

Waiting in Wonder for EASTER[🦋]

FAMILY DEVOTIONS FOR HOLY WEEK



Written by GAIL PAWLITZ

Illustrated by EVA VAGRETI



In thanks to God for the love
and support of my husband, Ron.
Together, we've shared seasons of
marriage, the joys of raising five
children, and the rewarding
work of teaching the faith.



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Written by Gail Pawlitz

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Jesus is the victorious Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.

INTRODUCTION

For many children, Easter is about candy, bunnies, more candy, and egg hunts. Those things are fun. But this year, make sure Easter is about Jesus, God's Son, the Lamb of God, the Savior of the world. Since you have chosen this resource, you are already planning to do that.

Begin using these devotions and activities right before Palm Sunday. Each two-page spread includes a devotion, an extra tidbit, a Bible verse or verses, something to do, a prayer, and artwork that will bring meaning to the words. Take plenty of time to savor them. Ask questions. What is Jesus doing? What are God's people today doing? How are some of the illustrations changing? This book will help you teach basic truths. Children already

know about bad things and sin. But you want them to learn and believe so much more. So, it's good that you teach them about God's plan to forgive sins and His plan to send Jesus, who took the punishment for sin. You want them to know that Jesus died on Good Friday but is now alive. And you want them to find comfort in believing that through faith, they are never separated from Him.

As I worked on this book, I prayed that God would bless you through it. And now, I am confident He will. May the events of Holy Week and Easter help you and those you love to appreciate and celebrate Jesus, the Lamb of God, victorious and reigning.

—The author

I wonder, what do we do in Lent?

Do you ever just sit and think? Maybe you wonder which super power you might like to have. Or maybe you look at the sore on your knee. Maybe you wonder what Lent is and what we do during Lent.

Lent is a time before Easter to think and to do.

It is a time to pray and to show God's love to others.

Long ago, Jesus spent forty days in the desert. He was thinking about sin. And He was thinking about showing love. He was praying about how to be our Savior. But He was not alone. The devil was there too. He tempted Jesus to sin. But Jesus never sinned; not once, not ever.

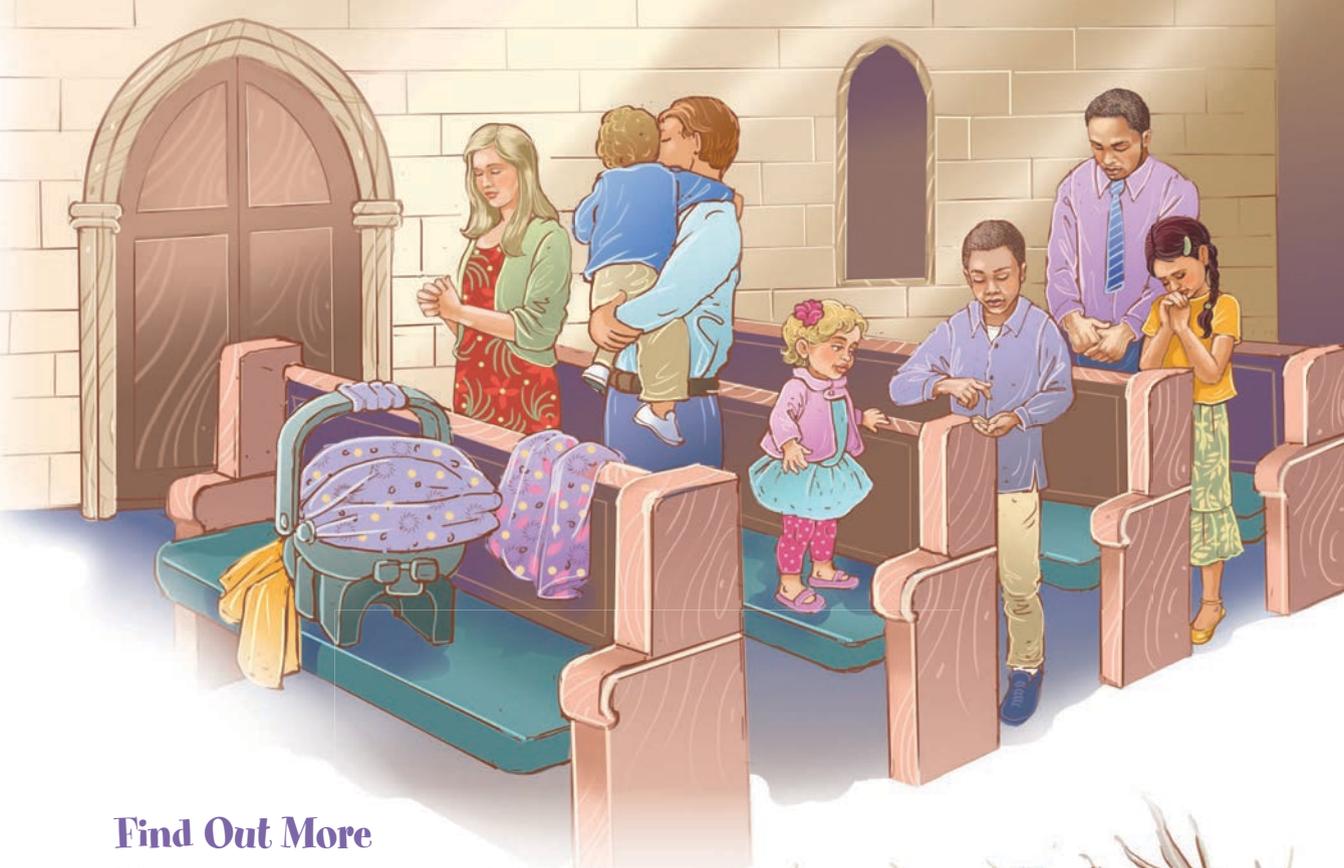
After His time in the desert, Jesus chose disciples, did miracles, and taught people about the kingdom of God. And a few years later, He died on the cross for the sins of all, including you.

