. The exciting things about the Gospel often resonate with us. For instance, eternal life with God in heaven sounds pretty good, right? We can't miss, however, that following Jesus will surely cost us some things. We will be asked daily to count the cost and, in doing so, die to our selfish desires. It is a process of laying down our own worldly desires so that we might pursue the desires of Christ. But, if there are two things we learn from Paul's life and writing, they are: (1) following Jesus may cause us to suffer in this world and face much pain, but (2) in the end it will all be worth it. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you strength today to lay down your own desires and chase after Christlike desires as you seek to live a holy life.

## **MADE NEW: A 28-Day Journey of Faith**

- What do you think it looks like to suffer with Christ?
- Who inspires you to live more like Jesus?
- Would you be willing to trade what you want in order to have what God wants for your life?