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Groups Sermon Study Questions

The Upside Down

April 1, 2018

Message Summary

There's an old saying, "Sometimes the truth is stranger than fiction." When the unexpected happens, we can be caught off guard, wondering if there is something else at work here. In this series, Stranger Things, we examine six spiritual realities that are at work in this physical world. This week, Pastor John showed us how God turned the world upside down. Through the death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection 3 days later, God provided a way for all of us to experience new life.

Consider This

What is the strangest thing that has ever happened to you?

Do you think we, as a culture, have a fascination with the strange events that aren't easily explained? Why or Why Not?

How does your faith in Jesus inform your understanding of the strange events in you may experience?

Study Questions Read John 20:1–18.

1. Read Psalm 23 and record how many times the pronouns "I" and "me" are used. What does that tell you about God's relationship to you?

- 2. What was Mary Magdalene's first reaction when she got to the tomb?
- 3. How did disciples react to Mary Magdalene's report?
- 4. As the disciples left, Mary Magdalene stayed at the tomb, weeping. How would you describe, in your own words, the encounter she experienced in verses 11-17?
- 5. What was her reaction when she realized that it was Jesus that she was talking with?
- 6. In the culture of the day, a woman's testimony was not accepted. Do you think it is so significant that Mary Magdalene was the first to see Jesus? Why or why not?
- 7.After encountering the risen Jesus, Mary Magdalene had to share what she experienced. How have you been compelled to action after an encounter with Jesus?

Read John 21:1-7.

- 8. Jesus' death and resurrection happened in Jerusalem. His disciples were with him there. Eventually they went home to the Sea of Galilee (according to Google maps, today it's a 30 -40 hour journey by foot). Why do you think they went home? Why do you think they went back to fishing?
- 9. How did Jesus meet them at the sea?
- 10. What was Peter's reaction? Why do you think he reacted this way?
- 11. How do you think you would've reacted if you were on that boat?
- 12. Have you ever seen Jesus "show up" in the midst of your

normal day to day work? How did you respond?

13. Do you feel compelled to respond to Jesus "showing up" in your life this week? If so, how will you do so?

Read Hebrews 10:32-35.

14. How does embracing Jesus help us stand when we feel attacked on every front?

15. What ways do we experience "insult and persecution" (v. 33) because of our faith in Jesus?

16. How were the early followers of Jesus able to stand when opposition rose?

17. Why is it so important for us to have a similar mindset as the early followers of Jesus when we face opposition in this world?

Action Steps

Resurrection Appearances

Below are additional Bible passages where the risen Jesus appeared to his followers. Take time this week to review these encounters. You can use the space on the back to write any observations and ways you will apply these passages this week.

Matthew 28 Mark 16
Luke 24 John 20-21
Acts 1:1-11 Acts 9:1-19

1 Corinthians 15:1-11