

Community Group Curriculum

for the week of May 12, 2013

"The Resurrection"

BIG PICTURE

He is risen! He is risen indeed! Just as the gospel writers were careful to emphasize the actual death of Jesus they also presented convincing proof that Jesus actually rose from the dead. Here are a few:

- The tomb was empty. The early Christians' claim that Jesus had risen could easily been disproven. The moment the disciples raised their voices, the religious leaders could have silenced them by just pointing to the body lying in the tomb.
- The body was missing. Ok, the body could have been taken. But the writers carefully describe details about the grave to emphasize something miraculous had occurred. John noted that Jesus' grave clothes were folded and laid on the table.
- He appeared to many people. More than 500 people directly encountered the risen Jesus. Jesus spent 40 days teaching His followers after His resurrection. Since many of these witnesses were still alive at the time the Gospels were written, their accounts could easily have been verified.
- He changed many lives. His disciples go from being cowards at His arrest to risking their lives by publicly proclaiming Jesus. Would you risk your life for a lie?

LET'S DIG IN!

1. Read John 20:10-18. Mary stood outside the empty tomb weeping, until Jesus revealed Himself to her. What did Jesus teach her about Himself? Tell about a moment when your eyes were opened, with greater clarity, and you came to know Jesus in a deeper way than you had before.
2. Some claim that: a) Jesus never really died, but rather passed out and was placed in the tomb. Upon waking up He simply sneaked away and later claimed to have risen from the dead or b) Jesus didn't actually rise bodily. His disciples either experienced a mass hallucination or they were only referring to a "spiritual" resurrection. Respond to these claims.
3. According to Romans 6:5-11, how does the resurrection affect us in the present?
4. Read Luke 24:13-49. On the road to Emmaus the resurrected Jesus taught two men the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures. How does understanding the Old Testament help us understand the rest of the story (New Testament)? In this story what is the role of the Holy Spirit?

5. Read John 20:24-29. Thomas was not willing to believe Jesus was alive until he saw Him with his own eyes. First, was Thomas' response unreasonable? Second, when Jesus revealed himself to Thomas, how did he seek to meet Thomas right where he was and help him move toward faith? How has God met you similarly?

6. Read John 21:1-19. The risen Jesus met the disciples while they were out fishing. How did Peter respond when he realized it was Jesus? What did Jesus do to restore Peter and set him back on course to live a life of service?

OPTIONAL: Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 and note the following statements Paul makes regarding the resurrection:

If Christ has not been raised then:

1. There is no resurrection at all (vv. 13, 16)
2. Our preaching is in vain (v. 14)
3. Your faith is in vain (v. 14)
4. They are false witnesses (v. 15)
5. Your faith is worthless (v. 17)
6. You are still in your sins (v. 17)
7. Those that have died are gone (v. 18)
8. We are of all men most to be pitied (v. 18)

PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

- After the resurrection some people had a hard time recognizing Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see Jesus with clarity.
- Pray that God will use you in His mission to make disciples of all nations.
- Pray that RiverLakes Community Church will remain bold in proclaiming our risen Lord!

AND NOW FOR SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

"Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." -John 11:25-26