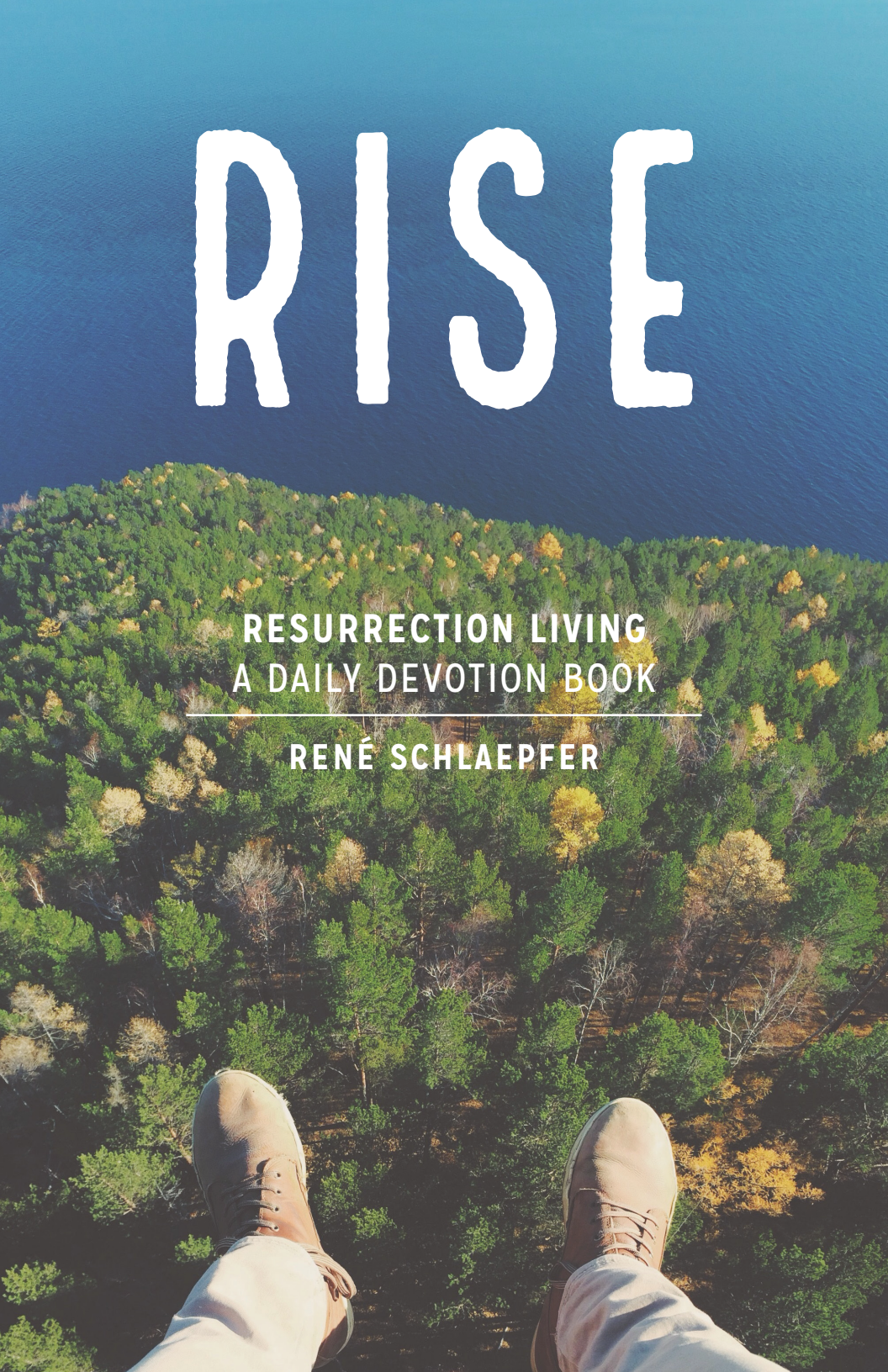


RISE

RESURRECTION LIVING
A DAILY DEVOTION BOOK

RENÉ SCHLAEPFER



RISE

Rise above coolness and cleverness,
above temptations and distractions,
above sorrow and regret.

Live for what counts,
passionately, purposefully, and powerfully!

In this devotional book and the related series at www.tlc.org,
you'll explore what the Scriptures say about the power of the
resurrected Christ in you... to rise above.

