



## **Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups**

# **“The Risen Lord Is Calling You”**

**Preached by Daniel Grothe**

**April 5, 2026**

### **Summary**

*Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.*

Pastor Daniel’s Easter sermon focuses on three personal encounters Jesus had immediately after his resurrection, representing different groups of people: the sorrowful (Mary Magdalene), the skeptical (Thomas), and the shameful (Peter). Rather than making grand public appearances, Jesus chose to personally address individuals who were struggling with grief, doubt, and shame. The pastor emphasizes that Jesus doesn't rebuke or shame people for their struggles, but instead meets them with compassion, patience, and restoration. Mary Magdalene, who had suffered deeply and was mischaracterized historically, heard Jesus call her by name. Thomas, who needed proof, was invited to touch Jesus' wounds rather than being given philosophical arguments. Peter, who had denied Jesus three times, was lovingly restored through a personal conversation away from the group. The

message concludes that wherever people are in their spiritual journey - Jesus knows exactly how to meet them with grace and purpose.

## Key Passages

- 2 Corinthians 5:14-15
- John 20:11-16
- John 20:24-29
- John 21:3-7
- John 21:15-17

## Opening Prayer

*Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own*

**Heavenly Father**, we come before you this Easter morning with grateful hearts, celebrating the victory of Jesus over sin and death. As we gather together in this small group, we ask that you would open our hearts and minds to what you want to teach us today. Help us to be vulnerable with one another and receptive to your Spirit's leading. May we see Jesus more clearly through our discussion and leave here transformed by the truth of the resurrection. We pray this in the powerful name of Jesus, our risen Savior. **Amen.**

## Getting Going

*Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.*

What is one Easter tradition from your childhood that you remember most fondly, and do you still practice it today?

## Discussion Questions

*Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.*

1. The pastor mentioned that Mary Magdalene was historically mischaracterized. How do you think misunderstandings about people's past can affect how we treat them today?
2. Mary Magdalene didn't recognize Jesus until he called her by name. What does it mean to you that Jesus knows your name personally?
3. Thomas needed to see and touch Jesus' wounds to believe. How do you respond to people who have honest doubts about faith?
4. The pastor said 'when we're struggling to hear the words of Jesus, he offers us his wounds.' What do you think this means?
5. Peter went back to fishing after denying Jesus three times. When you've failed or made mistakes, what do you tend to 'go back to' for comfort?

6. Jesus asked Peter 'Do you love me?' three times - once for each denial.  
Why do you think Jesus chose to restore Peter this way?
7. Which of the three people (Mary, Thomas, or Peter) do you most relate to right now, and why?
8. How does knowing that Jesus personally pursues people who are sorrowful, skeptical, or shameful change your view of God's character?

## **Making It Personal**

*Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.*

This week, identify one area where you might be carrying sorrow, skepticism, or shame. Spend time in prayer asking Jesus to meet you in that specific place, just as he met Mary, Thomas, and Peter. Consider sharing this struggle with a trusted friend or mentor who can pray with you and remind you of God's grace.

## **Key Takeaways**

*Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.*

- Jesus personally addresses people in their pain rather than making grand public displays

- God meets the sorrowful by calling them by name and restoring their identity
- Jesus doesn't rebuke skeptics but patiently provides what they need to believe
- When we fail, Jesus pursues us for restoration rather than condemnation
- The resurrection demonstrates that no one has gone too far for God's grace and forgiveness

## **Closing Prayer**

*Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.*

**Lord Jesus**, thank you for the hope we have because of your resurrection. Thank you that you don't treat us as our sins deserve, but instead you call us by name, meet our doubts with patience, and restore us when we fail. Help us to live this week in the reality that we are loved, forgiven, and called to purpose. May we extend the same grace to others that you have shown to us. As we go from here, help us to remember that you are always calling us back to yourself, no matter how far we may wander. In your precious and powerful name we pray, **Amen**.