



April 4, 2021

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for preserving this extraordinary document which documents the greatest story ever told. Thank you for Peter's courage. Thank you for Mark who encouraged Peter to share the stories of Jesus so Mark could write it down. Today, we pray that our faith and our courage would get bigger today as a result of this study. And we pray that all of us would believe that you are who you say you are, and that we would put our trust in you and find life and hope in your name. We pray this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

Mark 15:43-47 (NIV)

⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

Mark 16:1-7 (NIV)

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"



Small Group Study Guide

INTRODUCTION

When Jesus died, hope died along with him. No one was planning to keep this new movement going, because, after all, it seemed Jesus wasn't who he had claimed to be. Immediately following the crucifixion, there were no Christians, because there was no Christ. But then something happened.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" Mark 16:6-7. The kingdom of God is near, and everyone is invited to participate.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Growing up, what was Easter like for you? Given our unique circumstances this year, how did you celebrate Easter?
- 2) The Gospels focus on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. When you think of Jesus, which of those three words come to mind the most?
- 3) The event of the resurrection led to a movement, which led to the Bible being written. If we get this sequence out of order, how might that lead to confusion?
- 4) Read Mark 15:43-47 on page 1. What are some details about this story that would lead a reader to believe this actually happened? What stands out to you?
- 5) Read Mark 16:1-7 on page 1. What are some details about this story that would lead a reader to believe this actually happened? What stands out to you?

FINAL APPLICATION

This week, share your hope with someone.