

Small Group Guide: The Resurrection Changes Everything

Based on Easter Sunday Sermon - 1 Corinthians 15:1-23

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Icebreaker Question:

- What is your favorite Easter memory or tradition? How has your family celebrated Easter over the years?

Sermon Recap (5 minutes)

This Easter message focused on how the resurrection of Jesus isn't just a nice story or tradition—it fundamentally transforms our eternity and how we live every single day. Paul reminds us that if Christ has not been raised, our faith is futile. But because He HAS been raised, we have hope for today and tomorrow, and we can live with the reckless love of Jesus.

Key Scripture

1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 14, 17, 19-20

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith... And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins... If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Resurrection (15 minutes)

1. **Why do you think Paul emphasizes the eyewitness accounts of the resurrection so strongly?** What does this tell us about the historical nature of our faith?
2. **The sermon mentioned that Jesus' own brother James became a believer after the resurrection.** What does this family dynamic tell us about the credibility of the resurrection?
3. **Read 1 Corinthians 15:14-19.** Paul lists what we lose if there is no resurrection. Which of these consequences strikes you as most significant? Why?

Personal Application (20 minutes)

4. **The pastor asked: "What does Easter Sunday have to do with Easter Monday?"** How does the resurrection impact your everyday life, not just special Sundays?

5. **The sermon presented a dilemma:** Some Christians become "so wrapped up in the life to come that we are no earthly good," while others get "so caught up in the trappings of this life that we are no heavenly good."
 - Which tendency do you struggle with more?
 - What does a balanced, resurrection-centered life look like practically?
6. **The quote from Graydon Snyder said that resurrection hope leads to "a life of risk" rather than preservation and protection.**
 - Where in your life are you playing it safe rather than living with "reckless love"?
 - What would change if you truly believed "this life is not the end"?

Living It Out (15 minutes)

7. **The sermon contrasted two songs:**
 - "It's my life, it's now or never... I ain't gonna live forever"
 - "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow... life is worth the living just because He lives"

Which song better describes how you've been living lately? What needs to change?
8. **Paul says he "dies daily" (v. 31).** What does it mean to die daily in light of the resurrection? What would this look like in your life this week?
9. **The pastor said: "The role of Christian in society is not preservation and protection of our own personal goods. The role of Christian in society is one of restoration and resurrection."**
 - How does this challenge the way you think about your possessions, security, or comfort?
 - What specific step could you take this week to live more for restoration than preservation?

Key Takeaways

- ✓ **The resurrection is historically verified** through multiple eyewitnesses who died proclaiming its truth
- ✓ **Jesus' resurrection guarantees our own bodily resurrection** - He is the "firstfruits" of more to come
- ✓ **Without the resurrection, our faith is pointless** - but because Christ has risen, everything changes
- ✓ **Resurrection hope transforms how we live today** - we can take risks, love recklessly, and live without fear
- ✓ **We don't have to choose between earthly irrelevance or heavenly uselessness** - resurrection faith makes us agents of restoration in this world while hoping in the next

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to put into practice this week:

Option 1: Share the Hope Identify one person in your life who needs to hear about the hope of the resurrection. Pray for them daily and look for an opportunity to share what Jesus' resurrection means to you.

Option 2: Live Recklessly Identify one area where you've been living cautiously out of self-preservation. Take one concrete step of "reckless love" this week—whether that's generous giving, bold forgiveness, or serving someone in need.

Option 3: Die Daily Each morning this week, pray: "Because You live, Jesus, I can face today. What do You want me to surrender today?" Journal what God brings to mind and act on it.

Closing Reflection

Read together: 1 Corinthians 15:57-58

"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Closing Question: How does knowing that your "labor in the Lord is not in vain" change your perspective on the week ahead?

Prayer Time (10 minutes)

- **Praise God** for the resurrection of Jesus and the hope it provides
 - **Confess** areas where you've been living for this life only, focused on preservation rather than restoration
 - **Ask God** for courage to live with resurrection hope this week
 - **Pray for each other's** specific challenges and opportunities to live out the resurrection message
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For Further Study

- **John 20:1-18** - John's eyewitness account of the resurrection
 - **1 Corinthians 15:35-58** - Paul's full teaching on resurrection bodies and victory over death
 - **Romans 6:1-14** - How we participate in Jesus' death and resurrection through baptism
 - **Philippians 3:7-11** - Paul's desire to know the power of Christ's resurrection
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"Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives."