



*We realize you may not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like.*

## Small Group Questions

### “Resurrection Reversal”

John 20:11-31

**Previous message summary:** The Apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 2, that Christ is always leading in triumphal procession. The language that Paul uses to encourage first century Christians paints the picture of a victorious Roman general parading through town with his captives following behind in chains. This imagery is rich in meaning, because as we follow Jesus, we follow in his triumphal procession as confident captives of Christ. We are the ones who surrender our lives to Jesus and allow him to lead and guide us. As we follow him, we are a fragrance to those around us and an aroma that is pleasing to God. As we follow, our fragrance to those around us will influence others to join with us in following Jesus, but sadly it will also cause others to choose not to follow Jesus.

**What we learned:** Paul’s message for believers is that the life of a Christian is about following Jesus, no matter the cost, and influencing others to follow him along with us. The problem that we many times encounter is that we want to be our own leader. We struggle to really allow Jesus to lead us and submit ourselves to following in his triumphant procession. Jesus is the one who died, was buried, and rose again to lead us in triumph. He provides grace and forgiveness to make us whole, and he walks with us to remind us of a future filled with glorious hope. May we really follow him and invite others to join us as we walk through life.

### Introduction

1. Easter is the celebration of the great reality that Jesus rose from the dead. What are some things that come to mind when you think about Easter? (Spring weather, Easter candy, plants blooming, etc.)
  - a. What are some things that people, and even non-Christians, do to celebrate Easter?

- b. If you grew up in a non-Christian family and now believe in Jesus, how has the celebration of Easter changed for you?
- c. Since studying through the Gospel of John during this last year, do you have a greater appreciation for who Jesus is and what God has given to you through him?
- d. How has your view of Jesus (his life, death, burial, and resurrection) changed during this study through John?

### Discussion Questions

#### Read John 20:11-31

2. Who is the first person to see Jesus after his resurrection? Where have we seen this person before in Scripture? Read John 20:18, 1; 19:25; Luke 8:1-2.
  - a. Did Mary recognize Jesus at first? Who did she think she was talking to? Why would she assume that she was talking with a gardener?
  - b. What are some possible reasons why Mary didn’t recognize Jesus? Was Mary expecting Jesus to be alive?
  - c. What did Jesus say that prompted Mary to recognize him?
  - d. What does the fact that the first eyewitness to the resurrection is a woman confirm about the reality of the resurrection? If the resurrection was made up, who would be the first eyewitnesses?
3. What message did Mary deliver to the disciples? Read John 20:17-18. Who sent Mary to deliver this message?
  - a. How did the disciples receive the message of the resurrected Jesus that Mary delivered? Read Mark 16:9-11 and Luke 24:10-11.
  - b. Where are the disciples the evening of the first day of the week?

- c. What emotion would best describe the disciples after seeing Jesus dead and buried? Were the disciples expecting Jesus to be alive?
4. What does Jesus say to the disciples when he comes into the room? What does he show them to confirm his resurrection?
  - a. How does the reality of the resurrection reverse the discouragement for the disciples?
  - b. Has the reality of the resurrection reversed your discouragement in life? If so, how?
5. Which disciple is not present when Jesus appears to them the evening of the first day? Read John 20:24-25. What do the disciples who have seen the resurrected Jesus tell this disciple?
  - a. How does the disciple who didn't see Jesus respond to the other disciples when they tell him that Jesus is alive? Read John 20:25.
  - b. Is this conclusion unreasonable? If you had seen Jesus dead and buried, what would it take for you to believe that he had raised from the dead?
6. How much time passes before Thomas actually sees the resurrected Jesus? Does this seem like a long time to be in doubt about the resurrection?
  - a. What does Jesus say to Thomas when he enters the room? Is this the same greeting that Jesus made to the disciples when he appeared to them? Read John 20:19 & 26.
  - b. What does Jesus instruct Thomas to do? Why does Jesus tell him to touch him? Does Thomas actually touch Jesus' hands or side?
  - c. What does Thomas conclude about Jesus? Read John 20:28. How does seeing Jesus alive reverse Thomas' doubt and disbelief?
7. How did the resurrection of Jesus change Mary? How did the resurrection of Jesus change the disciples? How did the resurrection of Jesus change Thomas?

- a. What did it take for you to really believe in the resurrection of Jesus?
- b. How has the resurrection of Jesus changed you?

**Challenge:** John presents three eyewitness accounts of people who have seen the resurrected Jesus. Each one of the eyewitnesses did not expect to see Jesus alive. In fact, each of them needed to be convinced that Jesus had really overcome death. All three eyewitnesses recorded for us in John come to the conclusion that Jesus really is Lord. They all provide convincing proof that Jesus is alive and what his resurrection can do in the hearts and minds of people.

**Action:** The resurrection of Jesus can change everything. Complete this statement: This week, I will allow the resurrection of Jesus to change \_\_\_\_\_ about my life.

**Next Steps:**

- Praise be to God for resurrection reversals.
- I need direction in my life—I will look to Jesus for clarity in living.
- I will surrender my doubt and discouragement to Jesus, who provides faith and hope.
- I will live so that the phrase “My Lord and My God” are more than just mere words.