

He is Risen: Living an Empowered Life

A Small Group Bible Study Guide

Based on the Sermon by Pastor Shantel (April 20, 2025)

Welcome, Small Group Leaders!

This guide is designed to help you lead a meaningful and engaging discussion based on Pastor Shantel's recent Easter sermon. Our prayer is that it will help your group members grow deeper in their relationship with Christ as they reflect on and apply the powerful truths of His resurrection. Don't feel pressured to be an expert—this guide is here to support you. Trust the Holy Spirit to lead your time together!

1. Set the Atmosphere

Hello everyone, and welcome! It's so good to gather together. Let's start with a fun way to connect before we dive into God's Word.

- **Icebreaker (Choose one, or do both if time allows!):**
 - **"New Beginnings":** Easter is all about new beginnings! Share one thing you'd like to see "rise up" or begin anew in your life or in the world around you this season.
 - **"Power Source":** Pastor Shantel talked about resurrection power. If you could have one "superpower" for a day to help or bless others, what would it be and why?
 - **Opening Prayer:**
 - *Leader: Great sharing, everyone! Before we look at the sermon and Scripture, let's invite the Holy Spirit to be present with us and to open our hearts to what He wants to share. Would someone like to open us in prayer? (Or, "Let's pray together...")*
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2. Sermon Summary

Pastor Shantel delivered a powerful message on Easter Sunday about living an empowered life because "He is Risen!" Let's recall some of the key points.

- **Main Scripture Passages Referenced:**
 - Luke 22:19 (Remember)
 - 2 Peter 3:18 (Increase - Sermon mentioned 3 Peter; the correct reference is 2 Peter)
 - Acts 4:12 (Salvation)
 - Ephesians 3:20-21 (Expectancy)
 - Psalm 1 (Not just for us)

- **Big Idea:** Because Jesus is risen, we are called and empowered to live a transformed life characterized by Remembering God's work, Increasing in Christ-likeness, walking in complete Salvation, living with Expectancy, and knowing our blessing is Not just for us but for others.
 - **Highlights from the Sermon:**
 - The same resurrection power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to every believer.
 - Jesus didn't die for us to just be comfortable, but for us to go forth and share the Good News, empowered by His Spirit.
 - The acronym **R-I-S-E-N** gives us a framework for living this empowered life:
 - **Remember:** What God has done, His sacrifice, His past deliverances.
 - **Increase:** Grow in grace, knowledge, character, and the fruits of the Spirit.
 - **Salvation:** Experience God's complete healing and deliverance (sozo) in every area of life.
 - **Expectancy:** Live with hope, knowing God can do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think.
 - **Not Just For Us:** Our blessings and the fruit of our lives are meant to bless others.
 - **Group Discussion – Recalling the Message:**
 - What was one thing that particularly stood out to you from Pastor Shantel's sermon on Sunday?
 - Did anything challenge you, confuse you, or especially encourage you?
 - The sermon used the acronym R-I-S-E-N. Which of these points (Remember, Increase, Salvation, Expectancy, Not just for us) resonated most with you, or where do you feel God is inviting you to grow?
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3. Digging into the Word

Pastor Shantel rooted her message in God's Word. Let's take a closer look at one of the key passages that speaks to the incredible power and hope we have in Christ.

- **Scripture Re-reading:**
 - Let's have someone read **Ephesians 3:20-21 (ESV)** aloud for us:
 "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."
- **Observation – What Does It Say?**
 - What words or phrases in these two verses really capture your attention?
 - Who is the focus of this powerful declaration? What attributes of God are highlighted?
 - The passage mentions "power at work within us." What do you think this power is?

- **Interpretation – What Does It Mean?**

- When Paul wrote this to the believers in Ephesus, what do you think he wanted them to feel or understand about God?
- How does the phrase "far more abundantly than all that we ask or think" stretch your understanding of God's capabilities? Does it challenge any limited beliefs you might hold?
- Verse 21 talks about glory "in the church and in Christ Jesus." How do you see God getting glory through His power working in us?

- **Connection to the Sermon – Living it Out:**

- Pastor Shantel linked Ephesians 3:20-21 to the "E" in R-I-S-E-N – **Expectancy**. How does understanding God's immeasurable power fuel our ability to live in joyful expectancy, even in challenging times?
- The sermon emphasized that "resurrection power" is available to us. How do these verses from Ephesians affirm that this isn't just a theological concept, but a present reality for believers?
- Reflecting on this passage and Pastor Shantel's message, is there an area of your life where you feel God is inviting you to expect more of His power to be at work?

(Optional: If time permits and the group is led, you can briefly discuss how other R-I-S-E-N scriptures like Psalm 1 [for "Not just for us"] or 2 Peter 3:18 [for "Increase"] also reflect this empowerment for a purpose.)

4. Wrapping Up

This has been a rich discussion! It's amazing to be reminded of the life-changing power available to us because He is Risen!

- **Summarize Key Takeaways:**

- *Leader: Let's briefly go around and share one key insight or takeaway from our discussion today that you want to carry with you this week.*

- **Share Prayer Requests:**

- *Leader: As we close, let's support one another in prayer. Are there any specific prayer requests? Think about how we can pray for each other to walk in this resurrection power – perhaps in an area where you need to remember God's faithfulness, desire to increase in an aspect of Christ-likeness, need a fresh touch of His salvation, want to grow in expectancy, or feel called to be a blessing to others.*

- **Closing Prayer:**

- *Leader: Thank you for sharing. Let's commit these requests, and ourselves, to the Lord. Would someone be willing to close us in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to empower us to live out these truths this week?*

Thank you for participating! May you experience the fullness of His resurrection life this week!

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