

WHITNEY HOPLER

DISCOVERING THE
WONDER OF

*Lent &
Easter*



A FOUR-WEEK STUDY

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WEEK 1

How Participating in Lenten Traditions Opens Our Eyes to God's Wonder



Lent—a season of reflection and renewal that helps us prepare for Easter—is a sacred journey. The more we seek God during Lent, the more we can grow spiritually and encounter God's wonder along the way. Lent is a dedicated time for moving closer to God. God will meet us where we are and empower us to grow when we ask the Holy Spirit to work in our lives during Lent. Lent can be a solemn time as we grapple with the reality of sin and our need for repentance and positive change. However, Lent is full of wonder that we can experience as we practice spiritual disciplines that lead us to spiritual growth. Then, we can emerge from Lent with a stronger relationship with God. That relationship will inspire us with awe and move us to embrace the ultimate hope God offers us through Jesus' Resurrection.

At the heart of Lent is an invitation to delve into the depths of our relationships with God. God wants us to be wholeheartedly devoted to him, since he is passionately in love with us. He urges us in Joel 2:12–13:

“Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.”

That's the essence of Lent. It's not about religious rituals; it's about a heartfelt relationship with God.

When Is Lent?

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, where we can attend a church worship service where we receive ashes marked in the sign of the cross on our foreheads. That symbolizes our mortality, as well as

the need to repent of our sins and trust in Jesus' sacrifice for those sins, so we can spend eternity with our holy God. The ashes we receive at the beginning of Lent are a tangible reminder of God's words in Genesis 3:19: "... dust you are and to dust you will return." Ash Wednesday sets the tone for a season of humility, inviting us to recognize our dependence on God and to trust him more deeply.

The entire duration of Lent is 40 days, and a 40-day period of time has special biblical significance. It often represents a period of testing and preparation. Some examples from the Old Testament include how God flooded the earth for 40 days to deal with sin (Genesis 7:4) and how Moses spent 40 days on Mount Sinai in preparation to receive the Ten Commandments (Exodus 24:18). In the New Testament, Jesus spent 40 days fasting and praying to prepare for his public ministry (Matthew 4:1–11, Mark 1:9–13, and Luke 4:1–13), and he spent 40 days on earth after his Resurrection until his Ascension to heaven (Acts 1:3). Holy Week happens during the last week of Lent, and Easter immediately follows Lent. By the time we reach Easter, if we've pursued spiritual growth during Lent, we'll be prepared to celebrate Easter with a full awareness of its significance in our lives.

How Lenten Traditions Can Lead Us to Wonder

Lent is a deliberate and intentional season marked by spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting, and helping people in need. As we make a deliberate choice to detach from distractions and focus on our faith, we create space in our lives for a deeper connection with God. Lent can help us to realign our priorities, refocus our hearts, and renew our commitment to following Jesus. During Lent, we can enjoy an intentional journey that transcends our routines and leads us to appreciate the serious yet wondrous redemptive work Jesus did for us.

The presence of the Holy Spirit with us is central to the wonder of spiritual growth during Lent. It's the Holy Spirit who helps us grow spiritually, so we can develop key qualities that the Bible calls the "fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians 5:22–23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance [patience], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law." In John 14:26, Jesus promises the coming



of the Holy Spirit, saying, “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you,” Jesus reveals that the Holy Spirit will advocate for us and teach us everything we need to know.

So, during Lent, it’s vital to communicate regularly with the Holy Spirit through prayer. We can invite the Holy Spirit to help us grow in holiness throughout this sacred season. We can also pray about everything that’s on our minds throughout each day, continually giving each situation over to God. As we do, we’ll discover the wonder of God’s work in our lives. That will inspire us to keep growing—even when the process of doing so is challenging. Lenten prayers often focus on topics that can help us move closer to God: confessing our sins, repenting of them, and asking for forgiveness; pursuing discernment, relying on God’s strength; and taking action when God calls us to do something like being kind, resolving conflicts, or serving others. None of those pursuits are easy! But through prayer, we can get all the help we need from the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:26 reminds us that “... the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.” Not only will the Holy Spirit answer our prayers, but he will even join us in prayer to articulate our thoughts and feelings! Realizing that the Holy Spirit actively participates in our prayers can inspire us with a sense of reverent awe, strengthening our connection with God.

