

A Crew of Believers: 5 Day Devotional

Based on the sermon from **John 20:19–31** and **1 Peter 1:3–9**, this five day devotional invites you to journey deeper into the Easter season. It explores community, faith, doubt, wonder, and the living hope we share in Jesus Christ. Whether you are a longtime believer or someone just beginning to ask questions, there is a place for you here. We are, after all, all in this together.

EASTER SEASON DEVOTIONAL

5 DAYS

JOHN 20 · 1 PETER 1



Day 1

We Are a Crew

"As she looked down at the Earth, 252,000 miles away, she realized, we are all a crew."

When the Artemis II astronauts returned from orbiting the moon, one crew member described the profound realization that every human being on planet Earth is connected, bound together by our shared humanity, whether we choose it or not. That image of Earth as a small, pale blue dot surrounded by darkness has a way of reshaping our perspective in an instant.

The Gospel of John echoes this same truth. More than any other gospel, John emphasizes community, relationship, and the bonds formed through Jesus. On that first Easter evening, Jesus did not appear to just one person in isolation. He came through locked doors and stood in the middle of his disciples, his crew, and breathed peace over all of them together. The resurrection was never meant to be a private experience. It was meant to be shared.

You are part of a crew. Your family, your congregation, your neighbors, your preschool community, these are the people God has placed around you. We are connected to each other by our very humanity, and even more deeply by our faith. When life feels isolating or overwhelming, remember: you are not orbiting alone. You have a crew.

Key Verse

"Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'" John 20:19

Reflection Questions

- Who makes up your "crew", the people God has placed in your life right now?
 - When have you felt most connected to your faith community? What made that possible?
 - How might you be more intentional about showing up for someone in your crew this week?
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Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for not leaving us alone. You broke through locked doors to be with your disciples, and you break through the walls we build around our own hearts, too. Help us to see the crew you have placed around us, and to be a source of peace and presence for them. Amen.

Day 2

Belief Is a Journey, Not a Moment

Poor Thomas. He has carried the nickname "Doubting Thomas" for two thousand years, a label that has followed him far longer and wider than he ever could have imagined. But here is the thing: Thomas was not uniquely broken or uniquely faithless. He was human. He had missed something extraordinary, and he needed to encounter it for himself.

And what did Jesus do? He did not scold Thomas. He did not remove him from the crew. He showed up again, specifically for Thomas, and invited him to see, to touch, and to believe. That is grace. That is the character of our risen Lord. Jesus meets us exactly where we are, not where we think we should be.

The gospel writer tells us these stories were written "so that you may continue to believe." Notice those words, **continue to believe**. Belief is not a one time decision made at an altar or a baptism. It is a living, breathing, sometimes stumbling journey. There will be seasons of doubt. There will be questions you cannot answer. There will be locked rooms in your own heart. But Jesus keeps showing up, in unexpected people, in quiet moments, in the bread and the cup, in the laughter of a child. Keep going. The journey is the point.

Key Verse

*"But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name." **John 20:31***

Reflection Questions

- What does it mean to you that belief is described as an ongoing journey, not a single moment?
 - Where are you on that journey right now, in a season of confidence, or a season of questions?
 - Has Jesus ever shown up for you in an unexpected way? How did that moment shape your faith?
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Prayer

Gracious God, on the days when faith comes easily, may we be grateful. On the days when doubt creeps in, may we remember Thomas, and remember that you came for him anyway. You come for us, too. Keep us on the journey. Keep us moving toward you. Amen.

Day 3

Seeing Through the Eyes of Wonder

There is something quietly profound about the way preschoolers experience the world. They have not yet learned to suppress their questions. They ask "why" without embarrassment, point at ordinary things with delight, and find wonder in what grown ups have long since stopped noticing. And in doing so, they lead us back to something essential about faith.

Jesus himself said that unless we become like little children, we cannot enter the kingdom of God. That is not a call to be naive. It is an invitation to be open. To approach God not with all the answers already in hand, but with hands open and eyes wide. Thomas asked the hard question out loud. The preschoolers in your life are doing the same thing every single day. They are, without knowing it, modeling the very kind of faith that keeps belief alive.