What can you do during Lent?

You can tell God you are sorry for your sins. That is called confession.

You can do acts of love. That is called serving. And in the days ahead, you can read the devotions in this book. That is called fun.





Find Out More

What color does the church use in Lent?

Purple (or violet) is used during Lent. The purple cloth reminds us to repent. Right before they nailed Jesus to the cross, the soldiers put a purple robe on Jesus and made fun of Him. Jesus suffered this and many other things so that we might be His own—saved and free.

Say It *[God] is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.*

Joel 2:13

Do It Eat pretzels shaped like twisted knots. They look like arms crossed in prayer. When you are done eating, fold your hands in prayer.

Pray It Silently confess your sins to Jesus. Tell Him what you have done wrong. Say you are sorry. Then use one finger to draw a little cross on the palm of your other hand. Remember, God will forgive you because of Jesus.





I wonder, were there Easter eggs on that first Easter?

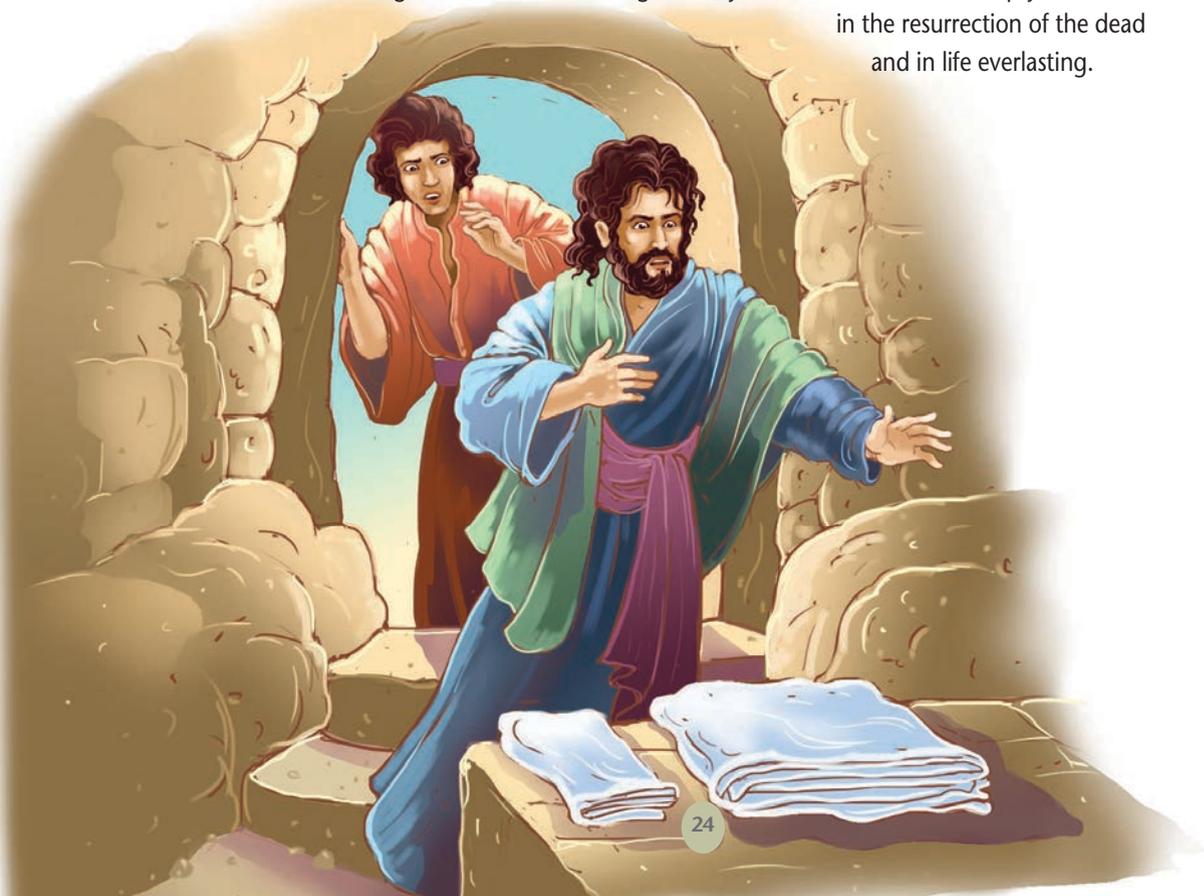
Today, most children get all kinds of Easter eggs on Easter morning. But what happened on that first Easter?

