

The Message of the Resurrection

2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5 In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” 8 Then they remembered his words.

- Luke 24:2-8

Welcome

Ask each one to share how they spent the Holy Week or if they have some practices they did during the Lent season. Summarize your members' answers by enumerating common themes (e.g. vacation, family time).

Worship

Lead the group in prayer. Suggested worship song: "Forever" by Kari Jobe

Word

Read: Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

All four Gospels included the account of the resurrection. This only proves how important it is to the disciples and for us believers. Though each book varies at some of the minor details in the story, we cannot miss the consistency of each version as to the major points. All accounts stated that it happened very early in the morning on the first day of the week which is the Sabbath. Mary Magdalene and some other women came to the tomb and found the stone already rolled away. They testified to have seen an angel of God or to some versions, a man in white clothes that gleamed like lightning. This man or angel told them "He is not here; he is risen!" and to go tell the others about what they have seen. Upon hearing the news, the disciples did not believe the women and thought their words seem nonsense. But what does the resurrection mean to us? What does the empty tomb have to do with us? We all know it has to happen for our salvation. But I believe there is so much more about the resurrection that Jesus wants us to consider.

1. "He is not here; He has risen!"

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then we have believed in vain. Since we were young, we have been taught about the story of Jesus. Even in Sunday School, we teach this story to kids and have seen their eyes grow big in amazement upon hearing that Jesus came back to life. We believe in a God who is alive. We believe that He has to suffer and die on the cross for our sins. We believe that He did it all for love. And we believe He did not see decay because He rose on the third day and ascended to heaven. Do you realize now the importance of this statement?

The fact that Jesus died and came back to life on the third day proves that our God is real, that everything we know, everything we believe in, is real!

The Gospel is for real! Jesus is for real! Our God is alive! Therefore, all his promises are true and they will surely happen in his time. We are assured of a life eternal with him. We are assured that He hears us. And all we know that is written in the Bible is real. May this truth build our confidence in Jesus and increase our faith.

2. “Why do you look for the living among the dead?”

If we truly understand the message of the resurrection, then why are we still living like defeated ones? Why do we act as if it did not happen? Why do we go back to the empty tomb as if his words are not true? God has won the victory and he meant you to live victoriously with him.

First of all, He wants us to be **victorious over sin**.

“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

When Jesus was crucified, he took the sin of the world and nailed it to the cross. Sin has no power over him! And if we are in Christ, we can overcome it too. God is not offering us a first aid remedy for our sin, he wants to set us totally free from the bondage of it. *“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36)* It is possible. If you find yourself going back to that sin, remember the empty tomb. God is true to his promises. Hold on to his word and rebuke the enemy. You don’t have to live like that anymore.

God also wants us to **live joyfully**.

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Phil. 4:4)

What is your attitude in life? Do people get envious by your joyful spirit or it’s the other way around? Your life is the greatest testimony you can share with others. How will they believe that our God is mighty or powerful or gracious if even the little troubles of life shake us?

Being joyful doesn’t mean you have to laugh all the time and pretend everything’s okay. Joy is not the absence of sorrow but a state of the heart that is at peace. It is the confidence we have in Christ knowing that no matter what our circumstance is, He will never leave us nor forsake us. It is believing that trials shall come to pass and trusting that God is already at work.

Joy is contagious. If we live joyfully, we are creating a little piece of heaven here on earth. Be a source of joy and help others find it by leading them to Jesus.

3. “Go and tell the others. . .”

Finally, the message of the resurrection is too beautiful to be kept to oneself. Jesus also wants others to experience the victorious life that He bought for us. He wants us to share the joy of knowing Christ and to have the same peace that surpasses understanding. Shouldn't we be running like Mary and the other women to reach the disciples and share the good news?

Upon hearing the news, the disciples did not believe. Peter and John came running to the tomb and saw that what the women told them is true but still walked away wondering what happened. Thomas even said that unless he puts his finger in Jesus' hand, he will not believe.

We've heard it many times already but are we putting into practice the message of the resurrection? Or are we like the disciples, who after being with him for a long time, still missed the point and did not believe. What would be your respond this time?

Look: Do you think you are living the victorious life God wants for you? What hinders you? What's enslaving you?

Took: How will this devotion change your attitude in life?

Works

On a small sheet of paper, write down things that you want to put to death. It can be a sin, a wrong attitude or anything you know that displeases God. Be very serious about it and keep that paper in your Bible or journal to serve as a reminder.

(Take note of your members' answers and make a follow up in the coming days.)

Close the group in prayer.