The resurrection is not just a theological proposition to be defended. It is a living encounter to be experienced again and again. The astronauts stared at the Earth from 252,000 miles away and were undone by its beauty. The disciples stared at the risen Christ and were undone by his love.

Wonder is the doorway into both. Let a child lead you back through it. Ask "why" again. Sit with the mystery. God is not afraid of your questions, and neither should you be.

Key Verse

"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." John 20:29

Reflection Questions

- When did you last slow down enough to let something simple fill you with wonder?
 - What does the faith of a child teach you about your own relationship with God?
 - How can you cultivate a spirit of "why?" and an openness to questions in your faith life this week?
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Prayer

Father, you made us curious on purpose. You wired us for wonder. Forgive us for the times we have let routine crowd out awe. Today, open our eyes to the beauty of your creation, the mystery of your resurrection, and the gift of the people around us. Give us the faith of a child. Amen.

Day 4

Peace, Forgiveness, and the Breath of New Life

Twice in the span of just a few verses, Jesus speaks the same words to his frightened, grief stricken disciples: *"Peace be with you."* He does not say it once as a greeting and move on. He says it again, and then he does something startling. He breathes on them. He gives them the Holy Spirit. And with that Spirit comes an extraordinary gift: the authority to forgive.

This is the shape of resurrection life. Not just joy and celebration, though those are real and right. Resurrection life is peace that passes understanding, offered to people who are still locked behind their fear. It is breath returning to lungs that had forgotten how to breathe. It is forgiveness, the releasing of what has been held too tightly, the healing of what has festered too long. The Spirit makes all of this possible.

In your own life, where do you need to receive that peace today? Where might you need to offer forgiveness, to someone else, or perhaps to yourself? The same Spirit that filled that upper room is alive and at work in you. Take a breath. Let it in. The risen Christ is still saying, even now: *Peace be with you.*

Key Verse

"Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" John 20:21 to 22

Reflection Questions

- Where in your life right now do you most need the peace of Christ?
 - Is there a relationship in which you are being called to offer, or receive, forgiveness?
 - How do you experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in your daily life?
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Prayer

Holy Spirit, breathe on us again. In the places where we are afraid, bring peace. In the places where we are holding grudges or shame, bring freedom. Remind us that we are sent, just as Jesus was sent, to carry this peace into the world around us. May we be bearers of your breath and your grace. Amen.

Day 5

Living Hope: Picking Ourselves Back Up

The astronauts aboard Artemis II hurtled back toward Earth at 25,000 miles per hour, thirty times the speed of sound, and then gently parachutes deployed, and they landed safely in the ocean. The whole journey had been extraordinary. The distances traveled, the challenges faced, the preparation required. And then, a soft landing. A crew, together, back home.

Peter writes to his scattered, suffering communities with this same spirit of resilient, forward moving hope. He does not pretend that the journey is easy. He acknowledges grief, trials, and the testing of faith. But he anchors everything in a living hope, not a wishful hope, not a passive hope, but a **living** hope, born from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus is alive, our hope is alive. It cannot be killed. It cannot be quarantined behind locked doors or buried under failure or snuffed out by doubt.

Faith is a journey. There will be missteps. There will be moments that do not go as planned. But by the grace of God, we keep going. We take a breath. We bow our heads. We pick each other up. We are a crew. And our captain, the risen, living Christ, has already gone before us, and he is with us still. All the way to the end. All the way home.

- ✔ Through believing, you may have life in his name. **John 20:31**. Keep going. The journey is sacred.

Key Verse

"By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." **1 Peter 1:3**

Reflection Questions

- What does "living hope" mean to you personally, especially in a season that has been difficult?
- Looking back over this week's devotional, what is one truth you want to carry with you?
- How will you live as part of the crew, sharing the love and hope you have been given, this week?

Prayer

Lord of resurrection, thank you. Thank you for a hope that cannot die. Thank you for a love that finds us behind locked doors, in moments of doubt, in the questions of children, and in the wonder of creation. We are your crew. Send us out with peace in our hearts, breath in our lungs, and the name of your Son on our lips. My Lord and my God. Amen.