This isn't a journey you're meant to take alone. There's so much
inspiration and power in traveling with other believers. That's why
these daily meditations are designed to synchronize with a message
series called "Rise" at Twin Lakes Church. You can join us live during
the series, or catch the messages online at **www.tlc.org**.

WEEK 1: RISE IN GOD'S POWER

WEEK 2: RISE ABOVE PEOPLE-PLEASING

WEEK 3: RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

WEEK 4: RISE ABOVE YOURSELF

Note: All Bible quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV)
unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION

The resurrection. A dead man leaves the tomb alive. His followers are amazed. So what difference does that make to you and me... today?

The resurrected man insisted it changes everything. Most obviously? It eliminates fear of death. He promised that if we follow him, we'll also be raised with him.

But the resurrection has other, even more world-shattering implications. Jesus Christ pointed to the resurrection as proof that his other claims were actually true: He was the Son of God. The Messiah. Sent to deliver the world from sin and death.

And his resurrection is a preview of what God will do—and is already beginning to do—for the whole planet: Lives changed by the risen Christ. And one day, those who trust in the Risen One will themselves be resurrected into eternal life in a restored heaven and earth!

When this idea captures your imagination, it changes you.

You see it in those first disciples. One day they cower in a locked room, afraid of every enemy. The next day their fear is totally gone. One day they're miserably bowed down with shame. The next they're striding into the city, forgiven and free and bold in their witness. One day they're shackled by their own weaknesses, the next they're turning the world upside down, healing the sick and proclaiming the good news.

And the good news they proclaim is this: Christ is risen. That's the central theme of every single sermon preached in the Book of Acts.

Why did that change them so? What did they believe about it? In this booklet you'll explore just a few of the implications of the resurrection of Jesus for you. The risen Christ can similarly help you rise... above fear of others, above your own shame, above your own limitations!

Because the resurrection didn't just happen once. And it won't just happen once again. It is happening... right now.

DAY ONE: Rise... Beyond Fear of Death

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Matthew 28:5-6 (NIV)

Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Do you believe this?" John 11:25 (NIV)

"He has forced open a door that has been locked since the death of the first man. He has met, fought, and beaten the King of Death. Everything is different because He has done so." – C. S. Lewis

Thank you, God, that Jesus is risen from the dead. Help me see how this changes everything. It means my sins are forgiven. It means death is defeated. And it means, if I place my trust in Christ's promise, I don't have to be afraid about my future anymore—not even of death—because I too will be resurrected one day. Remind me to always live in the hope of the resurrection truth. Today I answer Jesus' question as Martha did: "Yes Lord, I believe." Amen.

DAY TWO: Rise... Above Hopeless Thoughts

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Colossians 3:1 (NIV)

Lord, thank you that the new life you offer doesn't begin at my future resurrection; it starts right now! Today's verse says that, in a spiritual sense, I have already been raised with Christ. I am already shedding the deadness of my old life and putting on something new and fresh and alive: The identity you give me in Christ. I am your child, a royal priest, an heir of heaven. So help me think "resurrection thoughts" and not "grave thoughts" today. May the way I live—even the way I walk, my physical presence in the world, the way I interact with others—reflect your resurrection power at work in me. Amen!

DAY THREE: Rise... With God Empowering Me!

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know... his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead. Ephesians 1:18b-20a (NIV)

Lord, help me realize there is resurrection power at work in me if I trust in you. That means I can change: I can rise above my own destructive habits. I can rise past devastating wounds from my past. And I can rise out of the ashes of deadly regret. Not because I'm strong enough on my own. But because the same exact world-shaking power that transformed the dead cells in the crucified body of Jesus into a first-of-its-kind, resurrected, immortal body is at work in me, right now! Amen.

DAY FOUR: Helping Others Rise

Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. Acts 3:6-7 (NKJV)

Lord, I think of how Peter had seen Jesus heal. He'd seen Jesus' resurrection. He'd heard Jesus recommission him. So he was confident he could be a channel for the risen Christ to work through. Help me have that same confidence! May I boldly encourage those in need of hope and healing, in the name of Jesus, "Rise up!" Amen!

