


John 20

CG Discussion Guide // Week of 12 November 2023

INTRODUCTION

- Icebreaker: What's the most memorable, fun surprise you've experienced?
- Take some time to pray for one another's needs and requests (refer to Prayer Guide as needed)
- Pray for Harbor Network sister church: River City Church, Grand Rapids, MI (Pastor: Brad Kidder)
- Choose discussion questions, prayer guide, or abide time questions depending on your group's needs

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Put yourselves in the shoes of Jesus' followers just before Sunday. What would be running through your heads and hearts during that time?
- How do the first encounters of the disciples with the empty tomb strike you? Does verse 9's comment
- What do you make of Jesus revealing Himself first to Mary Magdalene? What do you make of their interaction and Jesus' statement in v. 17?
- If you were one of the disciples in vv. 19-23, how would you have reacted to seeing Jesus in the flesh?
 - In vv. 22-23, Jesus gives a foretaste of what was coming for the disciples (the Holy Spirit and the gospel work of the church). How does the resurrection bring about these two gifts?
- What do you make of Thomas and his skepticism? Is there a difference between his skepticism and plain unbelief?
- Theologian Jaroslav Pelikan once said, "***If Christ is risen, nothing else matters. And if Christ is not risen—nothing else matters.***" (This is also the Apostle Paul's argument in 1 Cor. 15:3-23) How does the resurrection change how we see the world? How should it change or affect how you live?
 - *CG Leaders: if you would like to do a special session on resurrection apologetics (either in conjunction with the discussion or another gathering), I recommend this 45 min presentation by J. Warner Wallace:  [Did Jesus Really Die and Come Back to Life](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajOYym3luRk) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajOYym3luRk>)*
- In honor of vv. 30-31, if you consider yourself a believer in Jesus, share how you came to faith in Jesus.

Abide Time: Psalm 16

- What realities are you facing this week? What is occupying your thoughts? How do you feel?
- Read the passage and let God speak to you in you reality through his Word. Write down your reflections as God shepherds you:
 - What does the text say is true about God and his character?
 - What does it say about the world around you?
- How do your reflections above speak to your reality?
- What did you experience in your heart and soul as God spoke to you and your reality?
- What did you experience in your body, given your reflections and what you experienced in your heart and soul?
- How is God inviting you to live differently?
- What does all of what you shared above say about God and his relationship with you?

WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

The Bible promises that anything we ask for in Jesus' name – that is according to His will – shall be granted to us (John 14:13-14). In view of this great promise, the prayer requests are all grounded in Scripture. When we pray Scripture, we can be certain that we are praying according to God's will.

That does not mean God will grant our requests in our preferred time or according to our frail wisdom; but it does mean that we can pray confidently knowing that God delights to answer these requests, for they are His words.

Use the accompanying Scripture verses to shape and inform your prayers.

PRAY FOR YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY:

- That your daily life will bring honor to the name of Jesus – (2 Thess. 1:11-12)
- That you will cast all of your anxieties on God – (1 Peter 5:6-7)
- That you will consider your trials as an opportunity for joy – (James 1:2-4)

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH:

- That the power of Christ will rest on our church and ministries [Worship Gathering, Community Groups, Men/Women, Youth, Children, etc.] – (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
- That God will give us the wisdom and faith that we desperately need to continue in faithful mission – (James 1:5-8)
- That God will make us fruitful in ministry – (John 15:1-2) – and bold in witness – (Eph. 6:18-20)

PRAY FOR OUR CITY:

- That God will give wisdom to our government (local, state, and national) that we may lead peaceful, godly lives – (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- That the Lord will continue to provide open doors of gospel ministry in IU and the Bloomington community – (1 Corinthians 16:9)
- That the work of God will be displayed in the lives of the members of our sister churches – (John 9:3)

PRAY FOR OUR WORLD:

- That the persecuted church will find fellowship with Jesus as they share in his sufferings – (Philippians 3:10-11)
- That the Lord of the harvest will send out more workers to unreached people groups because they have been gripped by Paul's missionary logic in Romans 10:13-17 – (Matthew 9:37-38)
- That Christ will return bringing the fullness of salvation with him – (Revelation 22:20)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Wednesdays, Nov. 15-29: Spiritual Formation Classes
- November 17: Redeemer Men's Breakfast
- November 29: Members' Meeting
- December 3: Nine Lessons + Carols
- December 11-January 7: CG Christmas Break
- December 24: Christmas Eve
- December 25: Christmas!!!

Reminder: All events are listed in the Events tab in our Redeemer app. You can RSVP for specific events by going to the Events tab, clicking on an event, and following the link to register.