Fasting is another significant practice during Lent. Fasting—which involves giving up something temporarily to redirect that time and energy to spiritual growth—is more than just a physical discipline. It’s a spiritual exercise that opens space for the Holy Spirit to strengthen our devotion to God. In the wilderness, Jesus fasted for 40 days, relying on the power of the Spirit to sustain him. Many believers abstain from certain foods (such as desserts) or give up alcohol during Lent. Others stop indulging in certain practices like watching television or posting on social media, in order to free up that time for more prayer during Lent. As we abstain from particular foods or activities, we can experience a heightened awareness of our reliance on God. The process of fasting becomes an opportunity to confront the desires of our



flesh and seek fulfillment in God alone. Jesus reveals in Matthew 6:16–18 that when we fast with pure intentions, God will reward us.

Another important way to grow spiritually and experience wonder during Lent is helping people in need. When we use our resources of time, energy, and money to help meet people’s needs, God’s love flows through our lives into theirs. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus teaches about the transformative power of compassionate acts, saying: “...‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Proverbs 19:17 declares: “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.” As we help people in need, we become vessels through which the Holy Spirit extends God’s love to others. We discover that generosity is not only about meeting the needs of others, but also about participating in the redemptive work of God. We’re bound to discover lots of wonder along the way!

Lenten traditions connect us with the Holy Spirit for a special season of intentional partnership. When we see them as more than rituals but as opportunities to partner with the Spirit, we can enjoy wondrous learning opportunities—about God, about ourselves, and about our world. The Spirit will teach us everything we need for spiritual growth as he renews our mind during Lent. Romans 12:1–2 exhorts us:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

It’s through the process of offering ourselves to God that we experience positive change and experience the wonder of God’s faithfulness to us.

The Power of Participating in Lent

In conclusion, Lent is a powerful season to grow closer to God and experience his wonder along the way. We can not only



prepare for Easter during Lent, but we can spark a fire of lifelong love for God in our souls. Approaching Lenten traditions with a focus on relationship rather than ritual can connect us with God in important and exciting ways. While it can be challenging to pursue spiritual growth, the Holy Spirit is always available to help us grow. Partnering with the Spirit during Lent can make the prayer of Psalm 51:10 a reality in our lives: “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” As we cooperate with the Spirit, our efforts to grow closer to God can transform us in the deepest levels of our souls!



WEEK 2

The Wonder of Walking through Holy Week with Jesus



Holy Week—the last week of Lent before Easter—is a wonderful opportunity to connect with Jesus in ways that inspire us with awe. During Holy Week, we can trace Jesus’ steps through the last week of his earthly life and discover how Jesus brought the light of hope into a dark world. Every day of Holy Week presents something significant to learn about Jesus as the world’s Savior. As we celebrate each day of Holy Week, we can let the details of Jesus’ activities then shape our prayer and meditation. That will lead us through both sorrow and joy. By the end of the week, when we reach Easter, we’ll have fresh insights into the wonder of Jesus’ redemptive work and stronger relationships with him. So, let’s start the journey!

Palm Sunday: The Triumphal Entry

As we begin our journey through Holy Week, we step alongside the crowds, welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem with palm branches and shouts of “Hosanna!” which is both a form of praise and a prayer for salvation. This triumphant entry, however, features layers of meaning beyond a simple celebration. In Matthew 21:1–9, Mark 11:1–11, Luke 19:29–44, and John 12:12–19, we see a prophecy from Zechariah 9:9 fulfilled as Jesus rides into the city on a donkey with her baby beside them: “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” The wonder of Palm Sunday lies in recognizing Jesus not as a conquering king in worldly terms (who would ride in on a majestic horse like a stallion) but as the loving Prince of Peace, entering the city with humble donkeys. Even in the jubilation of Palm Sunday, there is a subtle yet powerful proclamation of Jesus as the Light of the World. In John 12:46, Jesus reveals: “I have come into the

world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.” The triumphal entry into Jerusalem highlights the arrival of the Light that dispels the darkness in our fallen world.

