

The background features a light green watercolor wash with a torn paper effect at the top and bottom edges. The central area is white, providing a clean backdrop for the text.

# Be Seated

A 6-Day Devotional Journey for Easter

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Very often when we think of Jesus, our first thoughts go to Jesus as He is portrayed in the Gospels. We know Him as our Saviour, role model, friend, and someone who is always available to help us.

While this is absolutely true and foundational, we should not stop there. Jesus is no longer in the Gospels era. He is now alive and seated at the right hand of the Father. He is truly the supreme Lord and King over absolutely everything!

This devotional traces Jesus' journey, and our journey, through death, resurrection and ascension – so that we “may know the hope to which He has called [us], the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe”  
Ephesians 1:18-19 (NIV).

## Day 1 – Jesus’ Death on the Cross

From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”). When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.” ...And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open.

Matthew 27:45-52 (NIV)



What does Easter mean to you? As believers, Easter means so much more than just a long weekend. At Easter, we remember Jesus’ horrific death on the cross, and His glorious resurrection from the dead. We remember, and we are tremendously grateful for everything Jesus did on our behalf.

On the cross Jesus took the full weight of sin for every human being that had ever lived, and will ever live. In that moment, Jesus died spiritually as He was made sin for us. In other words, He experienced the consequence of sin - absolute and complete separation from God the Father. This spiritual death was so crushing, that Jesus cried out and physically died.

It’s incredible to think that God Himself planned that He would go through this painful event, even before creation. Jesus took our broken relationship with the Father onto Himself. Yet God

the Father never turned away from what was happening (Psalm 22:24). He was fully engaged in all that Jesus went through.

As excruciating as the experience of the cross was for Jesus, it was probably the greatest display of God's *glory* that the earth had ever known. With Jesus' suffering and death, God showcased every aspect of His nature; His profound love, His glorious righteousness, His vast compassion, His deep mercy, His unwavering justice, the depths of His forgiveness, His absolute holiness, and His unparalleled wisdom. He also demonstrated His immense authority and might over every evil destructive power, particularly the power of sin.

This profound display of God's nature and glory was, in the natural realm, a horrific experience. Jesus suffered and died horribly. He felt sin's broken relationship with God. But something tremendously glorious was happening in the spiritual realm. The power of sin and its crushing grip over humanity was being shattered (Hebrews 2:14-15). A pathway to deep and personal relationship with God was established, as slavery to sin was destroyed and every hindrance removed. How can we not bow in humble thanks and grateful appreciation to our Lord and King?

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#### Questions for reflection

- Jesus took my broken relationship with God onto Himself, and felt a deep separation from the Father. What is my response to Him for doing this for me?
- If the cross was the greatest display of God's glory, how does this change my view of what happened there?
- Jesus utterly shattered the power of sin. What does that mean for me today?

## Day 2 – Take up Your Cross Daily

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”

Matthew 16:24 (NIV)



Have you ever stopped to think about the enormity of all that Jesus’ death accomplished? His death was not only so we could be with God through eternity. Just as importantly, His death allows us to be deeply and intimately connected with God Himself, even while we are still on earth. That is an amazing thought!

Even further, God’s intent was for believers to be so closely joined together, that we would be one. The oneness of believers was so much of a priority for Jesus, that He prayed extensively for it, just before He went to the cross (John 17:20-23). The whole purpose of Jesus’ incredible act was to create a pathway for an entirely new *people*, a new *family*, to be joined to God (Ephesians 2:14-22). This new people, profoundly and intimately connected to God, would then continue to display God’s glory in the earth. This new people includes you and me.

Let us not forget that we have been gloriously set free by God’s amazing act of selfless love and mercy on our behalf, to be His people, and *together*, to display who He is, and bring Him glory.

In order to do this, each of us have to make the deliberate choice to follow the same pathway Jesus established – and that’s the way of the cross. It’s the pathway of humble repentance, laying down our lives and giving up our rights, to serve our almighty and

glorious Lord. To follow Him in death to self, and on into a brand new life in the Spirit.

Taking up our cross does not mean that we have to actually die on a cross like Jesus, or even suffer physically. But it does mean that we are giving up our rights, in favour of His rulership. We are letting go of self-interest and control. We are following the path Jesus took – the way of humility and the cross (Philippians 2:5-8).

