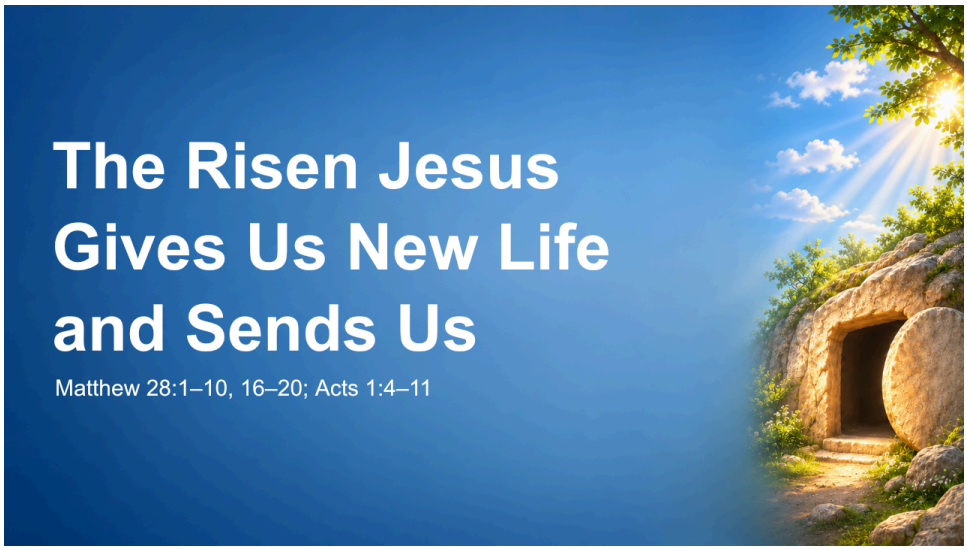
AKRONGRACE

Five-Day Devotional

The Risen Jesus Gives Us New Life and Sends Us

Matthew 28:1–10, 16–20; Acts 1:4–11

November 15, 2026 | Akron Grace Church



Scripture | New Living Translation

Matthew 28:1–10

1 Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb.
2 Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it.
3 His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow.
4 The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.
5 Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.
6 He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying.
7 And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember what I have told you.”
8 The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message.
9 And as they went, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they ran to him, grasped his feet, and worshiped him.
10 Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid! Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there.”

Matthew 28:16–20

16 Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.
17 When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted!
18 Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.
19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Acts 1:4–11

4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before.
5 John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”
6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”
7 He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.
8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
9 After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him.
10 As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them.
11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

Day 1 | He Kept His Word

Theme: The risen Jesus is trustworthy.

Scripture: Matthew 28:1–10

Devotional

What do you do when a promise sounds too good for the day you are actually living? At the tomb, the women were dealing with a real death. They had watched Jesus die. Then the angel told them that He had risen, “just as he said would happen.” The words direct us back to Jesus Himself. He had spoken of His death and resurrection before either happened. The empty tomb meant His promise had held through the darkest thing His followers could imagine.

Matthew lets us feel the women’s fear and joy together. They do not have to sort out every question before Jesus meets them on the road. They grasp His feet and worship Him. This is the same Jesus they had known, alive in a body they can touch. The resurrection is more than a comforting idea that survived Him. He is present, and He sends them to tell the others.

There may be an area of your life where the story still seems to stop at the grave: an unanswered prayer, a relationship that feels beyond repair, or a fear you cannot quiet. Matthew does not promise that every painful circumstance will change today. He gives us the living Jesus, who kept His word through death. That is a strong place to bring our questions.

Going Deeper

Notice how the angel says both “Come, see” and “go quickly and tell.” The women are invited to attend to what God has done before they carry the news to anyone else. Faith grows as we return to the truth about Jesus. Witness begins with that same truth, not with our ability to answer every question.

Quote from Sunday’s Message

“Jesus kept His word even through death. The cross and the tomb had looked so final, yet neither could keep Him from doing what He had promised.”

