



# COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

No Matter What / Week 2

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## SERIES SUMMARY

A 3-week series about Easter.

WEEK 1: Easter reminds us we're loved no matter what.

WEEK 2: Easter reminds us we're important no matter what.

WEEK 3: Easter reminds us we're forgiven no matter what.

## SCRIPTURE

*Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her.*

*"Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him" (John 20:11-13 NLT).*

*She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?"*

*She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him."*

*"Mary!" Jesus said.*

*She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher"). (John 20-14-16 NLT).*

*"Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"*

*Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them his message (John 20:17-18 NLT).*

## TEACHING OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

- Tell a personal story about a time you felt really important or on top of the world.

## TENSION

- It feels great to feel important, noticed, and seen by others.
- Most of us probably feel unknown or unimportant sometimes in our lives.
- We want our ministry to be a place where everyone feels important and worthy of love, no matter what.
- We're going to hear a story from the Bible about someone who may have felt unimportant, but the Easter story showed this person (and can show us!) that we're all important to God.

## TRUTH

- In Jesus' time, women didn't have a lot of rights, freedoms, or opportunities, but Jesus went out of His way to value women and give them opportunities.
- Jesus was close to a woman known as Mary Magdalene, and she witnessed Jesus' crucifixion and burial. When she went to visit Jesus' grave, she was visited by two angels who wanted to know why she was so sad. (*John 20:11-13*)
- As she was mourning Jesus' death and the fact that His body was not in the tomb, Mary was approached by someone she didn't initially recognize. When the man said Mary's name, she immediately recognized Him as Jesus. (*John 20:14-16*)
- Mary was shocked to see Jesus alive again because she had witnessed His death.
- Jesus died on a cross, was buried in a tomb, and came back to life. His resurrection shows us that we can trust that God is who He says He is. That everything Jesus said during His life was true.
- At Easter we celebrate Jesus' resurrection because it allows us to be close to God for eternity.
- At a time when women weren't valued, Jesus chose Mary to be the first person to witness His resurrection, and He asked her to spread this news to His closest followers. (*John 20:17-18*)
- Because Mary believed, she knew what Jesus' resurrection meant. She is one of the reasons we have record of the resurrection today. That makes her an important piece of the most important event in our faith: Jesus' resurrection.
- Maybe we've felt unimportant or that nobody sees or notices us. But Easter proves that we're not only important, but also important to God. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for us so that we can be close to Him forever.
- Easter reminds us we're all important no matter what.

## APPLICATION

- God didn't just send Jesus to die for people a long time ago; it was for us, too!
- No matter how other people see us or how we feel, Easter reminds us we're loved, seen, chosen, and have value.
- Easter reminds us we're important no matter what.
- We can believe that we're important by:
  - Thinking about how we see ourselves and asking God to remind us of His love for us and that He sent His Son to die for us.
  - Thinking about how we treat others and showing them that they're valued and important, no matter what.

## LANDING

- Easter reminds us we're important no matter what.
  - Your Small Group Leader values you and believes you are important. They want to help you believe that about yourself and others.
  - What makes the resurrection important to me?
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## THINK ABOUT THIS

You may have many students in your group this week who are new to church or who only attend around the holiday season. Do your best to keep them in mind as you lead this week. You'll be guiding the conversation for students who are coming in with all kinds of viewpoints and understandings of Jesus, the resurrection, and what it means to them. While any kind of decision made to follow Jesus is important and worth celebrating as a win for your group, sometimes the win is simply that the students showed up. If they don't walk away fully sure of what they believe or think about Easter this week, that's okay. The goal is to simply make them feel seen and important so that they walk away wanting to come back and keep the conversation going!

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## INTERACTIVE 1: CANDY SHOWER

### OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll throw handfuls of an Easter candy of your choosing into the audience to help celebrate the season.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Easter candy of your choice (You'll need enough to throw handfuls into the crowd.)

## INTERACTIVE 2: STORY CUT-OUTS

### OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll use large cardboard cut-outs of people from Scripture to help tell and personalize the Easter story.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 3 different large cardboard cut-outs of fictional or non-fictional characters/people that will represent the following individuals from Scripture: John, Mary Magdalene, and Peter. These can be fun and don't have to be serious or realistic-looking cut-outs.
- 3 letter-size pieces of paper
- A bold marker
- Tape

### HOW-TO

- If you did the Interactive from Week 1, the prep work is already done! If you didn't complete Week 1's Interactive, do the following:
    - Using the paper and marker, create a name tag for each cut-out.
    - Tape the name tags onto the cardboard cut-outs and place them on stage.
  - Note: These three cut-outs will remain on stage for the entire Easter series.
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# TEACHING SCRIPT

No Matter What / Week 2

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PRELUDE SOCIAL WORSHIP STORY GROUPS HOME

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## BOTTOM LINE

EASTER REMINDS US WE'RE IMPORTANT NO MATTER WHAT.

