

Small Group Guide: Easter Changed Everything

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share one Easter tradition from your childhood or family. How does it make you feel when you think about it?

Sermon Overview:

Pastor Jeremy reminded us that Easter isn't just a celebration we observe—it's a historical event that changed everything. The first Easter wasn't a celebration for those who lived it; it was a morning of mourning, confusion, and fear. Yet Jesus showed up, reminded them of His promises, and turned their pain into purpose.

Key Scripture References

- Luke 24:1-8
- John 20:11-19
- Romans 5:8-11
- 1 John 4:10
- John 3:16

Discussion Questions:

Part 1: He Still Shows Up

1. **Read John 20:11-16.** Why do you think Mary didn't recognize Jesus at first? What does this tell us about how we sometimes miss Jesus in our own difficult moments?
2. The sermon emphasized that "because Jesus walked out of the tomb, He can now walk into our lives." How have you experienced Jesus "showing up" during a difficult season?
3. The disciples locked themselves in a room out of fear, yet Jesus walked through the walls to be with them. What "locked doors" in your life might you need to open to Jesus right now?

Part 2: We Still Remember

1. The angels told the grieving women to "remember" what Jesus had told them. Why is remembering so important when we're struggling? What specific promises or truths about Jesus do you need to remember today?
2. **Read Romans 5:8.** How does it change your perspective to know that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"—not the future, better version of us?
3. Pastor Jeremy said, "It's easy to tell people you love them. It's another thing to show them." How did Jesus *show* His love, not just tell us about it? How can we follow His example this week?

Part 3: There's Still Purpose in Our Pain

1. Mary Magdalene experienced tremendous pain and confusion, yet Jesus gave her the honor of being the first witness to the resurrection. What does this tell you about how God can use our painful experiences?
2. The sermon pointed out that Mary started a movement that led to billions of Christians today. How does this encourage you about the impact your own testimony might have?

Personal Reflection: What pain are you currently experiencing that God might want to transform into purpose? How might your story encourage someone else?

Key Takeaways:

✓ **Easter changed everything** because Jesus didn't stay dead—He is alive and active in our lives today.

✓ **He still shows up** in our darkest, most confusing moments, even when we don't immediately recognize Him.

✓ **We must remember** what Jesus did for us—not based on our worthiness but based on His love.

✓ **Our pain has purpose** when we surrender it to Jesus and allow Him to use our story to impact others.

✓ **Jesus loves us as we are right now**, not some future version of ourselves we think we need to become first.

Practical Applications

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

1. **Remember Daily:** Each morning this week, spend 5 minutes remembering one specific thing Jesus has done for you. Write it down or share it with someone.
2. **Share Your Story:** Identify one person who needs encouragement and share how Jesus has shown up in your life during a difficult time.
3. **Turn Pain to Purpose:** Journal about a painful experience you've had and ask God to show you how He might use it to help someone else. Consider sharing this with your small group next week.
4. **Show Love:** Like Jesus *showed* His love through action, identify one specific way you can demonstrate (not just verbalize) love to someone this week.

Reflection Questions for Personal Time

- Am I living like Easter changed everything, or am I living like Jesus is still in the tomb?
- What "locked doors" of fear, shame, or hurt am I keeping closed to Jesus?
- How would my life look different if I truly believed Jesus loves me exactly as I am today?
- What movement might God want to start through my willingness to share what He's done in my life?

Prayer Points

- Thank Jesus for walking out of the tomb so He could walk into our lives
- Ask God to help us remember His love and promises when we're struggling
- Pray for courage to share our testimonies with others
- Ask God to reveal the purpose in our pain and use our stories for His glory
- Pray for anyone in the group facing difficult circumstances right now

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You that Easter changed everything. Thank You that Jesus didn't stay dead but rose again so we could have eternal life. Help us to remember Your love when we're hurting, to recognize Your presence when You show up, and to trust that You can turn our pain into purpose. Give us boldness to share what You've done in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.