

E A S T E R

CONNECT *BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING*

- Did your family celebrate Easter when you were growing up? If so, how did you celebrate it?
- Do you like surprises? Why or why not?
- Who is someone in your life who's very true to their word—when they say something you know it'll happen? Can you give an example?

TRUTH *UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING*

*He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.
—Matthew 28:6a*

When two women went to Jesus's tomb, they expected to find what you'd usually find in a tomb—a dead body. Instead of finding Jesus's body, they encountered the angel of the Lord, who announced the good news to them that Jesus had risen. In a moment in history when the world feels out of control, the angel's words to these women helps us understand the moment in which we live, and why we can still have a firm, immovable hope.

He Is Not Here

READ: John 20:11-18

DISCUSS: What stands out to you in Jesus's interaction with Mary?

We live in-between two resurrections—Jesus's and our own. The angels told Mary that Jesus wasn't in the tomb, but that didn't mean things would go back to how they had been. Rather, Jesus would ascend to God's right hand, where he's furthering his purposes until he returns. The Good Story is one of reality and hope. We live in the already-but-not-yet age, where Jesus is reigning but our world hasn't been renewed yet. That's why he calls us to have faith in him, and not to despair.

For He Has Risen

READ: John 11:20-27

DISCUSS: How do you think you would've reacted if you were Martha and received this answer from Jesus?

The two women who found Jesus's tomb empty believed in resurrection, but they believed it was something that would happen in the distant future. But that future resurrection came rushing into the present through Jesus. We may live in the already-but-not-yet age, but Jesus's resurrection means there is a strong "already" in this age. The Good Story that the angel announced means that realities of the resurrection age to come will, in a God-decided measure, come rushing into our present.

GRACE *SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS*

Just As He Said

READ: Luke 4:17-21

The Good Story isn't a story of chance. It's a promise fulfilled. God promised to come and save his people, and he fulfilled that promise in the person of Jesus Christ. He promised to rise again, and he did. He promises to give us everything we need to follow him here and now, and he does. He promises to return and wipe away every tear, heal every disease, make every sad thing come untrue... and he will.

CHANGE *APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS*

- Do you believe The Good Story? Do you have any doubts about Jesus's resurrection? What are they?
- In what way does the "already-but-not-yet" perspective impact the way you think and feel about your life?
- How does The Good Story of Jesus's resurrection help you to trust him in our current crisis?

PRAYER *RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER*

- Spend time praising Jesus as the Ruler of the world.
- Pray for the right perspective on the time in which we live.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?