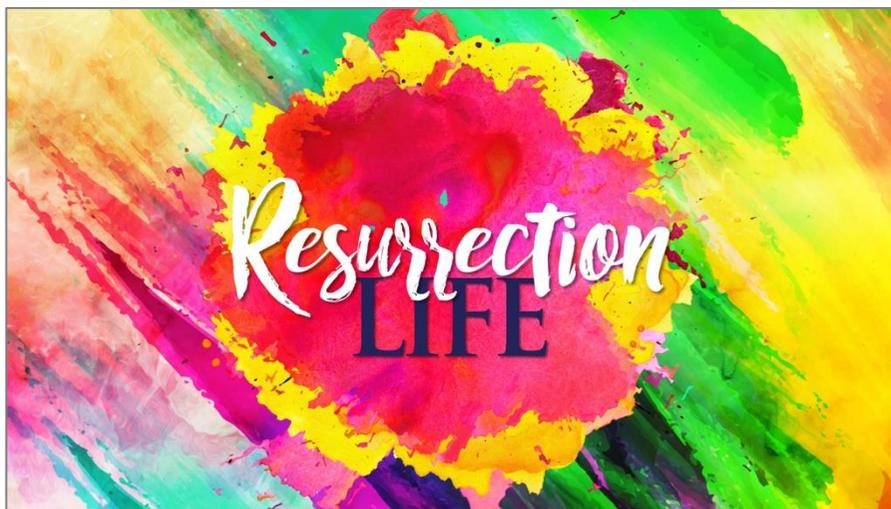


# DAILY DEVOTIONAL

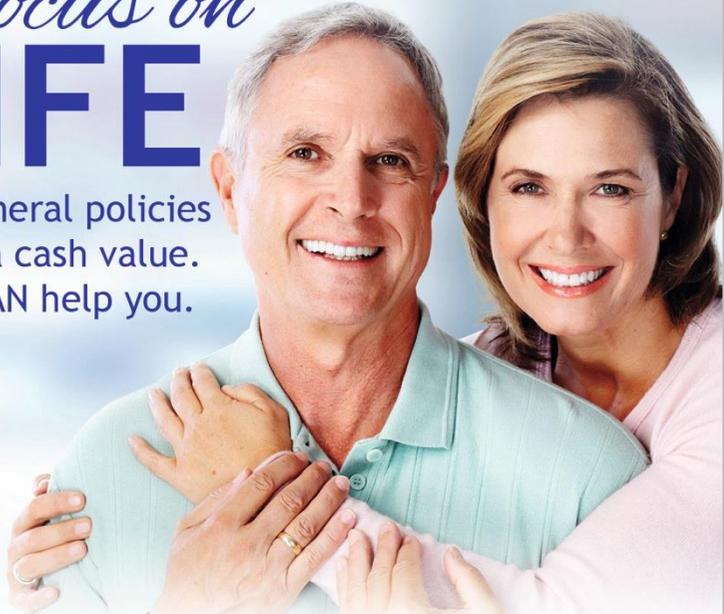
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## BOOKLET



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This booklet can be used as a stand-alone daily devotional. Or, if you would like to follow the sermons, they can be downloaded from our website at [www.northfield.co.za](http://www.northfield.co.za) or a cd-set of the sermon series is available for sale in our bookshop, and can be used as an accompaniment for this booklet. If you are using the devotions together with the sermon series at Northfield Methodist Church, then the readings start the day AFTER the sermon is preached, and the start date for each reading is:

## **RESURRECTION LIFE**

<b>RESURRECTION LIFE</b>	Page 01	13 April 2020
<b>RESURRECTION BODY</b>	Page 08	20 April 2020
<b>RESURRECTION MIND</b>	Page 15	27 April 2020
<b>RESURRECTION EMOTIONS</b>	Page 22	04 May 2020
<b>RESURRECTION RELATIONSHIPS</b>	Page 29	11 May 2020
<b>RESURRECTION ECONOMY</b>	Page 36	18 May 2020

These devotions are written by a team of writers and ministers from Northfield Methodist Church. An electronic version of this booklet that is formatted for easy reading on your tablet or phone, can be downloaded from our website, or you can request to be added to the email list.

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## RESURRECTION LIFE: DAY ONE

### AFTER THE SABBATH

***Read Matthew 28:1-10.***

Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed! This week we will be focusing on the resurrection story of Jesus, as found in Matthew 28:1-10. I would like to encourage you to read that passage, all ten verses, every day this week. Then we will be taking out one or two verses each day and focusing on them. Pray that during your reading each day God will reveal something new, something wonderful, and something good to you, in this strange season we find ourselves in.

Today the focus verse is verse 1: ***“After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb”***. The Sabbath is traditionally a time of rest, rejuvenation and reconnection. It is traditionally there for families to reconnect with each other and for people to reconnect with God. If you have ever been to Israel over a Sabbath it is a beautiful time of rest, rejuvenation and reconnection, that we in South Africa and many places of the world have lost because of our obsession that to be busy means to be important. Having said this, this first Sabbath was not the same for the followers of Jesus. It would have been a Sabbath filled with heartache, stress, anxiety and fear. They were unable to do much, yet it wasn't restful. Perhaps there is something of that in many of us today. We are unable to do much. We could be resting, rejuvenating and reconnecting, but there is an underlying anxiety, stress, fear and heartache all the time. If that is your truth, then hold on to what happens next. Dawn breaks and Christ is risen. Let us not lose sight of what happens after this strange Sabbath.

***Prayer: Father please help me to rest in hope. In Jesus name. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE: DAY TWO

### WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

***Read Matthew 28:1-10.***

Have you read Matthew 28:1-10 again this morning? What stood out for you? We will be focusing on verses 5-6 this morning: ***“The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.””***

The angel knows what the women are looking for. He knows that they are looking for Jesus. However, they are looking in the wrong place. They are looking in the tomb, but Jesus has risen.

I wonder how many times we look for Jesus in the wrong place? I wonder how many times while reading the news, we pray prayers like ‘God where are you? Please show yourself to me’. I wonder how many times we look up the latest cases of Coronavirus in SA or the world, and pray ‘Lord where are you? Please show me’. I wonder how many times we have conversations with people around us about what is happening in the world today, hoping to see glimpses of Jesus? Perhaps, if we truly long to see Jesus, we should stop looking in the wrong places. When we look to these places hoping to see Jesus, it is like looking in the tomb on resurrection Sunday. I am not saying Jesus is not in the midst of the greatest struggles and sufferings, but what I am saying is that if we long to find Jesus, we should look for the Jesus who has risen. We cannot ignore the tomb, but let us look at the tomb and realise that it has no power. Then let us turn and look for the risen Christ. Let us find Him in Scripture, song, silence and friendships. Let us actively search for the risen Christ, by not only looking at the tomb.

***Prayer: Father help me to turn my eyes upon Jesus and look full in His wonderful face... In Jesus name. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE: DAY THREE

### GO AND TELL

***Read Matthew 28:1-10.***

Once again, after reading Matthew 28:1-10, what has struck you this morning? Our focus verse this morning is verse 7: ***“Then go quickly and tell His disciples: “He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him.” Now I have told you”***. Isn't it amazing how much faith these women have? They rush off and are willing to spread the good news about the resurrection of Jesus, even though they haven't seen Him yet.