Following the way of the cross is not just a one-time decision. Every day we make choices that align us with God's Kingdom purposes. Every day we choose to keep following Jesus, to stay closely connected to our loving God and to be one with our fellow believers. Every day we make the choice to die to self, take up our cross and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

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#### Questions for reflection

- Am I joined to my fellow believers in the way Jesus intended when He prayed for oneness? What do I need to change in order to be one with my Christian family?
- Am I willing to take up my cross daily and follow Jesus? What does that involve for me today?

## Day 3 – Jesus’ Glorious Resurrection

Suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead?

He is not here; he has risen!”

Luke 24:5b-6a (NIV)



How amazing that God’s plan did not stop at Jesus’ death on the cross. Even though Jesus was totally separated from relationship with God in spiritual death, He did not stay that way for long. An amazing thing happened. On the third day, the life-giving, resurrection power of God raised Jesus to new life – both spiritually and physically.

Jesus’ resurrection is one of the most momentous events in history. It proves Jesus is who He said He was, the Son of God. It demonstrates forever that the penalty for sin was completely paid by Jesus, and that the power of sin and death was utterly shattered. The possibility of an eternal and abiding relationship with the Father was firmly established.

The resurrection was not only about Jesus being physically raised to life. He was the first person to ever be *spiritually* raised – from spiritual death to new spiritual life. No-one had ever experienced this kind of resurrection from the dead. This was resurrection to a whole *new* kind of life that had never existed for any human being before.



Paul explains that the power of God that raised Jesus from spiritual death, and exalted Him as King over all things, is immeasurable (Ephesians 1:19-23). Paul uses four different Greek words (power, energy, might and strength – verse 19) to try and describe how infinitely great God’s power actually is. One word is just not sufficient to do this!

The resurrection demonstrates how vast and limitless the power of God really is. The resurrection power that raised Jesus from the dead will eventually transform the whole of creation and flood it with His glory (Ephesians 1:10). In other words, God’s plan is for all things, in heaven and on earth, to be made new. Through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we experience a foretaste now, of a larger reality that is still to come in eternity.

Resurrection life is an incredible certainty for you and me. The power of sin is forever broken. We have been embraced by God and given new spiritual life in Him. Thank you Jesus!

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### Questions for reflection

- In what ways has God’s resurrection life already touched me? What changes have I seen in my life since I committed my life to Him?
- What does it mean to me to have new spiritual life? What does this look like in my daily life?
- How does reflecting on how immeasurably great and limitless God’s power really is, affect the way I pray? The way I relate to others? The way I deal with temptation?

## Day 4 – Our Resurrection to New Life

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:4-5 (NIV)



Do you realise the power of God that raised Jesus from the dead, continues to mightily work in each of us today? Spiritual resurrection did not stop with Jesus. He pioneered the way for many to join His new family (Hebrews 2:9-11). We share in His resurrection life (Romans 8:10-11).

As those who have given our lives to follow Jesus, and taken the journey of the cross with Him, we have also been raised with Him to a new spiritual life. We are the same, but we are also radically different.

Through Jesus, we have not only been brought into relationship with God, but actually into *Him*. We are therefore, forever intimately joined to the One in whom the power of life resides – and nothing can ever separate us from Him. Because of this, we are “more than conquerors” (Romans 8:31-39). Through God’s power within us, we are able to live godly lives, even though we still live in a world that is tarnished by the consequences of sin.

The resurrection power of God is so great and unfathomable, that the Apostle Paul prayed for the Holy Spirit to expand our awareness of how phenomenally great God’s power is (Ephesians 1:18-21). Paul prays this way because he knows how important it is for us to grasp the fact that God is vastly more powerful than every other thing we might ever encounter. Once

we realise this, we can live confidently in our new identity in Christ.

The change in us is *spiritual* – deep on the inside. We now have the Holy Spirit, the life of God, dwelling in us. We share in the resurrection life of Christ.

We have actually shifted kingdoms, from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light (Ephesians 6:8). This is an important fundamental change at the centre of our being, that will affect everything in our lives, from the way we think about ourselves to how we behave towards others (Colossians 3:9b-10).

