



So, Easter is in the past or is it. There are many significant times each year and we look forward to them but when they are over, they're over. But I don't believe we can count Easter as one of those over and done times. Easter actually should propel us forward and be with us every day. The death and resurrection of Jesus changed everything and we carry the hope and promise of the empty cross and empty tomb with us each and every day. How we celebrated Easter Sunday is how we should celebrate Jesus throughout the year. This week I want to challenge all of us to not return to our normal routine but use it as a springboard to a glorious future that shapes us into the image of Jesus. Easter Sunday is historically the highest attended Sunday for U.S. churches, the Sunday following Easter is usually below average in terms of attendance and people start to go into summer break mode. The thing is, God doesn't go on vacation or on a summer break and forget about us, so why should we step back from our walk with God? Think about this. Year after year, we have a big celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and then we return to a life lived, far too often, as if the resurrection never happened and nothing changed. How about making this year different? What if we move on from the celebration of Easter and see the resurrected Jesus in all His glory. When we turn our eyes to the Risen Jesus we

are transformed. To often we turn away from Him because we think that the big Easter celebration will tick a box that gives us a time out break. I want each of us to remember the words of the Centurion who was involved in the crucifixion of Jesus. As he stood in front of Jesus, and "saw the way He died," the Centurion said, "Truly this man was the Son of God" Mark 15:39. That's the change Jesus makes when you encounter Him. This man was not a follower of Jesus. He had no reason to believe Jesus was anything special. He had even been involved in nailing Him to the cross. Yet, this man's had no doubt who Jesus was. His testimony in that moment was that truly, certainly, surely, without doubt, this Man was the Son of God. As we move on from Easter, let's move on with as much certainty

as the Centurion. Let's remember that even the way Jesus died, gave clear, definitive testimony that He is the Son of God. If we live in the certainty of that truth, maybe our lives after Easter will be all that Easter says they can be.

Easter was and is a game changer. I love Easter, it is the greatest day in history and the message of salvation changed my life. However, without even noticing it, in the midst of a busy life, and daily duties at work I can let my relationship slip. We can't just keep putting Jesus on our to-do list when the time is right for us. When the world is loud, we can listen to it over our Savior. We know the gospel, we have heard it over and over. We know who Jesus is, but still we listen to the crowd instead of standing by our Savior. We want to satisfy the crowd more than we want to live like our Savior. We often think, "I know the story. I know Jesus was perfect. But it isn't always convenient to stand by Him." We may not have a crowd around us yelling at us to crucify Jesus, but each day we live in a world that yells lies about our Savior and about our identity. We have to remind ourselves that Jesus is our Savior, not just at Easter but every day.