The question for us this morning is this: ‘what news are we spreading?’ If we have to listen to our conversations, watch our actions, read our messages or social media posts, what news are we spreading? Are we spreading hope or fear, frustration or love? We are called, like those two Marys in this passage, to spread the news of the resurrection. In other words, we are called to tell people about hope, life and love. We are called to be the carriers of the good news of the resurrection. Even when perhaps we haven't seen evidence of it for ourselves yet, even when perhaps we have only seen the tomb, even when perhaps we aren't convinced ourselves. We are called to go quickly and tell that Jesus is alive and has gone ahead of us and will meet us. Perhaps today we can be mindful of what story we are emphasising. Perhaps we can be mindful that our actions often speak louder than our words. How are we treating those around us? How are we treating ourselves? Are we spreading the fear of the tomb, or are we spreading the good news of life everlasting?

***Prayer: Father thank you that you have trusted me to spread the good news of your life. Thank you that death is not the end of the story, but life is everlasting. In Jesus name. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE: DAY FOUR

### AFRAID WITH JOY

***Read Matthew 28:1-10.***

Isn't it amazing how we can read the same passage every day and something new will stand out for us? I am reminded that Scripture is the Living word of God, if only we would take the time to listen.

Our focus verse today is verse 8: ***“So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to his disciples.”***

I never knew that we could be afraid and yet filled with joy. They seem like two contrasts that cannot be experienced at the same time, by the same person. Yet the passage beautifully says they were afraid yet filled with joy. Perhaps this is one of the most profound statements for us today. It tells us that it is ok to be afraid. It tells us that fear doesn't not have to be all consuming. It tells us that in the midst of fearful times joy can be found, expressed and lived. There have been times during the lockdown where I've enjoyed myself, where I have felt rested, relaxed, joyful, where I've been able to spend time with my family in ways that I probably have never experienced before. Then I sometimes feel guilty because this isn't the case for everyone, or because this shouldn't be a good time. This statement that the women were afraid, yet filled with joy, is transformative for me. It says that I am allowed to have mixed emotions and ambiguous thoughts. Perhaps what we should strive for in this season, is that as we tell people about the hope that is found in Jesus, we are allowed to do it feeling afraid, yet filled with joy. May the fear never rob us of the joy that is found in the knowledge of Jesus, our risen Lord.

***Prayer: Father, may I be so filled with your Spirit that your Joy would be my reality, even when I am filled with fear. In Jesus name. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE: DAY FIVE

### ON THE WAY

***Read Matthew 28:1-10.***

On day 3 we focused on how the women were willing to go and tell the good news of the resurrection of Jesus before they had proof of his resurrection. Today our focus verse is verse 9a: ***“Suddenly Jesus met them, “Greetings,” He said.”***

This is one of the most beautiful moments in the entire story. It is the moment where Jesus meets the women on their way to go and spread the good news. He meets them as they are running towards the disciples and away from the tomb. They were willing to share the good news even though they hadn't seen it for themselves, and in their willingness, on their way, Jesus meets them.

There are times when we are called to share the good news of Jesus even when, perhaps, it is hard to see the good news. We are called in this season to be the people who share hope, joy, peace, love and self-control. We are called to be the carriers of God's Spirit, especially now. There is a beautiful truth in this story: there will be times where we share the good news even though we may have our doubts. It is often in our willingness to share the good news of hope, that we encounter Jesus. It is often as we run to bring hope to others, that Jesus encounters us and gives us all the hope we need. It is often in our willingness to share the gospel, that the one who is the Gospel encounters us. May we be the carriers of the good news of God's love, mercy and resurrected life, even when it seems hidden from us. May we then encounter the risen Christ on this journey of being willing to share the good news.

***Prayer: Jesus, I pray that I may have a true encounter with you.  
Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE: DAY SIX

### THEY HELD HIS FEET

***Read Matthew 28:1-10.***

Today is our final focus on the passage of Matthew 28:1-10. Once again I ask the question: in your reading of this resurrection story, what stood out for you today? Our focus verses are v9b-10; ***“They came to him, clasped his feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, “do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.””***

What a beautiful image: they clasped his feet and worshipped him. In the midst of their fear, uncertainty, joy and confusion, as soon as they encountered Jesus, their response was to clasp his feet and worship Him. Today may we learn to do the same. May we spend time at the feet of Jesus, worshipping Him. Whether that is through moments of silence, prayer, listening to people speaking about Jesus, or reading Scripture. Whatever it takes, may we clasp the feet of Jesus and worship Him. Then, once we have done that - spent time with Him and encountered Him - then let us get up and go tell others where to find Him as well.

The message to the disciples was go to Galilee and they will see Him. In other words, in their time of uncertainty they are asked to go to the places where they saw Jesus work before, and there they will see Him. Perhaps this is a message for us as well. Before the lockdown, before the coronavirus, there were places where we saw Jesus at work. May we go back there (perhaps not physically), and see Jesus. Jesus is still at work, still alive, still good, and He still loves us.

***Prayer: Father, help me to fall at your feet and worship you even in the midst of uncertainty. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE

### Reflection on RESURRECTION LIFE:

**Welcome:** Spend some time reflecting on how this time of Coronavirus and lockdown has affected your experience of Holy Week and Easter. Now, spend some time reflecting how the message of Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday affects your experience of the Coronavirus and lockdown.

**Worship:** Listen (and sing along loudly) to 'Happy Day' by Tim Hughes - <https://youtu.be/BOiIW8nrw5g>

**Word:** Read ***Matthew 28:1-10***.

- In what places have you been looking for Jesus? Are they the wrong places? What are the right places, for you?
- In this challenging time, are you spreading the fear of the tomb, or are you spreading the good news of life everlasting?
- Do you know what it means to be '***afraid yet filled with joy***'? What would that look like? How can you find joy, even in the midst of fear?
- In this season, how are you holding Jesus' feet and worshipping him? How can you do better? What needs to change for you?

**Work:** This week, find a way to live a resurrection life, in the midst of challenge.

## RESURRECTION BODY: DAY ONE

### LAZARUS: AUTHENTICITY

***Read John 11:34-44.***

Historically speaking the book of John was written for the “Johanine community”, who were facing criticism from those living together with them. Jewish Christians were being shut out of the synagogue by traditional Jewish believers, due to the ongoing debate about who Jesus really was. The Greek/Roman population were criticising the Johanine community for believing that Jesus was the “Son of God”. Their own belief system denied the possibility of a god who could be human. The gods they served were “unapproachable” and “impregnable”.

John’s gospel is significant because it provides a record of John’s personal “witness” of the significance and authenticity of Jesus’ life on earth. This gospel has a timeless quality or an “eternity theme”, as it speaks of Jesus’ life on earth and His return to His Father in heaven, and it provides Christians with the assurance of an eternal life through Him. The story of Lazarus provides us with a “witness” of a Jesus who loves and cares for His people, a God who desires a relationship with those who love Him and is willing to lay down His life for them. Lastly, it provides us with the encouragement to have faith in Christ and His ability to take care of any individual need we may have.

