

Cultivate Reflection Guide

How to Come Back to Life Easter Edition: March 3/4, 2021

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

Following God in a culture that doesn't is easier said than done. The book of Romans is full of foundational gospel truth that will teach us how our faith can influence the world around us, instead of letting others tell us what to believe – in the places where Christianity and culture collide.

Use our Weekly Reflection Guide, in community or through personal study, to live out what we're learning on the weekends. It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you. Choose the questions that are meaningful to you, then be REAL with self, God or others as you reflect, respond and pray.

1. But First... Pastor Matt challenged us that if we're always looking back, we'll miss out on the goodness God has for us both now and in the future. It's not only struggles with the past that can rob us of God's goodness today. Present distractions can steal just as much.

"Another said, "Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family." Luke 9:61 NLT

- Where in your life are you saying, "but first let me _____" to God?
- What has that stolen from you? This could be practical [time, energy], spiritual [growth, maturity], emotional [well-being, health] or even relational [meaningful connection with others].
- What would it take for you to follow God first and trust Him with what comes next?

Live it Out This week, whenever you're tempted by a "but first let me..." moment, turn your focus to God. Whether that's by practically choosing time with Him or praying for help, strength or courage. Make note of how you experience His goodness when you intentionally follow Him first.

2. Back to Truth: We live in a culture that is great at expressing feelings, but terrible at facing truth. If we want something better than normal, we need to come back to God's truth – and believe it.

"Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32 NLT

- How have you seen faithfulness to God's truth lead to freedom in your life?
- Is there any area of your life where you're relying on your feelings/thoughts/opinions more than believing God's truth? What can you do to come back to truth and believe it?

3. Right with God: Relationships take two and we don't get to declare them "good" without input from the other individual. That perspective holds true with God. If we want to have a healthy, growing relationship with Him, we need to ask Him if we're okay and what to do when we're not.

As you do this, remember we ALL commit sins of:

- **Commission:** doing what is wrong
- **Omission:** not doing what is right

Get alone someplace quiet with God and be still. If distracting thoughts rise up, set them aside side for now. Pray Psalm 139:23-24 back to God...

God, I invite your searching gaze into my heart. Examine me through and through; find out everything that may be hidden within me. Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares. See if there is any path of pain I'm walking on, and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting way—the path that brings me back to you.

Now, just listen. If God is pointing something out, take notice. Acknowledge it. Confess how it is affecting you. Ask God to show you the path back to Him – whether that's through forgiveness, change, growth or simply faith in Him. Then, identify what a next step would be for you to pursue that path with purpose and intention.