Monday of Holy Week: Cleansing the Temple

Our journey with Jesus takes us to the temple on Monday. In Matthew 21:12, we witness Jesus overturning the tables of the moneychangers and driving out those who were corrupting the purpose of that sacred place by buying and selling there. With righteous zeal, Jesus declares in Matthew 21:13: “‘It is written, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’” The story continues as Jesus proceeds to heal people at the temple after he has cleansed it. Jesus’ actions on that day represent his call to authentic worship and a pure heart, challenging us to examine our hearts as we navigate Holy Week. In the act of cleansing the temple, Jesus reveals himself as the Light that exposes sin and purifies, empowering people to grow in holiness. Just as he purged the physical temple, Jesus illuminates our souls, urging us to embrace genuine worship. In John 8:12, Jesus declares: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” On this day, we can invite Jesus to shine his light into our lives, revealing what we need to change in order to grow closer to him.

Tuesday of Holy Week: Teachings and Parables

Tuesday is marked by a series of teachings and parables that Jesus delivers. In Matthew 22:37–40, Jesus summarizes the essence of God’s law: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” As we reflect on Jesus’ teachings on Tuesday, we see what’s most important from God’s perspective, which is choosing love. In the teachings and parables of Tuesday, Jesus continues to illuminate the path of holiness for us. He becomes the guiding Light, directing our hearts toward love and compassion. In John 12:35, Jesus encourages us: “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the



dark does not know where they are going.” The way we can best discover the wonder of God’s work in our lives is through love, since everything God does is done in love. The Bible tells us that “God is love” (1 John 4:8 and 1 John 4:16), so we can understand that love is at the core of who God is. As we reflect on Jesus’ words from this day, we can renew our commitment to living with love, such as practicing intentional kindness and helping people in need.



Wednesday of Holy Week: The Plot Against Jesus and Anointing

Wednesday brings us to a pivotal moment in the Bible’s Holy Week narrative, where the religious leaders plot against Jesus. In Matthew 26:3–4, we learn: “Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him.” When we ponder Jesus’ opposition, we can see how Jesus can help us when we confront the darkness of betrayal and conspiracy in our lives. Jesus calls us to love our enemies, but he doesn’t expect us to do so in our strength. Jesus will empower us to overcome opposition with love. We only need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us in challenging situations like these. During Wednesday evening, Jesus goes to dinner in Bethany and Mary anoints him with perfume to honor him and express her love (Matthew 26:6–13, Mark 14:3–9, and John 12:1–8). That anointing foreshadows Jesus’ burial to come. Mary had faith that Jesus was indeed who he said he was: the Son of God. Even in the middle of the dark plot against him, Jesus remains the unwavering Light. John 1:4–5, assures us when it describes Jesus as the world’s light: “In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” Physically, light dispels darkness. We can see that by simply entering a dark room and then turning on a light—even a tiny light, like a candle flame. Spiritually, Jesus’ light dispels all darkness, since his power is much greater than evil. On this day, we can be confident that the Light of the World continues to shine, undeterred by any type of darkness in our world.