***Prayer: Jesus, I thank you for your desire to have a personal relationship with me. I acknowledge that you are “Son of God”, and I thank you for the gift of an eternal life for all those who believe in you and serve you. Father, I ask that you strengthen my faith each day. Help me to come to know who you are and what your desire is for my life, in my daily service to you.***

## RESURRECTION BODY: DAY TWO

### LAZARUS: ABUNDANT LIVING

*Read John 11:34-44.*

The story of Lazarus is closely tied with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, close to the festival of "Palm Sunday". This is the seventh and last 'sign' which John writes about, and it marks the end of Jesus' ministry. John 10 refers to the "Good Shepherd and His sheep". We can draw a number of parallels from this parable told in chapter 10, to the story of Lazarus. The parable allows us to identify Jesus as the Shepherd. The Shepherd loves his sheep and He takes care of them and tends to them. He knows His sheep by name, and the sheep know His voice and follow Him. Jesus is the gate through which the sheep enter, and as their Shepherd He is willing to lay down his life for them.

In John 11:1-2 we hear that a man named Lazarus is sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (We remember Mary as the woman who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair). We learn that the sisters sent a message to Jesus, saying, "**Lord, the one you love is sick**" (v3). This message is interesting, as it makes one aware that Mary and Martha identified Jesus as their Shepherd. They did not need to embroider on the message, provide further details, or make a special request for Him to come and see them. The words, "the one you love" implies that Jesus knew them intimately and loved them. It also implies that they were certain of the fact that He cared for them and loved them and that they knew that Jesus would be concerned about their sick brother, Lazarus.

***Prayer: Thank you Father that you are intimately concerned about your flock, and that you care for and love me so deeply that you were willing to lay down your life for me.***

## RESURRECTION BODY: DAY THREE

***Read John 11:34-44.***

In yesterday's devotional we heard how Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus to tell him that their brother, "***the one he loves***", is sick. In John 11:4 we hear what Jesus' response was when He heard the message: "***This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's son may be glorified through it***".

John, the writer, reiterates in verse 5: "***Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus***". Then Jesus did something that may seem strange to us. He remained where He was for two more days. According to Jewish belief, the soul remains in a person's body for three days. After three days the soul has left the body and that person is completely dead. In other words, they are not in a coma or still in a "sleep state". We know that Lazarus was dead for four days before Jesus reached him. We may ask: Why did Jesus wait? Sometimes we are put in a position where we don't understand why God is not providing us with an immediate response to our requests or prayers. We may seem confused, maybe we feel hurt or maybe we feel abandoned. John 11:5 may give us some reassurance during these times as it says: "***Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus***". Even though we may be going through a period of "waiting" for God's response to our requests and prayers, we may be reassured that our Shepherd loves us.

*Consider: Have you ever been through a time in your life where you have had to wait to hear God's response to your prayers and requests? How did that affect you? How did God answer?*

***Prayer: Father, thank you that when I am going through a period of trial and my prayers are not immediately answered, I can have faith in the knowledge that you still love me and care for me, and that you will answer my prayers at the right time.***

## RESURRECTION BODY: DAY FOUR

### NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

*Read John 11:34-44.*

Martha went out to meet Jesus as He was coming to Bethany and said, ***“If you had been here my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask” (v21).*** Jesus told Martha that her brother would rise again. Her response was: ***“I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (v24).*** She did not fully understand what Jesus was telling her. Jesus replied, ***“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die and whoever lives by believing in me will never die” (v25).*** Jesus then asked Martha: ***“Do you believe that?”*** Her response was, ***“Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is come into the world” (v27).*** Both Mary and Martha understood who Jesus was, they knew that Jesus had the power and authority to heal their brother while he was still sick, but could not conceive that He could do this when he was dead. They both had faith in Jesus, but they did not have a full understanding of His will in this situation. Sometimes we may have to walk a path of uncertainty. We may become “stuck” in our grief or our anger or our confusion, and we may be unable to see the “big picture” or God’s full purpose for us, simply because our situation is too overwhelming. Instead we focus on the smaller parts of the picture and we lose faith, we doubt, or we become unsettled or insecure. We may not understand why God allows certain events or things to happen, but we can trust in His plans as our Shepherd. We can be certain of this because we know that He loves us dearly and that His plans and purposes for our lives are good.

***Prayer: Father, when I am faced with hardship or trouble, I ask you to help me to continue to trust in your unfailing love.***

## RESURRECTION BODY: DAY FIVE

### TRANSFORMATION

***Read John 11:34-44.***

Do you see Jesus as Martha did? Would you respond to Him as she did? Her response was, ***“Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is come into the world” (v27)***. John Piper tells us that: *“God’s love is not His sparing us suffering and death, love is mainly His showing us and giving us Himself in his glory. We cannot measure God’s love for us by the amount of health or wealth He brings to us. Measure God’s love by what He shows you”*. Jesus defines eternal life in John 17:3, ***“And this is the way to eternal life – to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth”***. Our increasing learning journey and our constant service to Him leads us to Know Him. Jesus knew who He was (v25), but a number of the people around Him did not know who He was. Jesus then commanded them in John 11:39, *“Roll the stone aside”*. Martha responded: ***“Lord he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible”***. Martha, Mary and those around them did not realise that the reason Jesus had come so late was to ***“reveal the glory of God” (v4)***. As Christ’s “sheep”, we may take this time to consider our relationship with Jesus. When we are doubtful or lose faith or when, as His sheep, we lose our way, He is concerned about us. ***“He will leave the 99 in the open country and go after the lost sheep until He finds it” (Luke 15:4)***. God’s love is so deep and so wide and so high that we cannot begin to fathom how much He loves us. Allow Jesus to show you who He really is.

***Prayer: Father, I acknowledge today just as Martha did: “Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is come into the world”. I want you to show me who you really are. Help me to grow in my journey as I get to know you better each day.***

## RESURRECTION BODY: DAY SIX

***Read John 11:34-44.***

Jesus prayed, ***“Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me” (v42).*** This reveals the relationship Jesus had with His Father: He knew that God would hear him, He respected his Father, He was being obedient to His Father, and He wished to glorify his Father, by showing who He really was to the people around Him. Then Jesus, our Shepherd, called out to his sheep. Lazarus knew his Shepherd’s voice and He came out, ***“his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!” (v43).*** If we try to imagine, we may think of the terrible smell coming from the tomb, the darkness inside the tomb, and Lazarus wrapped in grave cloth walking out of the tomb and into the light at Jesus’ command. We may find ourselves in that dark place inside the tomb. But if we, as Christ’s sheep, listen to his voice and are obedient to Him, we may emerge from that tomb into the light of God’s grace and love and into his fold again. This miracle revealed who Jesus really was and is today: ***“The Messiah, son of God who is come into the world” (John 11:12).*** In verse 25 we learn: ***“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die and whoever lives by believing in me will never die”.***

*You may never have made the commitment to follow Christ. Would like to recommit your life, or make that commitment today?*

***Prayer: Jesus, I humbly come to you today to ask you if I may serve you and learn to know you personally as my saviour. I ask you to forgive me for all of my past sins. Please would you come into my life today?***

## RESURRECTION LIFE

### Reflection on RESURRECTION BODY

**Welcome:** Prayer: Father we thank you for your presence here today. Thank you for hearing us when we pray. We ask that you would guide us through this week's theme and that you would provide us with the wisdom and understanding we need. Father we thank you for your love and for your desire to show us who you really are. Help us to grow in our knowledge and love of you.