DAY FIVE: Rise... Above a Stingy View of Heaven

(Jesus said) "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." Luke 24:39 (NASB)

"If the truth is that after death there comes a negatively spiritual life, an eternity of mystical experience, what more misleading way of communicating it could possibly be found than the appearance of a human form which eats broiled fish?" – C.S. Lewis

Lord, sometimes we have a stingy view of heaven: That we'll just float around as disembodied spirits on clouds forever. So thank you that Jesus was resurrected generously. Completely. Physically and spiritually. That shows me you love and value the richness of this physical world. Thank you that the Biblical descriptions of the new heaven and new earth are so tangible. Because you love our physical bodies and our physical earth enough to restore them fully one day, help me to respect and love them too! Amen.

DAY SIX: Rise... Above the Fray

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame... Hebrews 12:2 (Berean)

Heavenly Father, help me realize the importance of the battle of mental focus that takes place as I awaken each day: Will I keep my eyes on you? Or fix them on the worries and cares of the world? Will I send my thoughts scurrying out to whack the moles of busyness and fear and regret, or will I remain focused on you, secure and unshaken? Of all the decisions I face today, this first decision is most important. Where will I keep my eyes? Help them to rise above the fray. Help me to have "resurrection eyes", set on you and your promises. Amen.

DAY SEVEN: Rise... Beyond Living for Myself

And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 2 Corinthians 5:15 (NIV)

"Lord, help me to break free from old patterns, old ways, old sins. I do not want to abuse your grace. It did not come cheaply to you. In you, I rise to a new way of life! Amen." – Joshua DuBois

DAY EIGHT: Rise... Above People-Pleasing

(God says) "I am the One who comforts you! So why are you afraid of mere humans, who wither like the grass and disappear?" Isaiah 51:12 (NLT)

"The Christian who cares only for God's approval lives free of the tyranny of conformist pressures, relaxed under the steady direction of the God who loves us and gives himself for us. Those who try to please the world... very quickly find themselves under the unkind surveillance of a thousand critics." – Eugene Peterson

Father, the most immediate transformation in the disciples after the resurrection was their sudden fearlessness, though they were surrounded by powerful enemies. Thank you, Lord, that the resurrected Christ can impact me the same way. The negative opinions of others need not discourage me when I have your love. May I always see you as my good Father whose love makes the approval of others unnecessary. Amen!

DAY NINE: Rise... Above People-Pleasing (Part 2)

(Jesus said) "I don't try to please myself, but I only please the One who sent me." John 5:30 (NCV)

(Paul said) "I'm not trying to be a people pleaser! No, I am trying to please God. If I were still trying to please people, I would not be Christ's servant." Galatians 1:10 (NLT)

Heavenly Father, the first disciples knew when they met the risen Christ that everything had changed. They inherited the courage of Jesus. They saw that He truly is the Messiah. The King of Kings, so they only needed to live for him. And to make things better still, they knew he called them not servants, but friends! Let me know the joy that comes from living for you alone. Amen.

DAY TEN: Rise... Above Envy and Pressure

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within... Romans 12:2a (Philips)

Lord, there are so many subtle ways the world tries to squeeze me into its mold. And one of its weapons is envy. Help me not to envy others who may have been born with skinnier genes or sharper brains or better connections. Help me see how the promise of resurrection destroys any jealousy. It means I can resist envying the place at the table that others may enjoy—because I know I have a seat at your heavenly table! Amen.

DAY ELEVEN: Rise... Above Serving Two Masters

(Jesus said) "Instead, store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust don't destroy and thieves don't break in and steal." Matthew 6:20 (GW)

Lord, help me make investments that will mature at my resurrection; to "store treasures in heaven"! I want to use my resources in ways that will last forever, and not crumble into dust. Help me rise beyond my society's pressure to value earthly possessions above anything else. Amen.

DAY TWELVE: Rise... Above My Culture's Prizes

The world and everything in it that people desire is passing away; but those who do the will of God will live forever. 1 John 2:17 (TEV)

Lord, help me learn to value what is truly eternal, in light of the resurrection: Faith, hope, and love. People. Your truth. May I see the world's prizes as they really are: Very temporary. Help me see how the promise of my resurrection amid the glories of the new heaven and earth puts the glories of my culture in perspective. Amen.

