

Small Group Guide: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Based on John 20

Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by thanking God for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and understanding.

Ice Breaker

Share a time when you experienced confusion or darkness in your life, but eventually found clarity or hope. How did that experience change you?

Key Scripture

John 20:1-18 (Focus on verses 1-9, 16)

Sermon Summary

This Easter message explores the confusion and grief of Jesus' followers after His crucifixion, their lack of understanding about why He had to die, and the transformative moment when they encountered the risen Christ. The sermon emphasizes that Jesus is the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy—both as the reigning King and the suffering servant who conquered sin, death, and the grave.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

- 1. Why didn't the disciples understand that Jesus had to die and rise again, even though He had told them repeatedly?**

2. **What is significant about Mary Magdalene being the first person mentioned at the tomb?** How does this connect to the broader biblical narrative starting in Genesis 3?
3. **The sermon mentions that "it was still dark" when Mary came to the tomb (v. 1). How does John use darkness and light as themes throughout his Gospel?** What does this symbolize in the resurrection account?

Theological Understanding

4. **The sermon emphasized that Jesus had to die as the "suffering servant" before reigning as King. Why was the cross necessary?** How do passages like Isaiah 53 help us understand this?
5. **What does it mean that "death could not contain" Jesus?** How does the resurrection validate everything Jesus claimed about Himself?
6. **The pastor asked, "Does Jesus know you?" as opposed to just "Do you know Jesus?" What's the difference?** (See Matthew 7:21-23)

Application

7. **The sermon concluded with challenging questions: "What are you afraid of? Why can't we proclaim His name?"** What fears hold you back from boldly living out your faith?
8. **How should the reality of the resurrection change the way we face death, suffering, and daily challenges?**
9. **Jesus sent the Holy Spirit so the church could "shine the light of Christ in the dark world we live in."** How can your small group practically do this in your community this week?

Key Takeaways

1. **Jesus is the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy**—from Genesis 3 through the prophets, He is the promised Redeemer, King, and suffering servant.
2. **The resurrection validates Jesus' identity** as the sinless Son of God who conquered sin, death, and the grave.
3. **Personal recognition of Christ transforms everything**—like Mary hearing her name, we must personally know Jesus and be known by Him.
4. **The resurrection should eliminate our fears** and embolden us to live courageously for Christ.

5. **The story isn't finished**—Jesus is coming again, and we have the privilege of proclaiming this hope until He returns.

Closing Reflection

The pastor said: "Our hope is found in one name, Jesus. Do you know him? The greater question is, does he know you?"

Take a few moments of silence for personal reflection, then invite anyone who wants to share their response or prayer requests.

Closing Prayer

- Pray for anyone in the group struggling with doubt or fear
- Thank God for the victory of the resurrection
- Ask for boldness to proclaim Christ's name in your daily lives
- Pray for opportunities to share the gospel this week