**Worship:** Listen to 'The Prayer' by Andrea Bocelli and Céline Dion: [https://youtu.be/qt\\_OkgSOrkU?t=96](https://youtu.be/qt_OkgSOrkU?t=96)

**Word:** Please read ***John 11:34-44***.

- Who was the book of John written for? Why?
- What do you think the relationship was like with Mary, Martha and Lazarus? What scripture confirms your answer?
- Why do you think Jesus chose to wait after the two sisters sent a message to him telling Him that his brother was sick?
- How did Mary and Martha respond to Jesus when they met with Him? Why do you think they responded in the manner that they did?
- What do you consider is the most important scripture verse in this story? Why?
- Why was Jesus angry?
- What do you think this story reveals about who Jesus Christ really is?

## RESURRECTION MIND: DAY ONE

### GOD'S MINDSET

***Read John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (NIV).***

God sacrificed His Son with you and me in mind. He let His only Son die so that you and I can live with the promise of life after death. God gave up His Son so that we can be forgiven.

We are foremost in God's mind. He created the world with us in mind. We let him down again and again, and He let us start over. We disappointed Him over and over and He sent His Son to teach us how to live. We still fail many a time, yet He loves us unconditionally and guarantees us eternal freedom through His Son.

Jesus' death could not have been an easy journey for God, or Jesus, or His Spirit. And yet He allowed it because we are so important to Him. We are the apple of His eye. With our many flaws and failures, God loves us in spite of ourselves.

And isn't that amazing and unfathomable? That you are so very loved by God and you're on His mind?

***Prayer: Lord, thank you that you gave your only Son for me that I may have eternal life. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION MIND: DAY TWO

### JESUS RESURRECTED

***Read John 3:13. "No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man." (NIV)***

But Jesus' death was not the end. He is risen!

His resurrection is what shows us that He has conquered death. His resurrection is what shows us that God is in control. The miracle of the resurrection story is what gives us life today and what guarantees us life everlasting.

Jesus died with us in mind. But He rose again with us in mind. He came back to give us abundant hope of a new life with Him, now and after death. We don't have to wait for heaven to be affected by the resurrection story. It has the power to influence the here and now.

The way we tackle life every day happens because of the resurrection. The way we celebrate, the way we mourn, the way we face adversity, are all possible because of Jesus rising again. We have the possibility of abundant life and abundant hope now. Jesus' resurrection is the rose-tinted glasses we can wear every day. Our outlook on life is affected by both the cross and the empty tomb.

Hallelujah!

***Prayer: Lord, thank you for abundant life and hope through your resurrection. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION MIND: DAY THREE

### BEING BORN AGAIN

***Read John 1-15. "Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."" (v. 3, NIV)***

Jesus' death had to result in our death too. We have to die spiritually and be born again into new hope and new life. We cannot carry on with our old sinful ways. If the resurrection story touches your life, it cannot remain unaffected. We can never be the same again. And this is good news!

No matter what we've done or failed to do, we can be born again into the body of Christ. He promises us hope and a future. Our lives are so different because of His sacrifice on the cross and his rebirth into eternal life. We shouldn't want to remain the same: we should crave the new life offered to us through Christ.

***"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV)***

We are offered new life through death: the great paradox. And all we have to do to grasp onto that new life and walk towards the light is to believe that Jesus as the Son of God died and was resurrected for this very purpose.

There's an old saying accredited to St Augustine that God loves every one of us as if there was but one of us to love.

It is this love that gave us new life. It is this love that makes us say no to fear and yes to new life in Christ.

***Prayer: Lord, thank you that I have been born again. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION MIND: DAY FOUR

### OUR RESURRECTION

***Read 2 Corinthians 5:13-14. "If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died." (NIV)***

What Nicodemus failed to realise in John 3:1-15 is that Jesus was not speaking literally. I love the idea that Nicodemus, in his naiveté, thought that one would have to go back into the womb and physically be born again in order to inherit eternal life.

Often, in our own naiveté, we think that we also need physical change in order to inherit the kingdom of God. We place emphasis on doing things to gain favour with God. We want to do more, see more and be more.

But we don't have to change physically, because we too were resurrected with Christ. We were born again into a new spiritual life of hope and love and life eternal.

***"Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was." (Romans 6:5, NLT)***

I love the idea of being out of our minds for Christ. When we are born again we do not have to conform to the world's mindset anymore. We are free in Christ.

***Prayer: Lord, let me be out of my mind for you. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION MIND: DAY FIVE

### RENEWING OUR MINDS

***Read Romans 12:2. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..." (NIV)***

Isn't it incredible that God doesn't encourage us to fit in? He doesn't want us to be like everyone else. He doesn't want us to follow the worldly ways of sin, negativity, materialism, greed... He wants us to renew our minds and therefore transform our lives. He wants us to stick out. He wants us to be a people set apart. He wants us to be known for lives of love, kindness, compassion, hope...

And we can only renew our minds because of Jesus' resurrection. We can only put off the worldly ways because we have been born again. We can only be holy because He has made us holy through His great sacrifice.

We can rekindle our minds and focus them on Him. We can repair the cracks and revitalise our spirits and our thoughts. The very word 'renew' tells us that we can become new again. We can be born again into the love and light of Christ. We can set aside our old ways, our old patterns of living, and live through Him.

We can live resurrected life.

***Prayer: Lord, help me renew my mind. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION MIND: DAY SIX

### OUR MINDSET

***Read John 3:1-21.***

We are because of Him. We are resurrected because of His resurrection. Our minds are made new because He makes all things new. Hallelujah!

*CALLED TO FREEDOM – DEBORAH ANN*

*Called to freedom,  
not worldly bondage  
called to understanding  
wisdom and knowledge.  
Called to liberation,  
not worldly dependence  
called into holy living  
moral transcendence.  
Called to empowerment,  
not worldly subjection  
called to be the Light  
of Jesus' reflection.  
Called to separation,  
not worldly servitude  
called to be discerning  
with minds daily renewed.  
Called to freedom,  
not worldly conformation  
called into a new life  
a holy transformation!*

***Prayer: Lord, thank you for making me new. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE

### Reflection on RESURRECTION MIND:

**Welcome:** Spend a few quiet moments being welcomed into God's presence. Think of what the resurrection means to you.

**Worship:** Listen to 'Resurrection Power' by Chris Tomlin:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxH8Q8ue65o>  
Worship in gratitude for the freedom we have been given.

**Word:** Read *John 3:1-21; 2 Corinthians 5:13-14, 17; Romans 6:5; Romans 12:2.*

God sent His Son to die for us. And Jesus came back to life for us. And through His resurrection we can be born again. We can be new. We can renew our minds.