DAY THIRTEEN: Rise... Into Christ-Like Forgiveness

God forgave all our sins. He canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross. Col. 2:13-14 (NLT)

Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Col. 3:13 (NLT)

Lord, your resurrection proves your sacrifice: Without it, I would have no way of knowing your death was any different from other deaths. But when you rose, you proved you truly did pay for my sins on the cross. Knowing I've been forgiven, help me to forgive others. I confess: it's hard to forgive some of the people in my life. I ask for the courage to take the leap of forgiveness today. May I pray, "Father forgive them..." knowing that new life follows! Amen!

DAY FOURTEEN: Rise... Above Vengeance

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. Romans 12:19 (NIV)

Lord, I pray for the patience to trust your just timing—even if your timing is delayed until the final resurrection and judgment. I trust both your mercy and I trust your justice, even in the areas of life where I've been personally hurt. And I am so grateful for the mercy you have shown me—where would I be without it? Amen.

DAY FIFTEEN: Rise... Above Barriers

Through Christ, God made peace between us and himself, and God gave us the work of telling everyone about the peace we can have with him. God was in Christ, making peace between the world and Himself. In Christ, God did not hold the world guilty of its sins. And he gave us this message of peace. So we have been sent to speak for Christ. 2 Cor. 5:18-20 (NCV)

Lord, nothing has brought people together across vast barriers like the death and resurrection of Christ. You bridged the gap between humans and yourself. And then you told us to have a "ministry of reconciliation" across all sorts of racial, denominational, and cultural gaps. May your resurrection power lift me past barricades, barriers, and borders with the powerful, elevating gospel! May I humble myself as Christ did, loving others incarnationally, through word and deed. Amen.

DAY SIXTEEN: Rise... Past Counting Wrongs

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times." Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)

Love... keeps no record of wrongs. 1 Cor. 13:5b (NIV)

Father, it is so easy for me to keep a record of wrongs. In fact, wrongs come my way without my even looking for them! My friends are insensitive. The boss is mean. People are rude. It all adds up in my spirit, turning me into someone who can feel victimized—rather than valued! Help me choose a "resurrection narrative" instead of a "contamination narrative" as I frame my life today. Amen.

DAY SEVENTEEN: Rise... Above the Insults of Others

(Jesus said) "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:27,28 (NIV)

Lord Jesus, just as you forgave those who tortured you, and forgave Peter who denied you, help me to love my enemies, to rise above their treatment of me. Not just because I'm being charitable. But because this is how healing begins. And how your resurrection power spreads. Amen.

DAY EIGHTEEN: Rise... Beyond Worry

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?" Luke 12:22-25 (NIV)

Heavenly Father, thank you for caring for all my needs. I do struggle with worry, but I want to rise above that. Help me realize how the promise of resurrection is the ultimate promise of your divine care for me! I commit my worries to you now. Amen.

DAY NINETEEN: Rise... Into a Resurrection World View

If all we get out of Christ is a little inspiration for a few short years, we're a pretty sorry lot. But the truth is that Christ has been raised up, the first in a long legacy of those who are going to leave the cemeteries. 1 Cor. 15:19,20 (The Message)

"The resurrection of Jesus means that what God has done for Jesus, He is beginning to do, in and through Jesus, for the whole of the rest of the world." – N.T. Wright

Lord, help me see how your resurrection power is already changing this world. But the way you are bringing new life right now is through sowing small seeds, not bulldozing everything down. You transform us, one life and community at a time—and we then become transforming people in our own right. Thank you that I get to watch this happening all around me. And that I get to be a part of it! Help me realize all this is a great preview of what's ahead: The whole universe transformed and restored! Amen!

DAY TWENTY: Rise... Above Shame

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:1,2 (NIV)

Lord, I sometimes live under a cloud of condemnation, imagining that you must look on me with nothing but disgust. Help me learn the meaning of "no condemnation". Help me to preach the gospel daily...to myself: Jesus gave his own life as payment for my sin, and then he rose from the dead, proving what his death accomplished! That means there is no reason for me to walk around in the ditch of shame today. I can walk in the freedom and power of a new life! Thank you!

DAY TWENTY-ONE: Rise... Beyond An Undisciplined Mind

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires. But those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. Romans 8:5-6 (NIV)

"For most of us, thought management is, well, un-thought of! We think much about time management, weight management, personnel management. But what about thought management" – Max Lucado

Lord, help me change my focus today. I focus on my paltry provisions instead of your promise to provide. I focus on my recent failures instead of your eternal forgiveness. I focus on what I don't want to do instead of what I hope to be. And when my mind is set on what my sinful nature desires, then I will always go back to it—even if I am only thinking of it in order to avoid it! What I need is to set my mind on something new: The new resurrection reality I have in you! Help me to change my mindset today by thinking of things that are excellent, lovely, pure, praiseworthy. Amen.

