

HIGHER PURPOSE CHURCH

WHEN YOUR STRUGGLE WRITES YOUR STORY

A 5-Day Devotional

“Your struggle didn’t end your story. God is still writing it.”

Based on the Easter Sunday message
Matthew 26:30–46

How to Use This Devotional

This five-day devotional is designed to carry the Easter Sunday message deeper into your week. Each day builds on one thread from the sermon — that God is not finished with your story, even in the hardest chapters.

Each day includes a key scripture, a short reading, reflection questions for personal journaling or group discussion, and a closing prayer. No Bible background required. No special preparation needed. Just show up honestly.

Work through it on your own each morning, bring it into a conversation with a friend or spouse, or use it with your small group. There is no wrong way. Just don't skip the questions — that's where the real work happens.

MONDAY · DAY 1

Everyone Has a Breaking Point

Matthew 26:38

“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.”

READING

We tend to sanitize our heroes of faith. We picture Jesus healing the sick, calming storms, raising the dead — and we quietly assume that following God means being above pain. So when the darkness comes for us, we assume something has gone wrong.

But look at Jesus in the garden on the night before the crucifixion. The Son of God, fully divine, tells his disciples that his soul is crushed to the point of death. He sweats drops of blood. He begs the Father for another way out.

This is not weakness. This is honesty. And it is one of the most important things the Bible tells us about suffering: even Jesus had a breaking point. Even he wrestled with his flesh. Even he felt the full weight of what was in front of him.

Which means that when you reach your edge — when the depression settles in, when the fear makes you want to disappear, when a thought crosses your mind that you would never say out loud to anyone — you are not failing. You are not disqualified. You are not too far gone. You are in the garden with Jesus, and he knows exactly where you are.

He was honest with the Father about what he was feeling. The garden is permission for you to do the same. You don't have to manage your pain before you bring it to God. You can bring it exactly as it is.

REFLECTION

1. Have you ever felt like struggling with fear, depression, or dark thoughts meant something was wrong with your faith? Where did that belief come from?
2. What changes for you when you see Jesus himself saying “let this cup pass from me” — fully feeling the weight of what was ahead?
3. Is there something you have been afraid to bring honestly before God? What would it look like to say it to him today, exactly as it is?

PRAYER

Father, I don't always know how to be honest with you about how hard things are. But Jesus was. He told you the truth in the garden — all of it — and you did not turn away from him. Help me trust that you will not turn away from me either. I bring you what I've been carrying. Meet me here. Amen.

TUESDAY · DAY 2

Don't Fall Asleep on Your Story

Matthew 26:40–41

“*Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*”

READING

Three times Jesus went away to pray in Gethsemane. Three times he came back and found his disciples asleep. Not hostile. Not rebellious. Just asleep. Completely unaware that the most important night in human history was unfolding around them.

This is how most of us lose the things that matter most to us. Not in some dramatic defeat. We just drift. The fire gets quiet. The spiritual habits slip. The vision that once burned clearly becomes a distant memory. And we don't even notice it happening until we're well past the moment when we should have woken up.

The enemy rarely defeats us with a frontal assault. He is patient. He simply distracts us — with busyness, with comfort, with the endless scroll, with everything that is urgent but nothing that is important. Falling asleep on your purpose is just as effective as losing an outright battle. The result is the same: the thing God put in you never makes it to the world.

But notice what Jesus does. He keeps coming back. Three times he woke those disciples. Three times he gave them another chance. That is who God is — the God of the third chance, the thirty-third chance, the chance you don't deserve and cannot earn. He doesn't give up on what he started in you. He just keeps coming back and calling you to wake up.

The question is not whether God is still speaking. The question is whether you are awake enough to hear it.

REFLECTION

1. Where in your life have you drifted — a dream, a calling, a spiritual discipline, a relationship — without fully realizing it was happening?
2. What specific distractions have been most effective at pulling your attention away from what matters most?
3. Jesus gave the disciples a third chance. What is an area of your life where you sense God has been calling you back — and you have been slow to respond? What would “waking up” actually look like this week?

PRAYER

God, I confess the ways I have drifted. The busyness, the scrolling, the slow numbing that has kept me from being fully present with you and with what you've called me to.

Wake me up. Give me the grace to stay watchful. Teach me to pray before the crisis, not just during it. I don't want to miss what you are doing. Amen.

WEDNESDAY · DAY 3

He Already Went Ahead of You

Matthew 26:32

“But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

READING

This is one of the quietest, most stunning sentences in the entire passion narrative. Jesus has just told his disciples that every single one of them will abandon him that night. Peter has just insisted, loudly, that he would die before he denied Jesus. And Jesus — knowing exactly what is about to happen — says: after I rise, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.

He doesn't say he will prevent the desertion. He doesn't promise to stop them from scattering. He says: I know you're going to fall. And I am going to be where you're running to before you get there.

God is not behind you, chasing your mistakes. He is not standing at the starting line, waiting for you to crawl back to where you fell and apologize. He is already in your Galilee. He has moved ahead to the next season, the rebuilt version of your life, the place you will be after you have walked through this — and he is waiting there for you to arrive.