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## INTRODUCTION

3 MINUTES

We're celebrating one of my favorite holidays: Easter! And this year, we're celebrating how Easter reminds us that certain things in our lives are always true . . . no matter what!

### **INTERACTIVE: Easter Candy Shower**

*This is where you'll throw handfuls of an Easter candy of your choosing into the audience to help celebrate the season.*

And what's one thing we've come to expect no matter what at Easter? You guessed it . . . candy! *[Throw lots of candy into the crowd!]*

Before we get into what we're going to talk about today, I want to tell you a quick story.

### **TELL A PERSONAL STORY**

*Tell a story from your own life that illustrates the following thoughts or ideas . . .*

- Tell a story about a time you felt really important or on top of the world.
  - Maybe you won the family Easter egg hunt, or made the winning shot at the game, or got the lead in the school play. (Bonus points if you can bring a picture, a prop, or a visual representation to show as you share your story!)
  - Whatever it is, make sure to land on what it feels like to feel important or seen by others.
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## TENSION

2 MINUTES

Have you ever been there? Like people around you knew you were important? Like you were on top of the world? Like you were seen, and noticed, and valued by the people around you?

Maybe your latest TikTok challenge went viral,  
or you're the top scorer in your sport.  
Maybe you're the smartest kid in your class,  
or you just got voted class president.  
Or maybe you just recently earned your blackbelt in martial arts.

If you've had an experience like that, then you know just how good it feels to be seen as important to someone else.

But if we're honest, I think we'd all also say **there are places in our lives where we don't feel so important**. And that feeling? Well, it's not so awesome.

Maybe you're not playing as well in soccer as you'd like.  
Or maybe you just can't understand math, but it seems like everyone else in class really gets it.  
Maybe you feel like you're an outsider at school and wonder if anybody even knows your name.  
Maybe nobody ever likes or comments on the videos you post,  
or nobody invites you to hang out.

Things like that? Well, they make us feel anything but important, don't they?

I think the reality is that **most of us probably feel unknown or unimportant at some point**. We wonder if we're ever really noticed or seen by other people at school, or at home, or even here at church. It seems like only certain people get to feel important all the time; we're just lucky if we feel important every once in a while.

If you've ever felt that way, first, I want to say that I'm so glad you're here. My hope is that when you walk into this room, you're treated with dignity and respect, no matter what! My hope is that we would see all people as important and worthy of love!

And second, I want to tell you a story about somebody else who probably felt just like we do sometimes. Somebody who didn't think they were all that important. And what's cool is that as we look at this story, we'll see that Easter actually shows all of us one really big truth: **We're important to the One who is the most important**.

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## TRUTH

6 MINUTES

### **INTERACTIVE: Easter Story Cut-Outs**

*This is where you'll use large cardboard cut-outs of people from Scripture to help tell and personalize the Easter story.*

Throughout this series, we're talking about three different people who were impacted by Jesus and played a part in the Easter story. [Motion to the three cardboard cut-outs.] Today, we're actually going to talk about the most important event in the Christian faith. And to start, we're going to see what this incredible woman named **Mary** had to do with it. [Display at the front of the stage the cut-out that you choose to represent Mary. Interact with it and motion to it throughout the Truth section of your talk.] Now when you hear the name "Mary" from the Bible,

you may think immediately about Mary, the mother of Jesus. Or maybe you've heard of the story of a guy named Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha. Well, while both of those are pretty important women in the Bible, they're not the Mary we're talking about today. This Mary may not have been the most well-known Mary, but what we're about to learn about her life is powerful! This Mary was from a small fishing village called Magdala, so she was known as "Mary Magdalene."

Now, here's the thing. It's actually a pretty big deal that we can talk about any of these Marys today. Because at the time they lived, women didn't have a lot of rights, or freedoms, or opportunities like the men did in their culture. That's actually one reason there are a lot more men talked about in the Bible than women!

And that's also part of what made Jesus so interesting! In a culture that gave women less rights, less leadership, and less opportunities, Jesus went out of His way to value women and give them opportunities. In fact, we know that during His life and ministry, He was close to Mary Magdalene. He knew her by name. He saw her as important. We know this because some of Jesus's closest followers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, recorded it for us in the Bible.

And because Jesus was close to Mary Magdalene, she's included in the story we read every year at Easter. She's a part of the event that shaped our Christian faith! So, let's take a look:

***Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her.***

***"Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him" (John 20:11-13 NLT).***

So, to catch us up, Jesus had just been killed. He was crucified on a cross, which was a horrible and public death that friends like Mary Magdalene witnessed. Then, He was buried in a tomb. And because she cared so much about Him, Mary went to visit Jesus' grave. But what did she find? That it was empty! Could someone have moved or taken His body? Thinking that happened, she began to weep even more.