DAY TWENTY-TWO: Rise... Above My Compulsions

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are now controlled by the spirit if you have the spirit of God living in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ living in them does not belong to Christ. Romans 8:9 (NLT)

So, dear brothers, you have no obligations anymore to your old sinful nature, to do what it begs you to do. Romans 8:12 (LB)

Lord, thank you that I can rise above my self-destructive compulsions. Not by willpower. But by God's power. I do not need to feel any sense of obligation to my familiar urges, whether they are compulsions to gossip, worry, envy, lust, lost my temper, or anything else. They will still beg me to indulge them. But I have no obligation to them. I am free. I've been raised to newness of life. Amen!

DAY TWENTY-THREE: Rise... Above My Fears

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Romans 8:14-17 (NIV)

Lord, help me to rise above my fears today. My life can be haunted by "what-ifs"... What if I was wrong about that investment? What if my kids go off the deep end? What if my boss starts to hate me? But the Spirit you give me does not make me a slave again to fear. That's what my old, "do-it-yourself" religion was like. I was afraid I was never doing enough. But you remind me you've adopted me. And if I'm your child, that means I am loved far more than I can comprehend. Help me banish the "what-ifs" and replace them with "for-certain"... I'm loved. For certain. I am your beloved child. For certain. I'm promised resurrection. For certain! Amen!

DAY TWENTY-FOUR: Rise... Above Hopelessness

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. Romans 8:18 (NIV)

Thank you, God, for this promise: The sufferings of this earth will be soon overwhelmed by the joys of the new heaven and new earth. And that's a promise the resurrection of Jesus guarantees! Thank you that, whatever it is I am going through, I will get through it. The grey sky will brighten. The pain will stop. The mourning will turn to dancing. The tomb... my tomb.. will one day be empty. And I will live with you forever. Amen.

DAY TWENTY-FIVE: Rise... Above Uncertainty

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 (NIV)

"There are so many things we do not know. We do not know if the economy will dip or if our team will win. We do not know what our spouse is thinking or how our kids will turn out. But according to Paul, we can be absolutely certain about four things. We know God works. In all things. For the good of those who love Him. According to His purpose." – Max Lucado

Father, I praise you today for the guarantee that you will weave something good even out of my hurts and failures. It's unlikely that I have suffered my last painful experience here, but I can walk into an uncertain future with confidence, knowing you will take anything that faces me and miraculously use it for something positive. The ultimate example: Christ's empty tomb. Amen.

DAY TWENTY-SIX: Rise... Past Self-Destructive Habits

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. Romans 8:26 (NIV)

Lord, I am so weak. But the same power that raised Christ from the dead helps me in my weakness! Thank you, Lord, that although my faithfulness may falter, yours never will! Though my moods change, you are consistent! Though I am weak, you are always strong! And you desire such a close relationship with me that, when I'm so low I can't even pray, your Spirit prays for me! Thank you that when I am weak, you don't condemn me—you help me. God, sometimes pain leaves me speechless. But let your endless love leave me speechless too—in awe and wonder! Amen.

DAY TWENTY-SEVEN: Rise... Past Insecurity

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Romans 8:31-34 (NIV)

Lord, help me recognize that no condemnation against me can stand in your presence. Even though sometimes I hear accusing voices ("You call yourself a Christian? How dare you! You have failed far too many times!"), help me remember that the risen Jesus is always interceding for me before the throne of the Father. The Resurrected One has my back! Amen!

DAY TWENTY-EIGHT: Rise... Above Any Obstacle!

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:35-39

Lord, thank you that the resurrection of Christ guarantees that no obstacle will ever separate me from your love—not even death. I will never have a day without your love. And I never have. Not on the days I doubted or deserted you. Not in my hour of failure or fear. Not when I was persecuted and not when I was in pain. You loved me in all those times and you always will. You love me when I feel close to you and when I feel distant. Your ever-living, ever-loving presence will never, ever leave me. Help me grow ever more certain of your eternal love, Lord, and rise above all doubt and fear! Amen!

NOTES:

Find more free resources including video & audio of the RISE series messages at www.tlc.org or download the Twin Lakes Church app