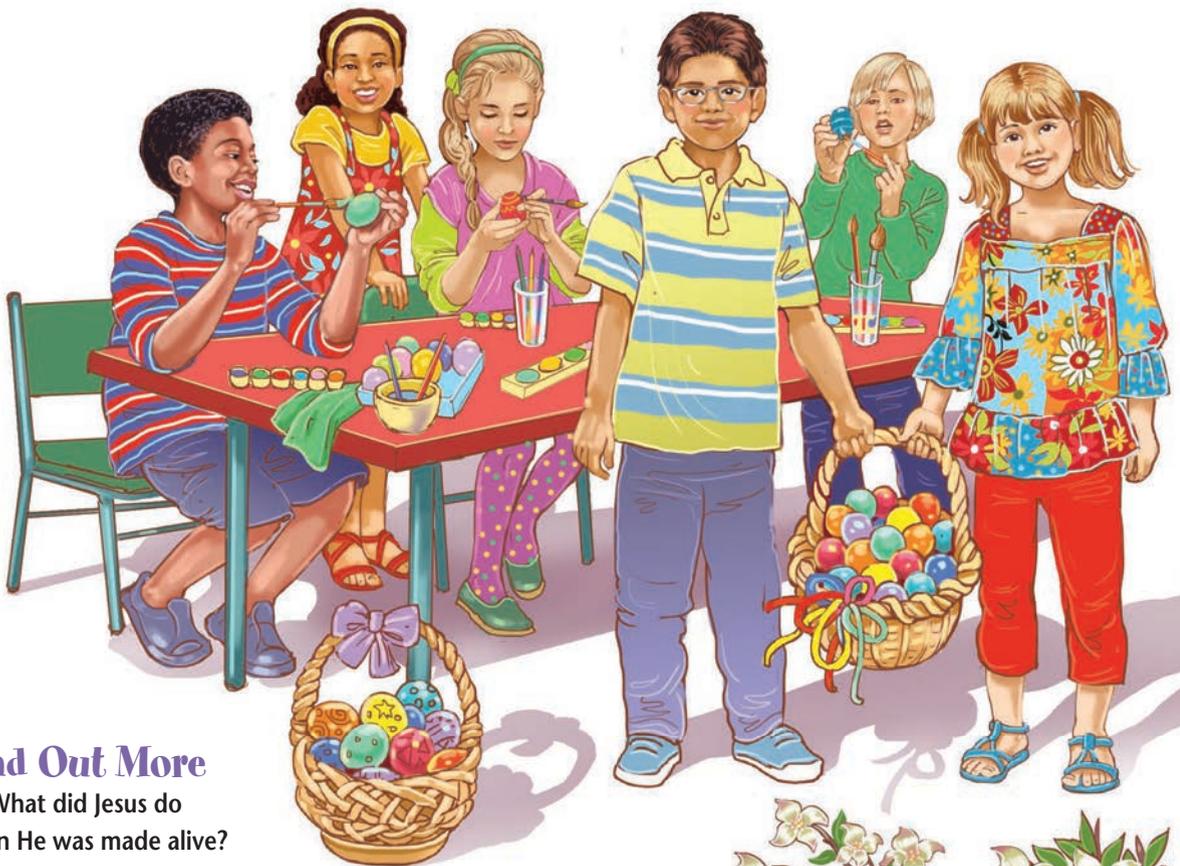
That morning, Peter and another disciple ran to the tomb to check out a story. They had heard from some women that Jesus was not there. But they did not believe it. They knew Jesus' lifeless body had been sealed in the tomb. So how could He not be there? They ran to the tomb to see for themselves. And what do you think? It was true; the tomb was empty. Then they believed the women.

