

GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS

EPISODE 9: NEW LIFE AND PURPOSE

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Main Points

Here are the big ideas you want people to understand:

- Jesus is unique among all the people who have ever walked on the earth
- He is the only one who has made payment for mankind's sin (by his death)
- He is the only one who has conquered death (by his resurrection)
- He is the only one who has been given all authority in heaven and on Earth
- We belong to him, and he calls us to help others become his people. We are witnesses for Jesus and called to make disciples for him among every people group in every part of the world.

EXPLORING THE STORY

◀ Look Back

Before diving into this week's session, give the group a chance to share and catch up to see where each person is at. Start with the following:

1. One-up (or One-down)

Invite each person to share one thing that has happened over the past week that they are grateful for (or, they can share one thing that has been weighing on them)

2. Prayer

Have a time of prayer and thanksgiving based on what was shared

3. Review

Quickly summarize where we've been before moving into this week's story:

“**Last time...** Jesus was ultimately rejected as the king sent from God. Though he was declared innocent in court, he was put to death on the cross for the crime of being the “king of the Jews”. But what seemed to be a human tragedy actually fulfilled God's divine plan – to offer his Son as a spotless sacrifice for sin (remember the story of Abraham and the Son of Promise?). Jesus became the substitute in our place and suffered for our crimes and sin.

▲ Look Up

Now that you've reviewed where we've been, shift to this week's episode.

4. Setting the Stage

“ Jesus died and was buried on a Friday afternoon. The next day was the Sabbath (Saturday) and was a Jewish religious holiday known as the Passover. No Jew was allowed to move about on this day, so Jesus' disciples remained in the house in Jerusalem where they were staying. Early on the morning of the third day (Sunday), some of the women who were disciples of Jesus went to visit his grave. What they discovered when they arrived at his tomb changed the course of world history.

As we read, be thinking about these things:

- Who did Jesus appear to after he was raised from the dead?
- What did he tell them to do?

5. Read **Matthew 28.1-8; 16-20; Acts 1.1-11** and then discuss:

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- What do you like about this reading? What bothers you?
 - What did Jesus tell his disciples when he first saw them in Galilee? (Matthew 28.18)
 - What did he tell them to do? What did he promise them? (Matthew 28.19-20)
 - In Acts, what did Jesus tell his disciples to focus on? (Acts 1.6-8)
 - Where were they to be his witnesses? What is the significance of this sequence? (vs. 1.8)
 - How did Jesus leave them? How will he return? (vs. 1.9-11)

► Look Ahead

Help people process the implications of this week's reading and how they should apply its truths to the way they think and live.

6. Implications and Applications

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- Jesus' disciples operate under standing orders. We are to “make disciples... until the end of the age”. The angels asked why the disciples were standing around looking at the sky. They had been given a mission and a great promise: Jesus would one day return. Until then, they were to follow his instructions to live for him and help others become his disciples.
 - What do you need to do to become part of Jesus' mission?

7. Closing Prayer