Remember, we have not only been drawn right into the sustaining life of God, we are also closely connected to other believers. We are one new family, knitted together by the Holy Spirit's love and power, with an amazing mandate to display God's glory to the world.

As Paul prayed, we really do need a revelation of what happened to Jesus at His resurrection, so we know what happened to us!

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#### Questions for reflection

- Is there any hindrance, lie or wrong belief that is stopping me from grasping the phenomenal greatness of God's power in me?
- Knowing I am now part of God's family, that I have shifted from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, how does this change the way I think about myself? How does it change the way I behave towards others?

## Day 5 – Jesus’ Ascension

He raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

Ephesians 1:20-21 (NIV)



I wonder what the disciples were thinking as they watched Jesus ascend to heaven and be hidden by the clouds (Acts 1:9). What the disciples didn't see, was what happened next. The resurrected Jesus took His seat at the right hand of the Father in heaven. This is a place of honour, favour and authority that is His today.

He is now far above every principality and power. In fact, He cannot even be put on the same plane as any other cosmic power or authority. To be far above something is to have rulership and dominion over it. His authority is absolute and complete over all powers and authorities that there have ever been, or ever will be.

Ephesians 1:22-23 states that God has “placed all things under his feet.” Jesus Christ is not only far superior to every other authority there is, but they have no choice but to submit to Him. He has no rivals whatsoever.

The amazing thing is that what happened to Christ is also true for us. God raised us up with Christ, and we are seated with Him in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6). If we are seated with Christ, then our position in Him is where He is. We are seated in a place of absolute authority and victory. Jesus taught His disciples to pray from this place of victory. We are to pray that

God's will would be worked out on earth, as it already is in heaven (Matthew 6:9-10).

Jesus also prayed for us, His people, that we would be one in complete maturity in Him, so that we can fully display who He is, in all His glory and power (John 17:21, 23). In other words, we are to become like Christ.

So much happened at Jesus' ascension. Jesus Himself was seated forever in absolute victory. We also ascended with Him as His new people, to be seated in a position of victory. Jesus' desire is for us together to come into full maturity and completeness in Him. We are now on this journey towards maturity. That's His amazing plan for us.

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#### Questions for reflection

- Have I fully grasped the fact that Jesus is victorious over every authority and power? How will this affect how I pray?
- I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. How does this change my perspective regarding what I am facing right now?
- Are there areas of my life where I need to pray that God's will would be done? What does praying over these areas from a place of victory look like?

## Day 6 – Be Seated in the Heavenly Realms

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in  
the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus  
Ephesians 2:6 (NIV)



So often, everything around us is negative and if we let it take hold of us, we become negative too. Instead, let us remember who we belong to.

Physically, we live in the natural world, and we are still subject to the frailties and limitations of life on earth. But spiritually, we are no longer dead, rather, we are raised to sit in heavenly places in Christ. This is a spiritual reality, not a figure of speech. It changes the way we live and how we think.

We have been made spiritually new – and we are taking the journey of discipleship in order to bring everything else in our lives into line with our new identity (Ephesians 4:23-5:4). We are called and empowered to live the life of Jesus, a life of love and obedience to God (Ephesians 5:1-2). We are to reflect the Kingdom of Heaven and display our Heavenly Father to those around us. That's what it means to live as God's family – positioned in Christ, as a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20).

Taking the journey of the cross and resurrection changes everything. It means letting go of our previous sin-filled identity, and grasping the enormity of what God has accomplished in us. He has powerfully resurrected us to spiritual life, and exalted us with Christ. This is a total gift from God.

Being seated in heavenly places is a position of honour, authority and victory. But we need to remember these things are from Christ, not us. We have been included in His honour, His authority and His victory.

We already have victory, because of our position in Christ. Our lives are therefore totally dependent on God. We stand confident, in humble thanks to God, knowing that the power to live according to His purpose is not from us, but from Him. We walk in total obedience to our wonderful Lord as He brings us together into completeness in Him.

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#### Questions for reflection

- How does knowing I now have a seat in heavenly places with Jesus change the way I live and think?
- Are there areas of my previous sin-filled identity that I still allow to define what I think about myself and others? What is Jesus saying to me about these areas?