"But what about the Easter eggs?" you wonder. How do they go along with the Easter story? Long ago, the hard shell of the eggs reminded people of Jesus' tomb—the one that was sealed shut. And cracking that shell open reminded them that Jesus did not stay in the tomb. Instead, He rose from the dead. So the egg became a good symbol of Jesus' resurrection.

Enjoy your Easter eggs. And as you open them, think of the glorious resurrection and the empty tomb! Then open your Bible to read about that first Easter. Think about how you can believe in Jesus. You believe because God has given you faith in Baptism and through His Word. And through faith, you believe the tomb is empty. You believe

in the resurrection of the dead
and in life everlasting.





Find Out More

What did Jesus do when He was made alive?

The Bible tells us that Jesus descended into hell to proclaim His victory over His enemies.

Say It

[Jesus said,] "I am the resurrection and the life."

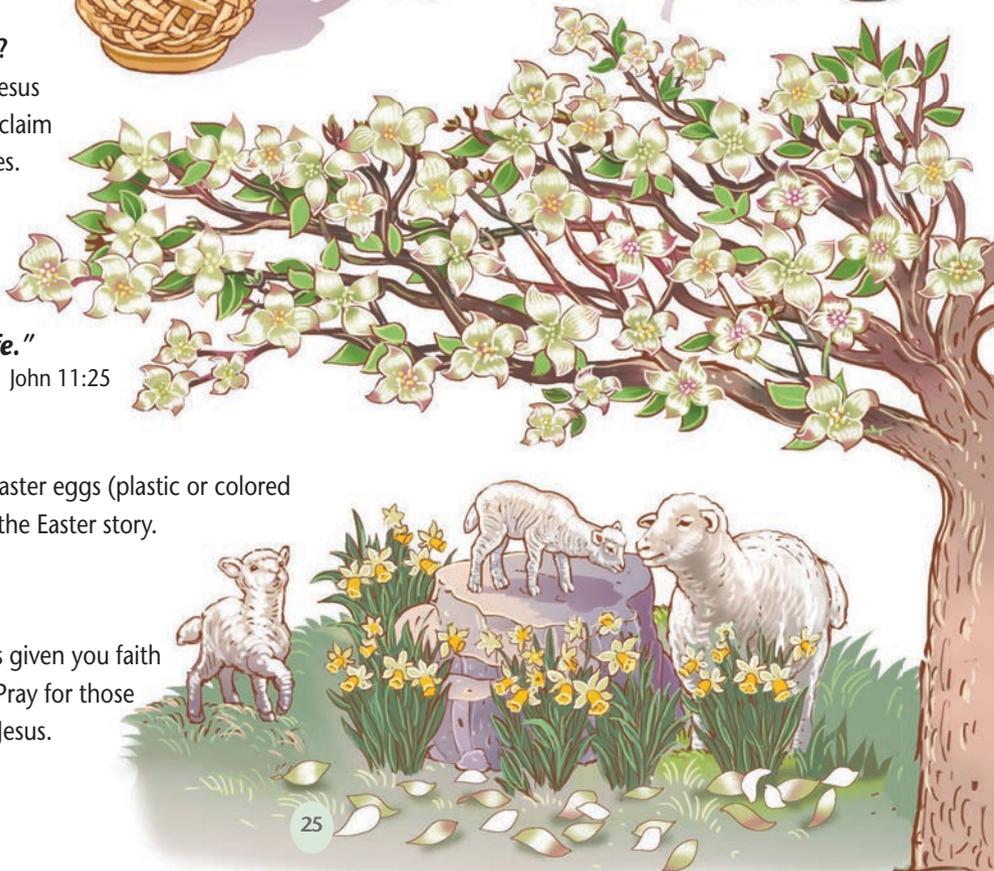
John 11:25

Do It

Use different-colored Easter eggs (plastic or colored on paper) to help you tell the Easter story.

