

# THE NEXT 40 DAYS

## WEEK 3

### DAY 1: READ JOHN 20:19-25 & 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

When we struggle to recognize God's presence in our midst, it can be tough to hear and see others abounding in His presence while we seemingly live in the wilderness. Don't let this bitterness take root. While this probably wasn't what Thomas was going through, we all experience the jealousy and grief that can come from us feeling like we've missed the train for God's presence and the fruits He brings. God has not forgotten about you and you are NOT alone. Cling to His promises.

### DAY 2: READ JOHN 20:19-30

Jesus willingly revealed Himself to Mary and His disciples. He also willingly revealed Himself to Thomas. He showed His wounds to them too. Jesus encouraged Thomas to touch His wounds so he'd believe. We have been rescued by the God who wants us to believe and experience new life. For Thomas and the disciples, seeing Jesus' wounds was physical confirmation of the death of Jesus and, therein, the physical and spiritual truth of Jesus' bodily resurrection as the promised Messiah. Why is Jesus' actions in this passage hope for us? Hint: verses 29-31.

### DAY 3: READ HEBREWS 11

As Christians living by faith in the words, life, death and resurrection of Jesus and empowered by the living presence of the spirit of God, we get to be part of this beautiful legacy of people who trusted God without seeing, through hard times and depending only on the word of God. Today, let's reflect on this consistent pattern of God being glorified through faithful people. In your own words and ways, express to God how grateful you are to Him for Jesus. Reaffirm your trust in Him.

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## **DAY 4: READ 1 PETER 5:6-11 & 1 PETER 3:11 - 4:19**

When we feel doubt, uncertainty or are tested in times of duress, let's choose to remember that these are opportunities, even in our weakness, for God's glory to be revealed. Let's abound in love, ground ourselves in the truth of God's word and remember that our God does not change and neither does His promises.

## **DAY 5: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 1**

If we are looking for worldly validation of our faith in Jesus, we will never find it. The Gospel is folly to a lost, hungry world, so don't let the friction or frustration you encounter from clinging to Jesus become a stumbling block to you. God is your validation, your purpose and the ultimate, only remedy for this world's lost, broken, sinful ways. Our God is a God of peace and not one of confusion; if you are struggling with validation, pray to Him and ask Him for holy affirmation of His presence and purpose for your life. Choose to ground yourself in scripture and read it frequently.

## **DAY 6: READ PHILIPPIANS 1 & PHILIPPIANS 4**

Nothing is wasted. Your lifelong struggle against the flesh and a wayward world are not wasted or lost time. Perhaps you're feeling frustrated and not seeing the "fruits" or successes of your walk with Jesus that you'd expect. It's a loaded prompt, but what God began in you, He will see through to completion. He will receive glory and you will find life in Him. Don't let frustration and bitterness take root. He hasn't failed us yet and He won't start now. Stuck and don't know how to shake your mind free from this bitterness? Start with Philippians 4:4-9.

## **DAY 7: READ JOHN 20:1-18**

As followers of Jesus, each of us has encountered the risen, living Savior. He has opened our eyes to see Him as He truly is: a caring, righteous God, victorious over death and faithful to fulfill His promises, yearning deeply for all to know Him and find true life and love, even if it meant His torture, mockery and death. Mary ran to share the hope of the risen Savior with the others. Who do you need and want to share the hope of our resurrected Jesus with today? Mary didn't pause to make plans and get her ducks in a row. She just went and told the others who needed to know. So should we.