Reflect

• What does “just as he said would happen” tell you about Jesus when your circumstances feel final?

• Where do you need to bring a question or fear to the risen Lord today?

Today’s Practice

Read Matthew 28:5–10 slowly. Write one sentence beginning, “Because Jesus is alive...” and keep it where you will see it today.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You rose just as You said. Meet me in the places where fear makes Your promises hard to trust. Teach me to listen to Your word and bring my questions to You. Amen.

Day 2 | A New Life With God

Theme: Resurrection brings us into a living relationship with God.

Scripture: Matthew 28:10; 1 Peter 1:3–4; Romans 6:4

Devotional

Have you ever been forgiven and still wondered whether you were truly welcome? The disciples had abandoned Jesus. Yet His message to them begins with two surprising words: “my brothers.” He intends to see them again. His resurrection does not erase their failure from the story, but He reaches toward them with the language of family.

Last Sunday’s message considered the price Jesus paid for our sin. Peter helps us see what that payment opens. Because God raised Jesus from the dead, believers have been born again. Forgiveness removes guilt; new birth brings us into life with the Father. We are received by the living Savior, not left to stand outside with a cleared account. The one who calls the disciples brothers is still making people His own.

This life begins now. We can speak to God as Father, depend on Him, and begin to obey Him. Romans 6:4 says that just as Christ was raised, “now we also may live new lives.” That does not mean we become different people overnight. It means our relationship to God has changed at its root. Our days can be lived with Him rather than apart from Him.

Going Deeper

Peter begins with God’s mercy, not the strength of our response. New birth is received, and growth follows. When you notice an old fear or pattern in yourself, you do not need to earn your way back into the family. Turn toward the Savior who receives His people and ask Him to grow the life He has already given.

Quote from Sunday’s Message

“Peter starts with God’s mercy and says that through Jesus’ resurrection, believers have been born again. Salvation includes a new birth, a life with God they did not have before.”

Reflect

• Where are you still living as though Jesus has forgiven you but has not welcomed you?

• How might belonging to the Father change the way you approach one ordinary part of today?

Today’s Practice

Before one ordinary task today, pause and pray, “Father, I belong to You through Jesus. Help me live this moment with You.”

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for receiving me through the risen Jesus. When I remember my failures, remind me that Your mercy has brought me into Your family. Grow Your new life in me today. Amen.

Day 3 | Free to Obey

Theme: Sin no longer has the right to rule those united with Christ.

Scripture: Romans 6:4–11

Devotional

Is there a pattern that makes you wonder whether change is really possible? Perhaps you have confessed it before and still find yourself drawn back. Paul speaks to that struggle by joining our story to Christ's. In Romans 6, he says that those who belong to Jesus have been united with Him in His death and resurrection. The old life's claim has been broken, and a new life with God has begun.

Paul is careful about what this means. He says sin has lost its power and that we are no longer its slaves. He does not say temptation has vanished. A believer may still feel a strong pull toward a familiar sin. The good news is that the pull no longer has the final word. We can name it truthfully, turn toward Jesus, and obey Him. His life is at work in us even when growth is slower than we wish.

The command in verse 11 to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God is a call to take Christ's work seriously. We do not create freedom by thinking positively. We act in light of what He has done. When an old response begins to rise, we can remember whose we are and ask for help before we choose our next words or actions.

Going Deeper

The passage begins with baptism because baptism publicly marks our union with Christ. Paul's point is that His death and resurrection have changed whom we belong to. Obedience grows out of that belonging. If you fail, return to the risen Lord. His grace gives you reason to confess, receive help, and keep walking with Him.

Quote from Sunday's Message

"Paul connects freedom from sin with belonging to Christ. Jesus' death and resurrection give His people a new life in which sin no longer rules them."

Reflect

- What old pattern most often makes you forget that you belong to Christ?
- At what moment in that pattern could you pause and ask for His help?

Today's Practice

Name one recurring temptation to Jesus in private prayer. Choose one specific moment today to pause, remember Romans 6:11, and respond differently.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that sin no longer owns me. Help me speak truthfully about where I still struggle. Give me Your strength for the next choice, and teach me to return to You when I fail. Amen.