- How does the resurrection affect your everyday mindset?
- How have you been made new?
- Do you think that the renewing of your mind is a conscious process?
- What does the resurrection mean for you personally?
- Can you find other Scriptures that show us how our minds can be renewed through the resurrection?

**Work:** This week, be conscious of how the resurrection affects how you look at the world every day.

## RESURRECTION EMOTIONS: DAY ONE

### POSSESSED

***Read Mark 5:1-20. "As Jesus stepped ashore, a demon-possessed madman came out of the graveyard and confronted him" (v2, TPT).***

Mark 4 ends with Jesus in a boat in a storm. His disciples feared for their lives, but Jesus was sleeping. Jesus was woken by their fear, and he rebuked the storm, and it calmed instantly. Chapter 4 ends with the disciples saying: ***"Who is this man who has such authority that even the wind and waves obey him?" (v41).*** The story we focus on this week, tells of Jesus setting a man free who was trapped by demons. This man's life was out of control, he was tormented and tortured, and he was marginalized. And then he met Jesus, and in an instant he was saved. Jesus was in control, even over the madness that neither the man himself, nor his community, could control.

Jesus has the power and authority to set us free, even when we are most trapped, most helpless, most hopeless. In this time of fear and uncertainty, in this time of sickness and lockdown, in this time of enormous economic challenge, Jesus can transform our out-of-control lives into healthy, faith-full living. Wind and waves calm at the sound of his voice. Demons flee at the sound of his voice. And we can be transformed at the sound of his voice. When we meet the resurrected Jesus, he calms the storms of our emotions. He drives out our demons of fear and doubt and anxiety. He reconciles the many selves within us, so that we may be authentic and true and honest. Through Jesus, we can accept the gift of resurrection living. All we have to do, is step forward.

***Prayer: Jesus, thank you that you drive out the emotional madness that possesses me. Be with me in this time of challenge.***

## RESURRECTION EMOTIONS: DAY TWO

### STEPPING FORWARD

***Read Mark 5:1-20. "When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran to him and threw himself down before him..." (v6, TPT).***

As Jesus set foot on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, he was approached by a man who was wild and mad, fierce and intimidating. He lived among the tombs and the graves, and he was untameable. He broke chains and ropes when he was restrained, and he wandered among the dead, screaming and howling, slashing himself with sharp stones. He was out of control. He was marginalised, ostracised, outcast. Yet, the moment he saw Jesus, he ran toward him and worshipped him, and acknowledged Jesus as ***"Son of the Most High God" (v7, TPT)***. When Jesus asked him his name was, he said ***"My name is Mob. I am a rioting mob" (v9b, MSG)***, because he was possessed by many demons. This was a severely tormented man. Yet it was in his most tormented state, in the middle of his emotional riot, in the midst of the stench of death and decay, that he met Jesus. And Jesus set him free.

It may feel right now like our lives are out of control. It may feel like our emotions are a rioting mob. It may feel like the world has been possessed by legions of tiny virus-demons. But the resurrection of Jesus promises us that Sunday is coming. Jesus frees us too. He casts out our emotional demons of fear and hopelessness. But we need to step towards Jesus. We need to accept this amazing grace. We can know who Jesus is, we can worship him, we can acknowledge that he is Son of the Most High God. But we also need to surrender our tormented lives to him, and we need to accept the resurrection life that he offers us in return - life with hope of healing and overcoming.

***Prayer: Help me Jesus, to step toward you, to accept your grace.***

## RESURRECTION EMOTIONS: DAY THREE

### WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

***Read Mark 5:1-20. "Jesus said to him, "What is your name?" "Mob," he answered. "They call me Mob because there are thousands of us in his body!" (v9, TPT).***

When people at addiction recovery meetings get up to share their story, they start with the words: "Hi. I am [name], and I am an addict". Step 1 of the 12 Steps entails admitting that we are powerless over our addiction - that our lives have become unmanageable. We have to name it. We have to admit it, to overcome it. The man on the beach told Jesus that his name was 'Legion', or 'Mob'. He admitted that he had no control over the demons that had possessed his life. Jesus asked the man his name, and his demons answered. He identified himself from the place of his deepest pain. His torment and turmoil had consumed him, his identity and individuality had been swallowed up by the demons. But Jesus did not rebuke the man, Jesus rebuked the demons. He did not condemn the man, he cast out the demons. When the man was healed, ***"everyone wanted to see what had happened. They came up to Jesus and saw the madman sitting there wearing decent clothes and making sense, no longer a walking madhouse of a man" (v15, MSG).***

We also face turmoil. We also experience crisis. We are also possessed by the 'demons' of addiction and anxiety and fear and emotion. As our world faces the biggest challenge of our generation, we are overwhelmed and defeated and hopeless and helpless. Yet, when we approach the Son of the Most High God and we worship him, we too can be free.

***Prayer: Jesus, you overcame death and darkness in the tomb so I can receive a resurrection life of healing and light.***

## RESURRECTION EMOTIONS: DAY FOUR

### SET FREE

***Read Mark 5:1-20, and Ephesians 2:1-3. “You let the world, which doesn’t know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience” (v2-3, MSG).***

The man who approached Jesus on the beach was possessed by many demons. He said: ***“They call me Mob because there are thousands of us in his body!” (v9, TPT).*** This may seem strange to us – this is something most of us cannot relate to. Or can we? Most of us have many selves living within us. There are many aspects to us. We have many facets. How we act with one group, may be very different to how we act with another. And that may be different to how we act within ourselves. If we are honest, many of us have multiple personalities. Who we are in private differs from who we are in public. We live with inauthenticity. We pretend to have it all together, when actually we struggle with crippling doubt and fear and anxiety. We face the challenges of the world with false bravado and fake confidence. We let the world, which doesn’t know the first thing about living, tell us how to live! We are fake, we are two-faced, we are hypocritical.

But when we meet Jesus, he sets us free to live a whole-hearted and honest and resurrected life. Jesus has the power and authority to transform anyone who comes into contact with him. Jesus loves us and is wonderfully able to transform us, if we trust him with the riotous mob of emotions and addictions and pain that possesses us. Let Jesus teach us how to live a resurrected and healed life. Jesus sets us free to be our authentic selves, if we let him.

***Prayer: Jesus, because you live, the hope and light of a resurrection life shines brightest in the darkness of my tomb.***

## RESURRECTION EMOTIONS: DAY FIVE

### SHARE HOPE

***Read Mark 5:1-20. "...Go back to your home and to your family and tell them what the Lord has done for you. Tell them how he had mercy on you" (v19b, TPT).***

After Jesus had cast out the demons from the man and set him free, he wanted to follow Jesus. He asked, "could I go with you?" But Jesus encouraged him to go home. He had been filled by madness for so long. He had lived among the tombs and the graves in torment. He had been outcast and marginalised. And now Jesus sent him back to his family. His healing only became complete when Jesus restored him back into his community. He wanted to serve his saviour, but Jesus sent him to be a living witness to those who knew his story. He asked to stay where it was safe and comfortable, but Jesus had an important ministry for him in his own back yard. To be a hope-bringer and a walking miracle was a far nobler calling. Jesus sent him straight into a preaching mission. His life told the miraculous story – if Jesus could set him free then Jesus can heal anyone. Nobody is beyond hope! He became a testimony of who he was, and who he had become through Jesus.