This is what makes God's love different from every human version of it. When people forgive us, they usually require us to go back. Back to the place it broke. Back to the apology. Back to the beginning. But God says: you don't have to go back. Come forward. Come to where I already am.

He does not make you return to your worst moment. He meets you past it and calls you forward. His love is not behind you. It is out ahead of you, waiting.

REFLECTION

1. Is there a failure or painful season from your past that you keep returning to mentally, feeling like you have to go back there before you can move forward?
2. What does it mean to you practically that God has already “gone ahead” into your next season? How might that change the way you approach this week?
3. Who in your life might need to hear this today — that God does not send people back to their worst moment, but calls them forward into what's next?

PRAYER

Lord, I have spent so much time looking back. Replaying what I did wrong. Wondering if I can ever get back to where I was before I failed. But you didn't go back — you went ahead. Help me stop trying to return to what was, and start moving toward where you already are. You're out ahead of me. I'm coming. Amen.

THURSDAY · DAY 4

God Does Not Waste Pain

Romans 8:28

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

READING

If God is real, why does he let people suffer? It is the oldest objection to faith. And it deserves an honest answer.

Here is what the cross tells us. God does not fix pain by eliminating it. He redeems it. And there is a profound difference between those two things. Fixing means the bad thing never happened. Redeeming means it happened — and it was not wasted.

The Father could have stopped the crucifixion. He had the power. He chose not to — because the cross was not the end of the story. It was the turning point. The worst thing that ever happened became the hinge of history. The moment that looked like total defeat was the moment that made everything possible. And three days later, God proved that no darkness — no grief, no betrayal, no tomb — gets the final word.

Your pain is not wasted. The season that broke you, the relationship that ended you, the diagnosis that changed everything, the depression that wouldn't leave — none of it is outside God's ability to redeem. He is not absent from your suffering. He went through his own. He knows what it costs. And he is already working in what you cannot yet see.

This does not mean pretending the pain is fine or that the loss doesn't matter. It means trusting that it is not the final word. There is more to your story. And the Author is not done.

REFLECTION

1. What is the difference between God fixing a painful situation and God redeeming it? Can you think of a time you have experienced the difference personally?
2. Is there a chapter of your story you are still waiting to see redeemed? What makes it hard to trust God with that unanswered question?
3. Think of one way God has already turned something painful into something meaningful in your life. How does remembering that change the way you face what is in front of you now?

PRAYER

Father, I don't always understand why you allow what you allow. But I am asking you today: don't let it be wasted. Take what has been broken in my life and redeem it. Use it for something I could not have imagined on my own. I trust you with the parts of my story I still cannot explain. Amen.

FRIDAY · DAY 5

Get Up. Let's Go.

Matthew 26:46

“Rise! Let us go!”

READING

Two words. Rise. Let us go.

That is what Jesus says when the moment finally arrives. Not a long speech. Not a negotiation. He prays, he pivots, and he moves. Somewhere between “let this cup pass from me” and “let us go,” something shifted. The prayer did not remove the pain. But it changed Jesus enough to face it.

He walked toward the cross. Not around it. Not away from it. Toward it. Because he could see past it. He looked through the humiliation and saw the elevation. He looked through the death and saw the resurrection. He looked through what Friday looked like and saw what Sunday would be.

And that is the invitation of Easter for every person carrying something heavy. Not to pretend it doesn't hurt. Not to skip the hard thing. But to go through it — because there is something on the other side that you cannot reach any other way. You cannot go around your cross to get to your resurrection. You have to go through it.

He didn't stay in the tomb. Three days after the worst Friday anyone had ever seen, he got up. With all authority. With all power. And he confirmed everything he had ever said and promised. It was all true.

Your struggle didn't end your story. The Author has not put down the pen. He sees every valley, every twist, every moment you thought it was finished. And he is still writing.

So get up. Do what you know to do. And let's go.

REFLECTION

1. What is the “cross” in front of you right now — the thing you have been avoiding or hoping will disappear without you having to go through it?
2. Jesus could see past the cross to the resurrection. What might be waiting on the other side of your hard thing that you haven't yet allowed yourself to imagine?
3. What is one concrete step — one act of getting up — you can take this week? Who can you tell so they can hold you to it?

PRAYER

God, you got up from the grave. You proved that death does not get the last word — and neither does my failure, my fear, or my hardest season. I am choosing today to get up. To stop waiting for the storm to pass and start walking through it. I don't know

*everything that is on the other side, but you do. You are already there. Here I come.
Amen.*

A Note from Higher Purpose Church

We are so glad you were with us on Easter Sunday. If something from this message or this devotional stirred a question in you, a memory, or a longing for something more — we want you to know the conversation doesn't have to end here.

If you took a step of faith on Sunday and want to talk to someone about what comes next, our team is here. If you are carrying a story you haven't told anyone yet, our pastoral team would be honored to sit with you in it.

And if you want to go deeper, join us for the full series — When Your Struggle Writes Your Story — continuing over the next four weeks. Each message will keep unpacking what it means when God uses the hardest parts of your life to write something new.

The Author has not put down the pen.