Then, we learn that Mary was visited by two angels who wanted to know why she was so sad. Wow! Angels. That's amazing! Then, something happened that totally took Mary by surprise. Something that changed things not just for Mary, but for all of us who believe in Jesus even still today. Take a look:

***She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?"***

***She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him."***

***"Mary!" Jesus said.***

***She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher"). (John 20:14-16 NLT).***

So there Mary was, weeping over the death of her friend and teacher, when just like that, another person appeared. Now of course, thinking Jesus was dead, she didn't at first recognize that it was Him. After all, she saw Him die! But then, Jesus used Mary's name. He wanted her to know that it was Him. That He knew her. That He saw her. And **when He spoke her name, she recognized Him immediately.**

And of course, she was in shock! See, Jesus had just risen from the dead. That's what we celebrate at Easter as **the resurrection**. Now, to resurrect something means to bring it back to life. So, at Easter, we remember when Jesus died on a cross and was buried in a tomb. And then we celebrate the fact that He walked out of the tomb three days later. In other words, He came back to life, which is what we call the resurrection.

See, Jesus' resurrection is so important. **Because of it, we can trust that God is who He says He is.** Jesus spent years in His ministry telling His followers that this very thing would happen. That His death and resurrection were coming, and that these events would change everything. And then? It actually happened! It was all true! And because of that, we can believe that all the things Jesus promised us are true, too. We can walk confidently knowing that we can be close to God. Jesus made that possible for us for eternity through the resurrection. That's what makes Easter so important!

And one of the reasons we know this important thing happened is because Mary was there to see Him. She witnessed it with her own eyes. And she followed through on an important task. Take a look:

***“Don't cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”***

***Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message (John 20:17-18 NLT).***

Mary was the first person to witness the resurrection! She was the person He asked to share the news with His closest followers. And I love how this passage ends: She gave them his message.

I mean, talk about an important job! Because Mary believed, she knew what Jesus' resurrection meant. And she said “yes” to sharing that message with the rest of His followers. She is one of the reasons we have record of those moments still today. And that makes her an important piece of the most important event in our faith: Jesus' resurrection.

Maybe you've felt unimportant. Maybe you feel like nobody else sees or notices you. That people don't understand you. That God would never choose or love you. Well, let me just assure you that what we celebrate every year at Easter proves that you are not only important, but you're important to God. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for you. To come back to life so that you can be close to Him forever. And He did that because of His love for you. He did that because your life is important to Him!

Here's what I want you to remember: **Easter reminds us we're important no matter what.**

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## APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

God chose somebody like Mary Magdalene to help spread the word about the resurrection. He chose her to be an important part of the story. And what's cool is that the same can be true for us!

God didn't just send Jesus to die for those people back then. His resurrection wasn't just to help them. He didn't just want people like Mary to know He saw and cared about them. He did it for us, too! No matter how other people see us and no matter how we feel, the resurrection proves that . . .

We're loved.

We're seen.  
We're chosen.  
We have value.

### **Easter reminds us we're important no matter what.**

The question is, how do we begin to believe that?

First, I think we need to **think about how we see ourselves**. Do you believe that you're important? To God? To those around you? Even to yourself? Do you talk down to yourself? Do you allow negative thoughts or words about who you are or how others see you to take up space in your mind? Do you let other people treat you poorly? Hurt you? Talk down to you? Do you think you deserve to be treated badly because you're not important? Do you think God even cares about you at all?

Get honest with yourself and think about the way you feel about you. Ask God to remind you this Easter that His love is for you. To Him, you are seen, known, and valued as important. So much so that His Son, Jesus, died and rose again just so He could be with you. *That* makes you important in His eyes.

Next, **think about how you treat others**. One of the most important things we can do this Easter is show Jesus' love to others. And we can start by treating others with the same value that Jesus did. We can show people, no matter who they are, that they're important to us by listening to them, inviting them to be a part of our group, standing up for them when they're being mistreated, learning about people of different races, ethnicities, or religions, or even simply saying hello in the hallway. Doing that not only shows them that we care, but it gives them a glimpse of God's love working through us. It shows them they're important.

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## LANDING

1 MINUTE

Remember, **Easter reminds us we're important no matter what**. And one of the best places to practice living this out is in Small Group. There, you have a Leader who values you. Somebody who believes you are so very important. And they want to help you not only begin to believe this about yourself, but to show it to other people as well.

So as you head to Small Group today, start thinking about how you'd answer this question:  
**What makes the resurrection important to you?**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS

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