When Jesus transforms our emotions, we are equipped to spread hope! Our changed life serves as a witness of resurrection. Jesus works with us while we are flawed, he sends us out while our wounds are still healing. There is no testimony as powerful as a transformation. No sermon is stronger than a resurrected life. If we do it through the Spirit, then it can be said of us too: ***"So the man left and went ... to tell everyone he met about what Jesus had done for him, and all the people marvelled!" (v20b, TPT).***

***Prayer: Remind me Jesus, that when I tell those around me what you have done for me, I spread resurrection life and hope and joy.***

## RESURRECTION EMOTIONS: DAY SIX

### RESURRECTION LIFE

***Read Mark 5:1-20, and Ephesians 2:4-7. "Instead, immense in mercy and with incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us!" (v4-5, MSG).***

This 'Resurrection Life' series started on Resurrection Sunday, when we were we saw that no matter how dark life gets, the Light always comes. Death was overcome. The tomb was empty. Now we can also live resurrected lives. This life is not without challenge. Jesus had to suffer and die first, before he was resurrected. But a resurrected life is a life of freedom and authenticity.

Right now we are facing a global health and economic crisis. Fear, uncertainty and anxiety is overwhelming us all. Plans for weddings, holidays, buying a home, studies, expanding a business, and more, are all gone. We may face an uncertain financial situation. We may feel disconnected and lonely. We may have relationships that are broken forever. We may have had to face a shadow side of ourselves. Hopes and dreams have crumbled to dust and ash. This is a time to mourn and lament. This is a time to wander among the graves, and shriek in the darkness, and cut ourselves with sharp stones. Having no hope, feeling hope-less, is one of the darkest places to be in. But this is also a time to approach Jesus. This is a time to worship him, and to acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of the Most High God, and let him drive out the demons of fear and doubt and anxiety that have possessed us for so long. This is a time where we accept that the tomb is empty, and death and darkness is overcome, and Jesus is risen so we can live a victorious resurrection life. There is hope. There is joy. There is life.

***Prayer: Thank you, Jesus. Through your resurrection I am free.***

## **RESURRECTION LIFE**

### **Reflection on RESURRECTION EMOTIONS:**

**Welcome:** Briefly reflect on the emotions you have been experiencing in this time of challenge.

**Worship:** Watch and sing 'I speak Jesus' by Here be Lions:  
[https://youtu.be/FpGYImM\\_VeM](https://youtu.be/FpGYImM_VeM)

**Word:** Read ***Mark 5:1-20 and Ephesians 2:1-7.***

- Why was the resurrection of Jesus so important? What does it change?
- In what way does being the people of the resurrection affect how we live life?
- In what way do the events of the resurrection affect the way we see the situation we are in today? How does the resurrection of Jesus give us hope?
- Do you have hope? What hope are you bringing to those around you?
- What 'demons' possess you? What do you need to be set free from by Jesus?

**Work:** This week, live life as someone whose life has been resurrected by Jesus. Even when it is dark, live in hope!

## RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS: DAY ONE

### WOMAN AT THE WELL

***Read John 4:4-30.***

In John 4 we meet an unnamed Samaritan woman. There are 42 verses dedicated to her story – a lot for any Biblical character, let alone a woman. This is also the longest personal conversation that Jesus has with anyone in the Bible. So why is her story so important? This ordinary woman came to the village well at noon to perform her daily task – to draw water. This was normally the duty of the young girls of the household. They went in the morning and evening, when it was cool, and they would meet each other there and catch up with the news of the day. The fact that she came to the well at such an unusual time, when she was sure to be alone, hints that she may have been an outcast. A woman who was marginalised by her community. A woman who was avoiding rejection and judgement and gossip. The fact that she, as an adult woman, came to the well to do what was normally the task of girls, hints that she may not have had any children. As she came closer in the shimmering heat, she saw a lone man sitting at the well. This must have filled her with dismay – women may not socialise with men alone. Coming closer she also realised that this man was a Jew, and Jews and Samaritans did not have a good relationship with each other, in spite of their neighbour status and their common ancestor, Jacob. Jesus had no way to draw water, so he asked her for a drink. It all sounds so commonplace.

The series 'Resurrection Life' started on Easter Sunday, and it shows us how an encounter with the living Jesus transforms our lives, bodies, minds, emotions, relationships, and finances.

***Prayer: Jesus, thank you for showing me that through your death and resurrection I can also share in abundant new life.***

## RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS: DAY TWO

### MAN AT THE WELL

*Read John 4:4-30. Try to read from a different translation today.*

Samaritans were considered unclean by Israelites. The fact that Jesus had deliberately travelled through Samaria was almost scandalous. This journey would lead him to this village, this well, this woman, this conversation, and this revelation of his true mission and identity. His choice, and his encounter with her, would transform her relationships and lead her into a resurrection life.

It was unusual to find Jesus alone, but he had sent his disciples to find food. It is startling to consider that Jesus would intentionally seek out and initiate a conversation with a woman. Gender taboos, racial divisions, religious practices, and the class system would prevent a man of Jesus' status from talking to a woman, especially one who seems to have been marginalised by her own community. It was shocking to her that a Jewish man would speak to her (v9). The disciples were shocked to find him speaking to her (v27). It was a break from cultural and religious tradition for a Jew to drink from an unclean vessel that belonged to an unclean woman. He asked her to call her husband (v16). She didn't want to disclose her disgrace to this rabbi, so she told him only a small part of the truth – "I have no husband" (v17). Her relationship situation was such a large issue in her own mind (v29), even though she initially tried to dodge the point (v19-20), but Jesus only referred to it in passing (v18). After she revealed the truth about herself, Jesus responded by revealing a truth of his own. What is most unexpected, is that Jesus chose this time, this place, and this woman to reveal, formally and explicitly, his true identity as Messiah (v26).

***Prayer: Jesus, please choose this time and place to reveal yourself to me. May I find abundant life through your resurrection.***

## RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS: DAY THREE

### OUTCAST

*Read John 4:4-30. Try to read from a different translation today.*

I have heard people refer to the Samaritan woman as a sinner because she had had five husbands, and the man she was with was not her husband. Preachers have assumed that she was divorced, and that it was all her fault. Yet the story does not say that. Jesus merely mentions her status. He does not rebuke her, nor does he say, like to the woman caught in adultery in John 8:1-11, “...**From now on, don't sin**” (v11b). Why do people automatically assume that she was a scarlet woman? She could have been a widow, married young to older husbands. It could be that she was barren – in her time being childless was grounds for divorce. Unmarried women were poor, outcast and shamed and they needed the acceptance and support of a man to survive, so she may have made desperate choices. She had likely experienced much pain, rejection and disappointment. She had likely been marginalised by conditions out of her control. But even today, Christians still shame her. Still judge her. Still make assumptions about her, based on very little information. Yes, her transformation is acknowledged and celebrated. But maybe the true transformation in her life was not only that Jesus accepted her as a guilty woman and forgave her sins. Maybe her new life was also because Jesus saw who she truly was, a lonely, outcast woman, and because of his acceptance and respect she found herself again. Maybe the woman in this story was very similar to the possessed man we focussed on last week: Jesus rebuked their demons, healed their hearts, and restored them to their community to live a resurrection life, as walking witnesses of his transformation power.