Maundy Thursday: The Last Supper and the Mandate of Love

On Maundy Thursday, we gather at the table with Jesus as he

institutes the sacrament of communion. Matthew 26:26–28 explains the profound significance of this sacrament: “While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.’” The wonder of Maundy Thursday lies in the sacramental act and the mandate of love that Jesus gives, commanding his disciples to love one another as he has loved them. In the intimacy of the Last Supper, Jesus embodies sacrificial love, becoming a beacon of light for the disciples as they are about to face the darkness of Good Friday, the next day. As we ponder the wonder of Maundy Thursday, we’re inspired to respond to the exhortation in Ephesians 5:1–2: “Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”



Good Friday: The Darkness of the Cross

On Good Friday, the journey takes a somber turn as we stand at the foot of the cross, witnessing the Crucifixion of Jesus. Matthew 27:45 tells us that while Jesus hung on the cross, bearing the tremendous weight of our sins: “From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land.” We find the Light of the World willingly stepping into the darkest depths of human suffering. As Jesus hangs on the cross, the darkness seems overwhelming. But when Jesus finishes his mission to save the world, his Light overcomes the darkness of sin. Hope becomes a reality for all people throughout history, since Jesus has made a way for everyone to connect with our perfect God. Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross becomes the ultimate manifestation of the Light triumphing over even the darkest forces in our world. On this day, we know that our mourning will turn to celebrating, because Easter is on the way.

Holy Saturday: The Silence of Waiting

Holy Saturday invites us into the sacred silence of waiting with hope. As we reflect on how Jesus’ body rests in the tomb before his Resurrection, we can be inspired with awe and gratitude as

we consider how Jesus helps us deal with grief and every other type of challenging circumstances in our lives. The wonder of Holy Saturday lies in the quiet hope that even in the stillness, God is at work, fulfilling the promises spoken through the prophets. Even in the silence of Holy Saturday, Jesus' light continues to shine, giving us hope. While we wait, we have the confidence of knowing that Jesus will fulfill good purposes—both in our lives, and in our world. Psalm 27:1 assures us: “The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?” Holy Saturday inspires us to overcome fear with hope.

Easter Sunday: The Triumph of Resurrection

The wonder of Holy Week reaches its zenith on Easter Sunday as we stand before the empty tomb. In Matthew 28:5–6, an angel declares to a woman outside Jesus' grave: “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.” Jesus, the Light of the World, has completely overcome the darkness of sin and death, offering all people the radiant hope of new life. In John 11:25–26, Jesus says: “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. Do you believe this?” On this wonderful day, we can respond to Jesus' question by affirming that we do believe!

In conclusion, walking through Holy Week with Jesus is a powerful journey that leads us to wonder with every step. We encounter the multifaceted wonder of our Savior in many ways: through Jesus entering Jerusalem, the temple cleansing, Jesus' teachings on love, the plot against Jesus and his anointing, the Last Supper and communion, the Crucifixion, waiting with hope, and celebrating the Resurrection. Our wondrous experiences with Jesus during Holy Week can inspire us to trust him. When we encounter dark situations, we can rely on Jesus—the Light of the World—to give us the hope and help we need.



WEEK 3

Seeing the Wonder in the Miracle of Jesus' Resurrection



The resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first Easter is a miracle that transcends our human understanding and shows God's power at work in awe-inspiring ways. The gravestone rolls away, not just revealing an empty tomb but tearing open the fabric of our reality. Jesus, who died through crucifixion and was entombed in a grave, is now resurrected—becoming a living testimony to the truth of his work as the world's Savior. Jesus' resurrection is the greatest event in history, since it makes hope a reality for humanity. It shows us that we truly can enjoy eternal life with God if we trust him. Every part of the resurrection story from the Bible is full of wonder! Let's explore the miracle of Jesus' resurrection so we can discover its profound significance and let the wonder of it draw us closer to our Savior.

The Miracle of the Empty Tomb

The Bible's resurrection narrative begins with the discovery of Jesus' empty tomb. In Matthew 28:5–6, an angel tells the women who are visiting Jesus' grave:

“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 emptiness of the tomb is not a void but a testament to the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to rise from the dead. To embrace the miracle of the empty tomb is to step into a space where our finite understanding collides with the infinite power of God. It requires us to shed preconceptions and enter with hearts open to the extraordinary. Consider God's words in Isaiah 55:8–9:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than

your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

We should approach the empty tomb with a willingness to be surprised by God.