Day 4 | The First of the Harvest

Theme: Christ's resurrection promises a future resurrection for His people.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:20–23; Revelation 21:1–4

Devotional

Whose face comes to mind when you think about seeing a loved one again? Grief can make the future feel both precious and far away. Paul gives Christian hope a solid beginning: "Christ has been raised from the dead." He calls Jesus the first of a great harvest. His resurrection is the beginning of what God will do for all who belong to Him.

Paul does not say that death is painless or that we should hurry through mourning. He says death will not have the last word for Christ's people. When Jesus returns, they will be raised. The salvation that began with forgiveness and new life now will reach even their bodies. The same Lord who rose bodily will not abandon His people to the grave.

Revelation 21 widens that hope. God will dwell with His people, and death, grief, and pain will be gone. Imagine a life where there is no hospital room to leave, no funeral to attend, and no goodbye waiting around the corner. More than the absence of sorrow, heaven means being with Jesus. Scripture also gives believers hope of reunion with those who died in Him. We can miss them deeply and still look forward to that day.

Going Deeper

Paul's harvest picture has an order: Christ first, then those who belong to Him when He returns. Our hope is tied to His victory, not to the strength of our feelings. We should speak carefully about any individual whose faith we do not know, while holding the promise confidently for those who died trusting Christ.

Quote from Sunday's Message

"The risen Jesus gives us hope beyond the grave. Christ's resurrection is the beginning of a harvest. When He returns, those who belong to Him will be raised too."

Reflect

- How does Christ being "first of a great harvest" give weight to the promise of resurrection?
- What do you most long for about life with Jesus and the people who have died trusting Him?

Today's Practice

Thank God by name for a believer you miss. If grief is fresh, share one memory of that person with someone you trust.

Closing Prayer

God of all comfort, thank You for raising Jesus and promising to raise those who belong to Him. Hold us when we grieve and help us remember that Your future is real. Keep our hope fixed on life with You. Amen.

Day 5 | Sent Together

Theme: The Spirit empowers Christ's church to witness and welcome.

Scripture: Matthew 28:16–20; Acts 1:4–11; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17

Devotional

Who first made room for you to hear about Jesus? Someone may have spoken with you, read Scripture with you, or invited you to sit beside them in worship. In Matthew 28, the risen Jesus sends His followers to make disciples. That includes sharing the good news, baptizing new believers, and teaching them to obey Him. His authority stands behind the work, and His presence stays with His people.

Acts adds an essential promise. The apostles are told to wait for the Holy Spirit, who will give them power to be Jesus' witnesses. We cannot bring another person to faith through our own strength. We can tell the truth about the Savior whose life we have received, trusting God to work as we do. His promised return gives urgency and hope to that witness.

Jesus sends people, not isolated messengers. At the Lord's Table, many believers share in one body because they share one Savior. We remember His death together as people who live because He rose. The person we invite into church is more than an extra seat filled. We want them to know Christ and, with us, belong to His family. That is the life we have been given to share.

Going Deeper

The church's witness and its life together belong to the same calling. Our welcome should make room for someone to hear God's Word and see His people caring for one another. A simple invitation can begin a longer friendship in which you listen, speak honestly about Jesus, and walk alongside someone as they explore faith.

Quote from Sunday's Message

"When we put our faith in Jesus, He brings us into His family. We belong to Him, and we belong to one another. That's who we are as Christ's Church."

Reflect

- Who in your life needs an invitation to hear about the risen Jesus?
- How could you and your church make room for that person to ask questions and grow?

Today's Practice

Pray for one person by name. Invite them to read Matthew 28 with you or to sit with you at worship, and make time to listen to their response.

Closing Prayer

Holy Spirit, give me courage, patience, and kindness as I speak about Jesus. Make our church a place where people hear His Word and experience His people's welcome. Keep us faithful as we wait for His return. Amen.