***Prayer: Jesus, thank you that you accept me as I am, and then give me an abundant life through your resurrection power.***

## RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS: DAY FOUR

### UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTENCE

*Read John 4:4-30. Try to read from a different translation today.*

It is likely that the Samaritan woman had led a life of struggle. It is certain that she'd been hurt, lonely, abused, and had experienced betrayal and rejection. God created us to be in relationship - it is a very basic human need to feel loved and accepted. She looked to others to fill her emptiness, but her several relationships brought her shame, failure and pain. God created us to be in community, but she struggled to find significance and a place to belong. As a woman, she knew sexism. As a Samaritan, she knew racism. As someone who had been with six men, she knew the loss and pain of being unloved. As a woman living with a man with whom she was not married, she was ritually unclean. She was trapped in a life of emotional trauma, relational immorality, and social and economic marginalisation. When was the last time a man had spoken to her with kindness, gentleness, care, respect, and unconditional acceptance? But Jesus was less concerned with her social life than with her spiritual life. Jesus was more interested in her heart than in her water. Jesus met her where she was, but he invited her into a resurrection life. She was transformed by their encounter, her spiritual thirst was quenched by Living Water.

Jesus invites us into an abundant life, but we must acknowledge our situation, accept his invitation, and surrender our lives to him. Jesus knows our condition, speaks the truth about our situation, and extends kindness without condemnation. He meets us where we are, and his kindness and love transforms our lives. A resurrected relationship with Jesus brings us forgiveness, acceptance, and confidence - a thirst quenched by Living Water.

***Prayer: Thank you Jesus that your Living Water brings me new life***

## RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS: DAY FIVE

### FROM OUTCAST TO EVANGELIST

*Read John 4:4-30. Try to read from a different translation today.*

When she broached the subject of the Messiah, Jesus said **“I am he” (v26a)**. This is the most direct and explicit Messianic claim Jesus ever made. He had not said this before, and until the night of his betrayal he did not say this again. Looked down upon by Jews because she was a Samaritan, and disdained because of her relationship status, she was not an obvious choice to bring the gospel in a region where it had not yet been heard. Her life circumstances relegated her to the margins of society. Jesus broke barriers of culture, race, and religion to reveal himself to her. In her hurry to tell the story of her encounter with Jesus, she left her water jar behind. She left behind the jug that had strained her shoulder. She left behind the burden she had carried. She left her shame at the well. The insignificance of her life was transformed by the significance of her experience of a Jesus who accepted her. She ran to the village and told them, **“I just talked to a man who knows everything about me, and he loves me anyway! Could this be the Messiah?” (v29)**. Her transformation was complete. She was no longer afraid and ashamed – the burden of her sin and guilt was lifted. Her excitement must have been contagious, because the people came back to meet Jesus. The change in her was so compelling that everyone took notice. They who had shunned her, listened to her. And they believed her! They followed her, and went to see Jesus for themselves. Her testimony was powerful (v39). The men of Sychar welcomed Jesus, and urged them to stay. And afterwards, many believed. The gift of sweet Living Water that Jesus offered the woman, was meant for all of Sychar and Samaria.

***Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, that you know everything about me, and love me anyway.***

## RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS: DAY SIX

### **RESURRECTION LIFE**

**Read John 4:4-30.** *Try to read from a different translation today.*

Jesus did what Jesus does. He touches and transforms the unclean. He crosses boundaries of culture, social status, and gender. What rejection takes a lifetime to destroy, his kindness and unconditional acceptance heals in an instant. He knows everything about our life, but loves us anyway. When we encounter the Messiah, he shows us who we truly are. When we meet Jesus, our shame does not control us anymore. When we focus on Christ, our reputation loses its power over us. When we surrender to God, we are no longer owned or defined by our brokenness. Knowing who Jesus is, transforms who we are. And when we are living a resurrection life, the people around us cannot help but notice. The tragedy of our past becomes a wellspring of grace. The thirst of our brokenness and shame is quenched by his Living Water. When we drink in the grace of a resurrected life, when we gulp deeply, our hearts will overflow and the Living Water will spill out of us to others around us. It will replenish those who are parched. This water is a gift from God. We cannot buy it, but we have to receive it to experience its life-giving properties.

In this time of social distancing and fear and uncertainty and lockdown, Jesus meets us at the well of hope that will never run dry. He quenches our thirst. He restores our hearts. He cares about our lives. Where our lives are suspended and our plans are in disarray and our future is uncertain, Jesus declares to us that he is our Messiah. In the tomb Jesus overcame darkness and death, so we can live a resurrected life. The power of the risen Christ is in us always, no matter what our circumstances.

***Prayer: Jesus, you offer me abundant life and joy and hope.***

## RESURRECTION LIFE

### Reflection on RESURRECTION REALTIONSHPIS:

**Welcome:** Take time to reflect on the transformation power of an experience of God. Did your life change because you met Jesus? How? Or, if not, why not?

**Worship:** Listen to and sing 'You Say' by Lauren Daigle.  
[https://youtu.be/g\\_49NQI3XTQ](https://youtu.be/g_49NQI3XTQ)

**Word:** Read *John 4:4-26*.

- How do you see the Samaritan woman transform from the beginning of the story to the end? What does say about the resurrection power of Jesus? What does this say about the transformation power of acceptance?
- On day 3 of the devotions there is an invitation to look at her story in a different light. Does this change the way you see her? Does this change the outcome for you? Why? Why not?
- Has there been a situation where you overcame your own hang-ups and fears, to speak to someone about God's work in your life? What happened?
- What do you think a 'resurrection life' looks like? Does your life look like that?

**Work:** This week, try to meet Jesus in the dark tombs and dry places in your life. Let his Living Water heal you there.

## RESURRECTION ECONOMY: DAY ONE

***Read John 6:1-9. "Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs, he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" (NIV).***

In the last couple of days I have had conversations with people who are worried about where the next meal will come from, if they will be paid, and if they will be able to meet their financial commitments. In the account of the feeding of the 5000, I want to highlight Philip's response to Jesus: "It would take more than half a year's wages". Even for Philip the reality of the economics of scale was at the forefront of his response to Jesus's request. Did you notice that no response was offered to his concern by Jesus or by Andrew? A solution to the feeding dilemma was right in front of them, and Philip hadn't noticed it. Perhaps you find yourself in times of economic or financial uncertainty, and you have so many voices offering varying opinions. If this is your reality, I want to suggest that you seek out the voice of the Resurrected Jesus, who will offer you peace and assurance.

***Prayer: Resurrected Jesus, I long to hear your voice. Speak to me I pray. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION ECONOMY: DAY TWO

***Read John 6:8-9. “Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” (NIV).***

When we reflect on the feeding of the five thousand, we typically hear about Jesus, the crowd, or the disciples, but we sometimes neglect this central character: the boy. His story teaches us so much. Nobody in the crowd would have thought that this boy mattered. Nobody would have imagined that what he was carrying in his little basket would not only be the provision of the moment, but the basis of one of the most significant sermons Jesus ever preached. This was one little boy in the crowd, with a little bit of seafood and bread, but he had been chosen by God to be a significant piece of the Messiah's redemptive plan, not only for that day, but for the rest of human history.