The empty tomb echoes with the resonance of redemption so profound that it reverberates throughout all of history. In Colossians 2:15, the Apostle Paul vividly describes the aftermath of the cross: “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” The empty tomb is the culmination of this triumph—a resounding victory over sin and death. In Romans 4:25, Paul points out that Jesus “was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.” Jesus’ empty tomb represents not just the absence of a body but the fulfillment of God’s promise to save humanity from sin. As we ponder the empty tomb, we can let the reality of our redemption from sin fill our hearts with awe and gratitude.

Jesus invites us to believe when we reflect on his empty tomb. He challenges us to move beyond doubt and embrace a faith that transcends what our eyes can see. John 20:24–29 reports how Jesus’ disciple Thomas refused to believe that Jesus has been resurrected until Jesus appeared and gave Thomas the opportunity to verify that it was really him. John 20:27–29 records a conversation between Jesus and Thomas:

Then he [Jesus] said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

We can’t physically see and touch the risen Jesus right now like Thomas did, since Jesus has already ascended to heaven. But Jesus appeared to hundreds of different people during the 40 days he spent on Earth between his resurrection and his ascension (1 Corinthians 15:1–11 and Acts 1:1–11), and his work from heaven as our living Savior is evident in each of our lives. So, we can accept Jesus’ invitation to believe, with the confidence that God’s resurrection power is not confined to the past but is available to us now in relationships with Jesus.



Encountering the Risen Jesus

The heart of the resurrection miracle is our encounter with the risen Jesus. When Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, John 20:20 says that “...The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.” His resurrected presence defied the laws of nature, ushering in a sense of wonder. We can also connect with the risen Jesus through spiritual practices that help us notice his presence with us throughout each day, such as prayer and meditation practices. Jesus is the same God who encourages us that when we seek him, we will find him. He tells us in Jeremiah 29:13: “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

Encountering the risen Jesus involves opening our hearts up to the miraculous. It means looking for the wonder of God’s work in our lives with a strong faith that is ready to believe and trust. That challenges us to suspend our disbelief, to set aside the limitations of our rational minds, and to open ourselves to the possibility of a tangible encounter with Jesus. Just as the disciples touched and beheld the risen Jesus, we can seek relationships with Jesus that are both personal and experiential. Psalm 34:8 urges us to: “Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.” As we encounter the wonder of Jesus’ resurrection, we become hungry for closer relationships with him and eager to taste the goodness he can bring into our lives.

Jesus’ resurrection isn’t confined to the pages of history. It’s a present reality in our lives, because we can enjoy relationships with the risen Jesus right now. In Revelation 3:20, Jesus tells us:

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”

Jesus is not a distant figure from history, but a part of the living God, who knows and loves us completely and wants to have a close relationship with us. So, we can invite Jesus into the everyday moments and ordinary spaces of our lives. We can do that by praying about everything, as the Bible encourages us to do in Philippians 4:6—keeping a constant mindset of expressing our thoughts to Jesus, listening for his guidance, and relying on him to provide what we need.



The resurrection gives us ultimate hope. That's definitely something to celebrate by praising God! In 1 Peter 1:3–4, the Bible declares:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you

The resurrection assures us that we can experience eternal life with God because of Jesus' redemptive work. In John 11:25–26, Jesus talks with Martha and says:

“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. Do you believe this?”

Jesus asks us the very same question: Do we believe this? If we do, we can live forever with God. The wondrous miracle of the resurrection gives us confidence that, when we trust Jesus, death is not the end but the gateway to everlasting life.