Pray It

Thank God that He has given you faith to believe that Jesus lives. Pray for those who do not yet believe in Jesus.





I wonder, did any other amazing things happen on that first Easter?

You already know some amazing things about Easter.

- Jesus rose from the dead.
- An angel rolled the stone away.
- Some men and women saw the empty tomb.
- Some women even saw Jesus.

But wait; there's more!

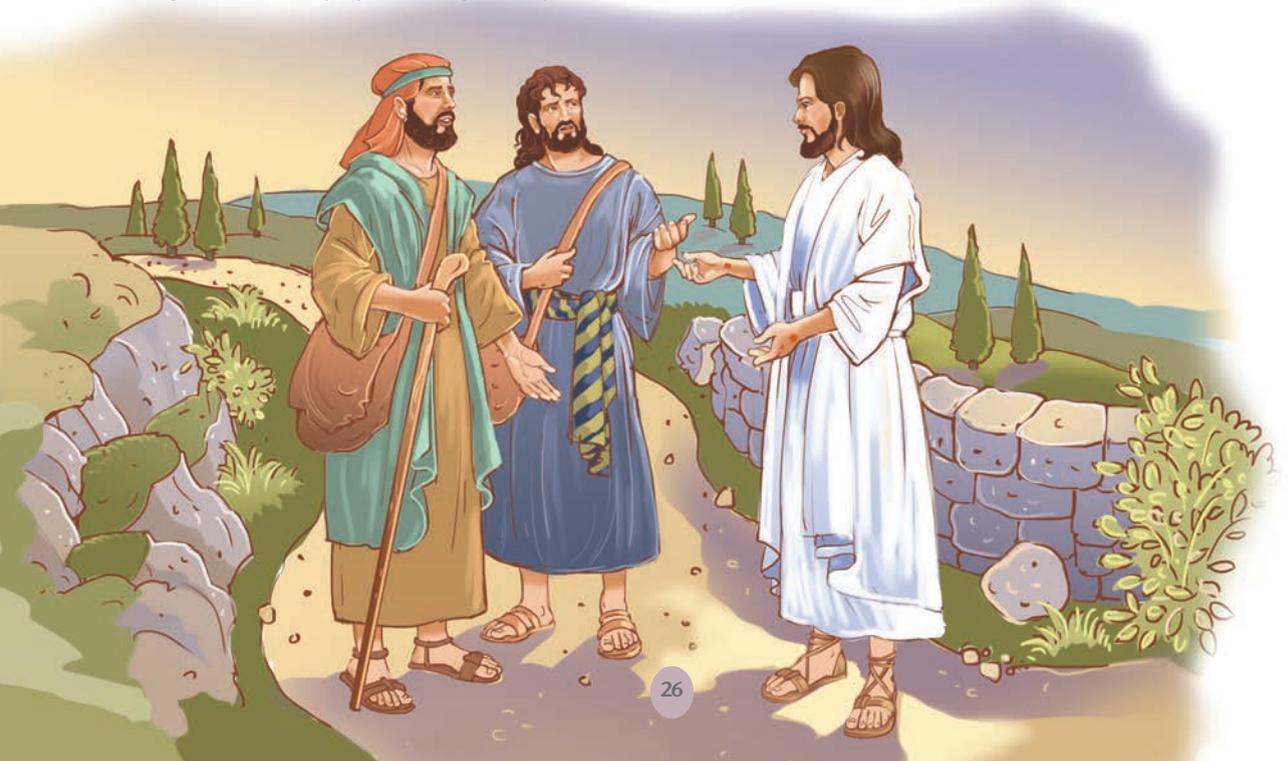
On that day, two sad disciples were walking to the town of Emmaus from Jerusalem. As they walked along, they talked about Jesus' death and other things that had happened. Soon, another man joined them. It was Jesus, but the two men were kept from recognizing Him.

