



[Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides! If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions below the discussion questions.]

THE EIGHTH DAY

Easter Sunday: April 17, 2022

ChangeMaker has been our theme the past few months, as we've walked through the events of Holy Week, the final week of Jesus's earthly life. Each week, we have explored together the changes Jesus *made* and *is making* in our lives and the world. We've learned that Jesus changed the way we think about power, religion, prayer, and politics. This Easter Sunday, we discover that Holy Week actually has *eight* days, and that on the eighth day, Jesus changed the way we think about *everything*.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q – Pastor Bryan started his sermon with a question for our imaginations: If someone offered you an eighth day of the week, what you do with it? So let's think about it—if we somehow discovered an extra day tacked on between Friday and Saturday this week, how would you spend it?

Q – Matthew 28:1 reads: "After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb."

- Why do you think the women went to Jesus's tomb that morning? What might have been on their minds and hearts as they approached it?
- According to Pastor Bryan's sermon, why were Matthew and the other Gospel writers careful to note the day and time when the women went to the tomb?

Q – Let's read through the rest of the passage together now. [Ask one or two group members to read Matthew 28:2-10 out loud.]

- What details most stand out to you from Matthew's account of the women at the empty tomb?
- What did you make of the connections Bryan drew between this passage and the creation account in Genesis?

Q – The heart of Bryan's message is that Easter is the dawn of something new, a brand-new day, a new opportunity for freedom from the ways in which we've been stuck: "The Eighth Day changes the way we think about *this life*. It means that we don't have to be *stuck* in the same place, doing the same thing, and none of it meaning anything. . . . The Eighth Day isn't just *another* day—it's *a new* day, a day unencumbered by the past; by what we've done, or by what's been done to us. It's a day that offers forgiveness for our failures, healing for our hurts, freedom from our addictions, and hope for our disappointments."

- What is one way in which you have experienced the feeling of being stuck, either recently or at some point in your life? You may have felt stuck in terms of your job, your finances, a relationship, a habit; you may have felt stuck and unable to move forward spiritually. How does Easter invite you to a new way of thinking about that stuck place?



- Is there some way in which you feel stuck *right now*, that you would like God's help with? As Bryan noted, "Change happens when we wake up to the possibility of a new life with God." Let's share with one another where we are feeling stuck and how we can pray for one another.

Q – Next, Bryan observed that "Easter means that God is remaking this world, one day at a time, and the Eighth Day was the first day of that new creation"—and we are all invited to join God in this work of re-creation and restoration.

- Revelation 21:5 tells us: "He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!'" What is one concrete way that we as a Christian community can partner with God in his work of making everything new in the world around us?

Q – Finally, Bryan noted that the Eighth Day changes the way we think about the life to come, for ourselves and for those we have loved and lost.

- What does it mean for us to grieve as people with hope (see 1 Thess. 4:13-18)?
- As you think about the stresses and challenges you are facing right now personally, or the challenges we are facing as a society, what would it look like for you to face those challenges with Easter hope?

HOW TO USE THESE STUDY GUIDES

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
 - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
 - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

Group Leader Support: Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.

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