

Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides

April 18th-25th

Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)

1. Did your family have any Easter traditions when you were growing up?
2. Do you enjoy scary movies? Why or why not?

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Mark 18:1-8
 - Why do you think that the women were so afraid? How would you have reacted in that setting?
 - Why do you think that Mark chooses to end his gospel in this way?
 - Pastor Michael talked about the resurrection challenging their view of reality. When was a time in your life that you discovered that God was different than you had previously thought? Tell the story.
2. The angel tells them not to be alarmed. How does the news of the resurrection cancel out fear? How does it impact fears that you may have?
3. What encouragement does it give you to know that Jesus is alive and present even in our darkest moments?
4. How does the promise of a future resurrection give you hope?

April 17th A Spooky Easter

Most Americans view fear as a bad thing. Yet millions of dollars are spent each year on horror films. Halloween is one of the most celebrated holidays of the year. We often realize that the resurrection story has much in common with those themes. The story takes place in a cemetery and involves a dead man coming back to life.

I. Why the fear?

In the Mark account of the Easter story, the women are said to be alarmed (Mark 16:5). The Greek word behind that is one of being terrified of impending doom. The book then ends in verse 8 that they left the tomb trembling and bewildered.

- a. **It is beyond comprehension:** Jesus talked about his resurrection, but no one believed that it was actually going to happen. They believed that there would be a resurrection at the end of time, but that was still far off. Jesus was dead and it was assumed that he would stay that way. For him to be alive blew their minds.
- b. **It challenged their view of reality:** They thought they knew how the world worked. In that moment, everything that they thought changed. The world went from being predictable to uncertain.

II. Why the resurrection frees of us fear

- a. **God is present in the world:** Jesus coming out of the grave meant that he was alive. He did ascend to heaven, but his living presence still remains upon this earth. Even in our darkest moments, his presence and strength are available.
- b. **His resurrection is available to us all:** Paul writes 1 Corinthians 15:20, that Jesus' resurrection is the "first fruits", meaning that his followers will someday share in the same resurrection. Death is not the end of the story and we have live everlasting to look forward to.

Conclusion

The resurrection should shake us challenging the way that we view our lives. It challenges a reliance on the world and on a God that we can control. It confronts us with Jesus as the conquering king who offers us true life everlasting through him. We make the choice as to if we embrace that gift or not.