So, let's immerse ourselves in the Bible's resurrection stories. We can read the reports and imagine ourselves personally witnessing the scenes they describe. As we engage our emotions with what goes on, we let ourselves feel the shock and awe of the experience. We become humbled by the wonder of God's work saving humanity. We allow God's limitless love to wash over us. Let's embrace the mystery of something that can't be logically explained. Not everything needs to be neatly explained. We can let the unknown spark our curiosity and motivate us to keep seeking God every day through lifelong learning. As Romans 11:33 points out, there is so much that is valuable to learn about God's mysteries:

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

While we can't logically understand the miracle of the resurrection, we can find inspiration from it every day as we place our hope in Jesus. Whenever we need to renew our hope, we only have to read the Bible's stories of the resurrection to remind ourselves



of its reality. We can also enjoy wonder walks in nature and let creation remind us that our Creator brings us renewal—daily sunrises, fresh rains, blooming flowers, and more. The physical renewal we encounter can inspire us with gratitude for the spiritual renewal Jesus gives us.

In conclusion, the miracle of Jesus’ resurrection welcomes us into a powerful encounter with wonder. It challenges us to consider the greatest event in history when God saved the world and proved that we could trust him completely. As we explore the miracle of the resurrection, we open our hearts and minds to a deeper reverence for Jesus that inspires us to develop closer relationships with him. We discover that God has given us ultimate hope! When we encounter the reality of the risen Jesus in our lives, we’ll be so awestruck that we’ll exclaim along with Thomas in John 20:28: “My Lord and my God!”



WEEK 4

How to Live Out the Wonder of Easter Every Day



Easter is a joyful time of celebrating the most important event of our faith: Jesus Christ's resurrection. We eagerly look forward to the Easter holiday for a long time each year, but it ends after one short day. That can be quite disappointing. After all, who really wants to stop celebrating the best gift the world has ever received? The good news is that we don't need to stop celebrating Easter after the holiday is over. We can celebrate the wonder of Easter every day—not just on Easter Sunday. The wonder that Easter sparks in our souls is something we can enjoy each day of our lives. When we do, we'll experience the joy that comes from connecting with God's presence in our lives day by day. Here's how to live with the wonder of Easter every day.

Live with Hope

Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross and victorious resurrection from his grave assures us of our own victory over sin and death when we trust Jesus to help us. It gives us confidence that we can connect with our holy God and experience eternal life with him in heaven. That reality gives us ultimate hope and infuses our lives with a sense of renewal. As believers, we can let the hope God has given us permeate every aspect of our lives. Romans 6:4 declares:

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

This new life, born out of Jesus' resurrection, is a hope-filled life that inspires us to find and fulfill God's purposes for us. It motivates us to ask the Holy Spirit to empower us to move away from our sins and move closer to God, day by day. When we're

living with hope, we can do as Romans 6:11 urges us to do: "... count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." Living with hope also frees us from the fear of death, because we know that when we die, we will go to heaven when we trust Jesus as our Savior. That hope inspires us to discover the wonder of God's work in our lives, and when we become aware of that day by day we can stop worrying, overcome anxiety, and find encouragement when we're grieving. Living new lives of hope also motivates us to share the Gospel message with other people who are looking for hope. Jesus' resurrection on the first Easter showed that he conquered death once and for all. As 1 Corinthians 15:55–57 proclaims:

Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Also, 1 Peter 1:3 encourages us:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

This living hope propels us forward each day, knowing that even when we face dark circumstances, we can rely on Jesus as the Light of the World to help us.

Live with Courage

Jesus' resurrection is the ultimate victory over fear. It shows God's power to conquer anything—even what we fear the most: death. When we keep the wonder of Easter in mind every day, we can walk with a powerful spirit that makes us courageous. In 2 Timothy 1:7, the Bible reveals: "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." This assurance empowers us to face life's challenges with boldness. The more we focus on the wonder of what God has done for us through Easter, the more we can trust in God's promises when we're in situations that make us feel afraid. Thanks to the resurrection, we know that God's power is truly limitless. Wonder helps us break free of fear by moving our perspective beyond our circumstances to



God. Then, we can see that we can rely on God to help us with whatever we need in any circumstances. God assures us in Isaiah 41:10:

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

This steadfast assurance enables us to face each day with courage, knowing that God is our protector and guide. Wonder inspires us to feel awe, which is a good kind of fear involving respect and reverence. The Bible refers to that in both Proverbs 9:10 and Psalm 111:10, when it says that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” The resurrection’s wonder shows God’s awesome power at work in a miraculous way. Pondering that gives a healthy fear of God—not being afraid of God himself (because God is good and loving), but being in awe of God’s great power. Since God used his great power to give us the gift of salvation on Easter, we can live securely in God’s love, which gives us courage.

