

Weekly Study

S T A R T

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following questions:

What was your favorite part about Easter?

S H A R E

Happy Easter week! Hopefully you got some time to celebrate with people you love, whether that's family or friends that feel like family. Before we dive in, take some time to check in with your group and ask the following questions:

What is one thing you feel like God was teaching you this Easter season? Did anything stick out to you that you haven't noticed before?

G R O W

Read Matthew 28:1-7.

This passage is the climax of the entire Biblical story. All of scripture points to resurrection reality, and this moment is what we place our eternal hope in.

The story is set at dawn of a new week. Jesus had promised his disciples that after he was crucified, he would rise again on the third day. Saturday must have felt hopeless, but the Easter story is a reminder that when things seem like they're at their darkest, a new day is dawning.

What does the resurrection mean for you?

Have you seen the power of the gospel play out in your own life? If so, how?

It's interesting to note that in verses five and six, the angel tells Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to not be afraid, and that Jesus had risen *just as He said*. When we experience anxiety and hopelessness, it is easy to forget the truth of what Jesus has told us in his word, but the power and reality of the resurrection means that when we make the decision to submit our lives to Jesus as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit dwells within us and enables us to remember the truth of God's word when we experience those feelings of anxiety, hopelessness and more.

Read Ephesians 2:4-5.

Before you met Jesus, you were dead in your transgressions. Dead people don't need self-help, they need life. We do not earn salvation through our good works or good behavior, which is a relief, because it's exhausting to strive! God has made the greatest exchange possible to give us His life – he used His son to span the gap for us on the cross, took the death that we deserve and placed it on Jesus to make a way for the forgiveness of our sins. He made his perfect Son who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

It is a powerful thing to realize that the resurrection is rooted in God's love for you and that our salvation means that His extravagant grace is at work in our lives. All of our past, present and future sin has been forgiven because Jesus did for us what we could never do for ourselves. Whether you've been following Jesus for ten minutes or ten years, the truth remains that the grace that saved you is the grace that will sustain you until you meet Him face to face one day.

This is scandalous and unfathomable. It's the opposite of every other religion. No one could come up with this – it's the greatest news in the universe.

How is your life going to look different now that you know that you have been "made alive

in Christ”?

M O V E

Read 2 Peter 3:13.

As we look forward and eagerly await Christ’s return, we can have confidence that the resurrection actually happened and that He will ultimately restore all things. Just as He promised His disciples that He would rise again on the third day, He promises that we have a new heaven and a new earth one day awaiting us, where righteousness dwells. The entire story of the Bible is a story of God who is after His people, intent on redeeming them.

There is no competition between God and Satan as we wait for Jesus to come back, and Heaven is nothing to be fearful of or indifferent about. There is no reason to question whether God will win in the end. He cannot be beaten, and because of the resurrection, we can eagerly await a new heaven and a new earth that is far more wonderful and familiar than we think. We will ultimately receive what Jesus had: a resurrected body with bones and skin, the ability to experience, feel, hug and smile. Everything we love about being human, including the things we love about ourselves and the world we live in, will be restored to us without decay and brokenness. He is not making all new things; rather, He is making all things new. We are looking forward to an eternity that is unimaginably good!

What about this statement is different from what you have formerly understood about Heaven?

Heaven is so much better than we’ve known. With this increased understanding of what God has in store for us in eternity, what excites you most about Heaven?

TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENT: Begin to solidify these truths in your heart and mind. Write these down each day this week as a way to celebrate resurrection reality.

- 1. Resurrection reality means our sins are forgiven.**
- 2. Resurrection reality means we get heaven forever.**
- 3. Resurrection reality means we get His life here and now.**

Declare these truths out loud and watch how God makes them your reality. Observe how your perspective shifts and how the Holy Spirit renews your mind!

P R A Y

Begin to solidify these truths in your heart and mind. Write these down each day this week as a way to celebrate resurrection reality. We need prayer now more than ever. Spend some time-sharing prayer requests. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking off into two separate groups (or calls if you are an online group) to share more freely.

T O G O

"He is before all things, and in him all things hold together." – Colossians 1:15