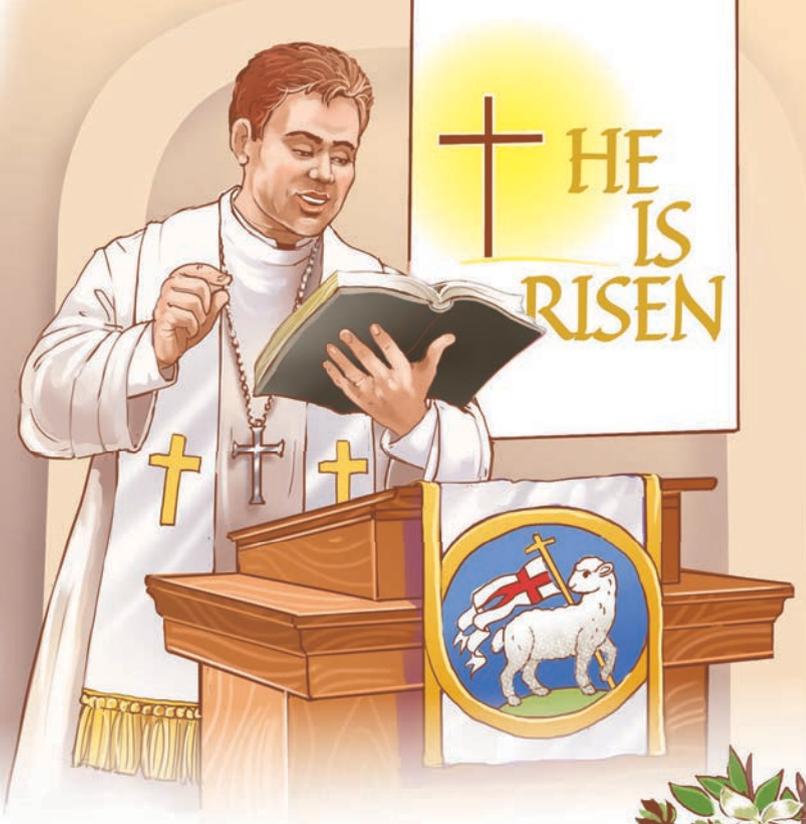
Jesus asked the men why they were sad. They said they had hoped Jesus was the Savior, but His body was missing. Then Jesus explained God's Word. He told them why the Christ had to suffer to be the Savior.

When they got to Emmaus, it was getting late. The men asked Jesus to stay, and He agreed. While they were eating, Jesus blessed the bread and broke it. At once, the eyes of the men were opened and they recognized Jesus. Then Jesus vanished.

So what did they do with this good news? They ran all the way back to Jerusalem. They found the disciples and said, "The Lord has risen indeed" (Luke 24:34). Now, that is another amazing thing!

We can ask Jesus to help us understand His Word too. And here is one more amazing thing. He gives us His Holy Spirit to help us do just that.





Find Out More

Where does faith come from?

Faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit. In Baptism and through His Word, God gives us faith to believe in Him as our Savior.

Say It

The Lord has risen indeed.

Luke 24:34



Do It

Make a Bible by putting your hands together.

Open the Bible and say these words.

The Bible tells me of God's love.
It says God sent His only Son
To earth to save me from my sin,
And through His death, forgiveness win.

Close the Bible and say these words.

The Bible tells me I can go
And show God's love to those I know.
And as I go, God goes with me,
For I am His child, redeemed and free.

Pray It

Ask God to help you learn His Word.



I wonder, when did the disciples first see Jesus alive?