Live with a Sense of Belonging

The wonder of Easter highlights that we have been adopted into God’s family through the saving work of Jesus Christ. This adoption brings with it a powerful sense of belonging that dispels the fear of rejection or abandonment. Romans 8:15–16 points out:

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

This intimate relationship with God fills us with confidence, knowing that we are unconditionally loved and accepted. So, we can enjoy peace of mind before God. When we let the wonder of Easter inspire us, we can see that we’re connected to our Heavenly Father along with all of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. That can motivate us to pursue unity with our fellow believers. As part of God’s family together, we should treat each other with intentional kindness, helping each other in practical



ways and building relationships that are full of grace and mercy.

Live with Forgiveness

As we reflect on the wonder of Easter and the events leading up to it, we can't help but think about forgiveness. Jesus' work saving humanity from sin was all about forgiveness. We can ponder Jesus' words from the cross, recorded in Luke 23:34: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Since God has forgiven us for so much, shouldn't we forgive others who hurt us, as God calls us to do? Forgiveness isn't easy, but it's a vital part of Easter's message. We should respond to Easter every single day by being willing to forgive people, with God's help. We can let go of bitterness and resentment, and move on with freedom and trust that God will help us with whatever we need. Colossians 3:13 encourages us to: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Jesus will help us learn to love our enemies. He will also help us move on from our own past mistakes when we ask him to forgive us for them and learn from them.

Live with Strength

Finally, we can draw strength from the wonder of Jesus' resurrection. Remember that death must always precede resurrection. So, we must be willing to sacrifice whatever selfish agendas conflict with God's will for our lives. We can crucify attitudes and behaviors that we know don't align with God's best for us, so God can raise us to new lives by transforming our habits into healthy ones that will help us grow to become more like Jesus. As the Apostle Paul says in Galatians 2:20:

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead now lives within all of us who trust Jesus as our Savior. That empowers us with the strength we need in any situation. Philippians 4:13 points out: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." This profound truth reminds us that we are not alone in our struggles.



We have access to the limitless power of God through our union with Jesus. By letting the wonder of Jesus' resurrection inspire us daily, we can face each day with all the strength we need.

So, we don't have to stop celebrating Easter just because Easter Sunday has passed. We can celebrate the wonder of Easter every day of the year. As we do so, we can live with hope, courage, belonging, forgiveness, and strength. Let's remember that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead now lives in us as God's children, empowering us to live our best lives every single day! The more we let the wonder of that reality inspire our daily choices, the more we can enjoy the abundant life God intends for us.

Sources

WEEK 1: [How Participating in Lenten Traditions Opens Our Eyes to God's Wonder](#)

WEEK 2: [The Wonder of Walking through Holy Week with Jesus](#)

WEEK 3: [Seeing the Wonder in the Miracle of Jesus' Resurrection](#)

WEEK 4: [How to Live Out the Wonder of Easter Every Day](#)

About the Author

Whitney Hopley is the author of the *Wake Up to Wonder* book and the Wake Up to Wonder blog, which help people thrive through experiencing awe. She leads the communications work at George Mason University's Center for the Advancement of Well-Being. Whitney has served as a writer, editor, and website developer for leading media organizations, including Crosswalk.com, The Salvation Army USA's national publications, and Dotdash.com (where she produced a popular channel on angels and miracles). She has also written the young adult novel *Dream Factory*. Connect with Whitney on X/Twitter and on Facebook.

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