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## OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You so much for the scriptures. But thank You even more for the men and the women that penned them while risking their lives so we could have them. And thank You for the confidence that we have in the gospels. Father, give us the words and give us the opportunity to take what we've learned and to share it with people who need a little bit more hope. Father, use us to invite them back so they can experience your grace and love. In Jesus' name we pray these things. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

### 1 Peter 3:15b (NIV)

*<sup>15</sup> Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.*

### Matthew 5:17 (NIV)

*<sup>17</sup> “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*

### Luke 1:1-4 (NIV)

*Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup> just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. <sup>3</sup> With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.*

# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 2 November 21, 2021  
“Reliable Witnesses”

## INTRODUCTION

If you're a Christian, be prepared to defend your decision to follow Christ. Be prepared to defend your hope or confidence in Christ. You believe that Jesus died for your sins and rose from the grave. That's amazing! But you don't have to believe it because the Bible says so. It's better than that.

Life causes us to doubt. But the foundation of your faith is not your personal experience. It's better than that. We take the Old Testament seriously because Jesus did. We take Jesus seriously because of the resurrection. We take the resurrection seriously because Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, and James took it seriously.

## QUESTIONS

1. Talk about a time in school or at work when you were unprepared for a task, test, or presentation. What happened?
2. Do you know someone who walked away from his or her faith? If so, what caused that person to change what he or she believed?
3. Think about your own faith journey. How has your faith—your view of God, Jesus, and the Bible—changed? What people and circumstances influenced these changes?
4. Talk about a time when something you read in the Bible seemed to conflict with something you believed about the world. Were you able to resolve that tension? If so, how?
5. During the message, Pastor Eric said, “Life causes us to doubt. But the foundation of your faith is not your personal experience.” To what extent is your faith currently based on personal experience? What are some practical things you can do to begin to reorient your faith toward Jesus?

## FINAL APPLICATION

Last week you were given the assignment of beginning to craft a simple statement that answers the question, “Why are you a follower of Jesus?” How did it go? How will this week's message help you to refine that statement? What can this group do to help you continue working on that statement?