No one knew that after this moment, every man, woman, and child who trusted in Jesus and read the Bible would know this boy, know exactly what was in his basket that day, and know how Jesus used him to make the point about his identity. We will never know what God will use and how! That means that we're never just lost in the crowd. We're never without anything to offer. We never know who the Lord will claim and use in ways that we can't predict or haven't intended. The Lord knows us all. He knows where we are, what we have, and how we can be used. He is the Divine Author over each moment, writing our stories. He can do eternally amazing things with the little fragments of our lives that we're carrying around and that we tend to think aren't worth much. Never underestimate your little, because in God's eyes it is much.

***Prayer: Father God, I offer all that I am and all that I have for the sake of your Kingdom, here and now. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION ECONOMY: DAY THREE

***Read John 6:10-13. “Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten” (NIV).***

Whenever I think about this Scripture, I find myself wondering: what if that little boy had said no to the stranger who came and said that Jesus wanted his food? What if he had run as fast as he could into the crowd and disappeared? What if his parents had said, "That's our food – leave us alone!" But it didn't happen that way. The boy selflessly gave up his little meal, and Jesus did with it what only the Son of God could do. By divine power, a crowd of thousands was satisfied by physical food with plenty of leftovers. And simultaneously it pointed to the eternal source of spiritual food that satisfies the soul. What an amazing story! Christ did the impossible through an unremarkable kid in the middle of a very big crowd. This boy never received glory – only the Messiah did – but what he carried in his basket had bigger and more lasting implications than he would ever have been able to grasp.

We just never know what God will ask of us. We never know when he will ask it. We never know ahead of time what will happen when he does. We never know how the Lord will redeem what we have and use them to give grace to the hungry.

***Prayer: Father God, my soul is satisfied by the daily bread you offer me. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION ECONOMY: DAY FOUR

***Read John 6:1-4 “Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near” (NIV).***

If we just read this story by itself, it would seem reasonable that the disciples would believe that feeding the crowd would have been impossible. However, they had just come back from a mission of miracles. They had performed some amazing signs and wonders, many of the same things that Jesus had been doing. Nowhere in this passage does it say that Jesus took back the power and authority that he gave them at the start of the mission. But feeding the crowd still seemed to the disciples to be beyond their abilities.

So often in our lives the successes of yesterday are not enough for today. We have become a consuming society, wanting more and more. We quickly forget how God answered our prayers five years ago, or the many God-moments we stood in awe of. The world is different, and today is a new day, a day in which we must rely upon God’s power more now than we did in the past. We can look back on the good old days as much as we want, but that won’t help us today. There are miracles that are needed right now. Will we have enough faith to believe that our small basket will be enough?

***Prayer: Father God, thank you that I can hold onto your answers to prayer in the past, and trust you for the future. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION ECONOMY: DAY FIVE

***Read John 6:14-15. “After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself”***

One of the things that really stands out in this story is that Jesus told his disciples that they should feed the crowd. He didn't say, "Don't worry, I will take this," but rather, "You feed them." For Jesus, it was all rather simple. There was a large group of very hungry people. There was a need.

What do you do when confronted with a need? You meet that need. That is what is expected in the kingdom of God. The church was never meant to be a country club, where all we do is entertain ourselves. We need to be a community that is aware of the other, the needs of our people, and we are to have a desire to meet those needs.

During Covid-19 resources were limited, but the budget was never the starting point for our response, but rather what the need was.

Perhaps today, when we are we are looking at our resources, our giving is calculated and budgeted to align with our current financial concern. Maybe we need to be asking the question: what is the need in our community? How does God want to partner with us and multiply what we have for the sake of his Kingdom and people today?

***Prayer: Today I lift my eyes, Oh God, and focus on those around me, those who lack resources, those who are hungry. Guide me to share what I have. Amen.***

## RESURRECTION ECONOMY: DAY SIX

***Read John 6:11-13. “Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten”***

We need to acknowledge our needs and those of our community, but also have a clear understanding of the resources we have: our time, talents and treasures. Even if the disciples had taken the initiative, they would have had to acknowledge that there were only five loaves and two fish. However, limited resources are not the end of the story. One of the lessons of this story is that limited resources plus Jesus equals more than enough. The disciples were never expected to feed the crowd in their own power. We, as followers of Jesus, are not expected to respond to our community in our own strength.

We need to look at our limited money, time or our limited resources, and invite Jesus to multiply it. If that sounds too spiritual, we need to remember that Jesus has done that many times in the past in our lives, in His church, and during our response during Covid-19. He will continue to do that here at Northfield, and in your business and your place of work. All we need to do, is bring what we have and present it to Jesus. Once our limited resources are put in Jesus’ hands, anything can happen.

***Prayer: Father God, thank you that you continue to use what I have. Thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you that you meet me wherever I am, and perform miracles with what little I have. Amen.***

## **RESURRECTION LIFE**

### **Reflection on RESURRECTION ECONOMY:**

**Welcome:** Share a moment when God multiplied your resources.

**Worship:** Listen to or sing 'Desert Song' – Hillsong Worship:  
<https://youtu.be/HUISd7LSxAQ>

**Prayer:** *Pray to God and offer the resources that you have. Ask God to bless the little that you have and the abundance that you have.*

**Word:** Read ***John 6:1-15***.

- How would you have responded to the instruction to feed the 5000 people?
- Why do you suppose Jesus instructed the disciples to collect all the leftovers?
- What do you think Jesus did with the leftovers?

**Work:** Spend this week reflecting on the blessings that are poured out in your life. Your resources, health and relationships. Ask God to show you where you can use your time, talents and treasure for the benefit of His Kingdom, at your Church, your community centre or shelter.

# Let's do coffee

Trading Hours:  
Tuesday to Friday  
09h00 - 16h00  
Saturday & Sunday  
08h30 - 12h00



 010 140 0218

 [coffeeshop@nfmcc.org.za](mailto:coffeeshop@nfmcc.org.za)





## HOW TO KEEP IN TOUCH

-  Cnr Aerodrome Drive and Webb Street, Airfield, Benoni
-  Tel: (010) 140 0210 Fax: (011) 425 5518
-  [admin@nfmcc.org.za](mailto:admin@nfmcc.org.za)
-  [www.northfield.co.za](http://www.northfield.co.za)
-  #Northfield Methodist Church
-  @NorthfieldVoice
-  Service Times

Chapel: 7am & 5:30pm

Sanctuary: 8am, 10am & 6pm

Wesley Hall: 6pm (Youth)

Children's Church: 8am, 10am & 6pm



A group of people gathers regularly to take turns answering a single question.

In 18th century English, Wesley asked, "How does your soul prosper?"

or "How is it with your soul?" Today we might say,

"How's your spiritual life?"

Take the message from the Sunday sermon into deeper learning by joining or forming a small group. If you do not belong to a group yet,

you are welcome to sign up by contacting Nick (082 808 1452) or Ria (063 020 4639).