



EASTER 2024 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

Today, we celebrate the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We'll discuss how Jesus is alive and our new identity in Christ.

DISCUSSION

- Do you have any Easter traditions? Share with the group.

Jesus' very last words on the cross were *tetelestai*, which is translated to "It is finished." What Jesus finished at the cross is the starting point of what He has done in our lives. Jesus paid the price we could never pay because we are priceless to Him. Our new beginning is where Jesus conquered death and showed His power over sin.

Matthew 28:1-6: *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door...And the guards shook for fear of him...But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said..."* The angel didn't move the stone to let Jesus out, but to let *us* in to see what God had done. God invites us to come and see all that He has done for us.

- How does it make you feel that God invites you to come close to Him?
- Do you currently feel close to God? If so, what is He speaking to you? If not, what do you think is hindering you from the close relationship He wants you to experience?

What do we see in the tomb?

1. Jesus is alive.

Mark 16:11-14: *When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she (Mary) had seen him, they did not believe it. Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.* Jesus has overcome death, sin, and the grave and is alive today! And we can hear His voice as we continue to grow in our relationship with Him.

- What are some areas in your life you feel are hopeless and need God to bring back to life?

2. God has done it all for us.

When we look in the tomb, we see God's grace at work. Grace moved the stone. Grace is God's Riches At Christ's Expense. When it comes to our position with God, our salvation, God doesn't invite us to "come and do"; He invites us to "come and see" all He has done. Christ alone bore the weight of sin. We are simply the recipients of grace.

Now by grace, the Holy Spirit can live in us. **Ezekiel 36:26-27** foretold this: ***"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."*** Whether you're spiraling down or feeling hopelessly lost, there's hope. Jesus paved the way for us to have a relationship with God. Because of the cross and Christ's resurrection, it's now possible for every human being to come into a personal relationship with God.

- What does God's grace mean to you?
- How have you experienced the grace of God?
- Why is the resurrection significant related to our relationship with God?

3. We have a new identity.

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.* Through the cross and resurrection, God makes us new. At the cross, there's forgiveness of sin, but it's the resurrection that gives us the power to change. **Romans 8:11: *The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.*** Because of the resurrection, God moves you from victim-to-victor. When we look in the tomb, we can see that we can also rise and be new again.

- Discuss the significance of the phrase "old things have passed away" in relation to our spiritual journey. What does it mean to let go of the past and fully embrace the new life offered by Christ?
- Discuss practical strategies for reminding ourselves of our true identity in Christ during times of doubt, struggle, or temptation.
- How does understanding and embracing our new identity in Christ influence our purpose and mission as individuals and as a community of believers?

LIFE CHALLENGE

This week, reflect on what Christ has done for you. Pray about the areas in your life that feel hopeless. Ask God to bring these things back to life. Set a time each day this week to spend with Him and grow in a deeper understanding of His love.

PRAY TOGETHER