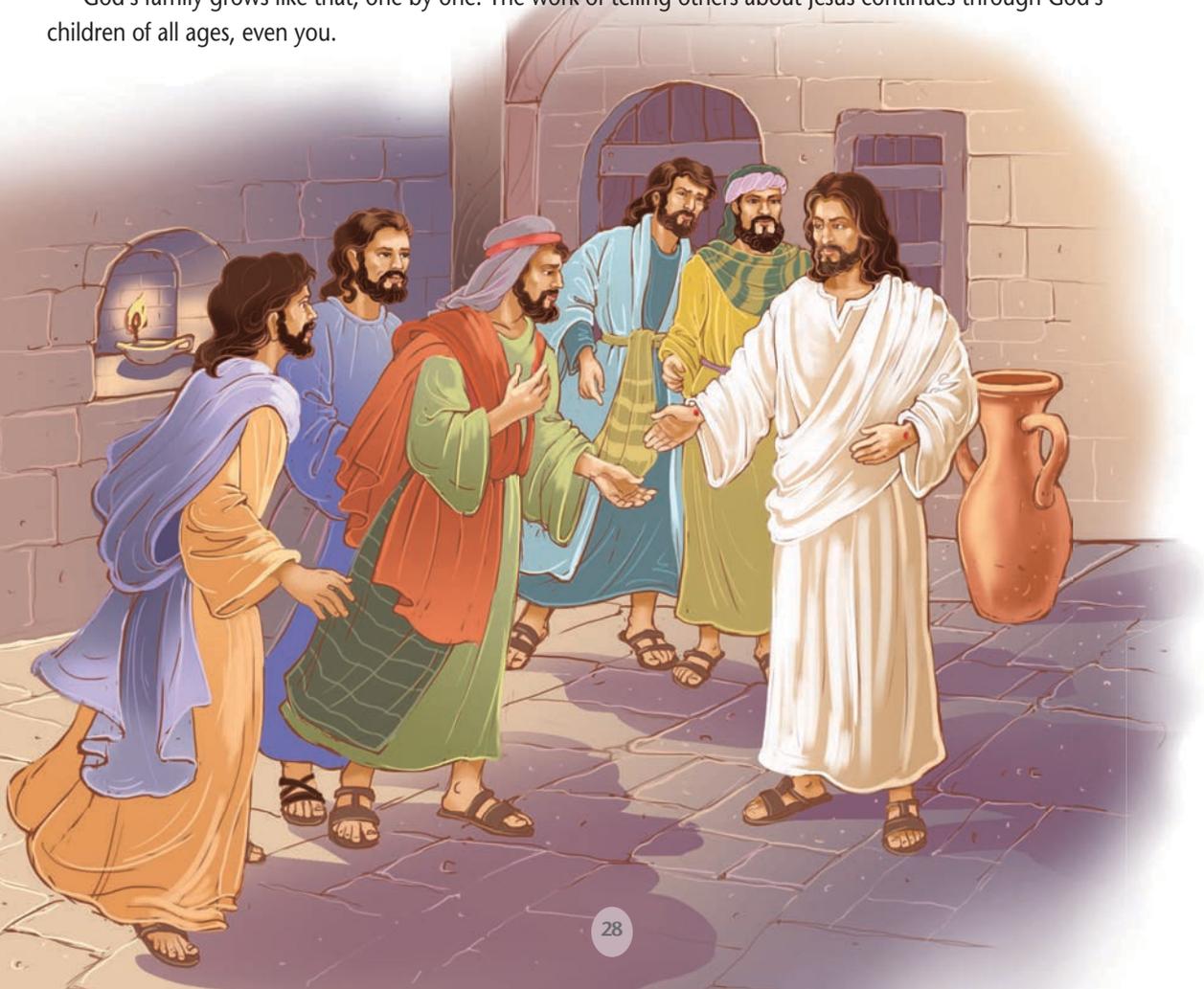
On Easter evening, most of the disciples were together with the doors locked. Suddenly, Jesus appeared, standing with them. He said, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19). But His friends were still afraid. So Jesus showed them the wounds in His hands and side. Then the disciples saw that Jesus was a living person. He was not a ghost. It was true, they thought—it was the Lord.

Jesus' friends had questions. They wondered why He, their teacher and friend, had to suffer and die. Jesus explained why these things had to happen for Him to be the Savior of all. With His help, the disciples believed.

Then Jesus gave His disciples a job as His witnesses. He wanted them to tell what they had seen and heard. He wanted them to explain God's Word.

When did you first hear about Jesus? Maybe it was when someone told you or read you a Bible story. Or maybe when someone sang you a song. Maybe someone took you to church to receive God's gifts through His Word and Sacraments.

God's family grows like that, one by one. The work of telling others about Jesus continues through God's children of all ages, even you.





Find Out More

Who can help us understand God's Word?

God has given you His Holy Spirit to help you. He has also given you loving and caring adults—parents, teachers, and pastors.

Say It

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:57

Do It

Make someone a card to tell the Easter story.

Pray It

Pray for those who preach and teach God's Word.

