

WHO NEEDS? EASTER?

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

March 31, 2024 (Easter Sunday)
“Who Needs Easter?”

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, there was nothing predictable about that stunning, world-changing day when, against all odds, you rose from the dead. Help us take in, and live out, all the ways that day changed everything about how we see the world. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Acts 17:22-31 (NIV)

²²Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

²⁹“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. ³⁰In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

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INTRODUCTION

Easter can mean many things to different people. Some people associate Easter with getting dressed up and going to church. Others think about Easter egg hunts and getting candy. But what is Easter all about? Does Easter matter? And Who needs Easter?

Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and it answers two questions that everyone wrestles with at some point in their life:

- Is there a personal God?
- And what does it mean for me personally?

Easter matters because it validates that there is a personal God who sent his Son to die for your personal sin. Easter matters because it validates the claims of Jesus' first century followers who said “God is love, and God loves you.” Who needs Easter? Everyone.

QUESTIONS

1. How important was Easter in your home growing up?
2. Why do you think none of Jesus' followers were expecting him to be raised from the dead?
3. At one time or another, we've all wondered about God or wandered from God (or both). Have you wondered if God really knows you and loves you? Have you ever had a season where you've wandered from the faith you once knew?
4. Read Acts 17:22–31 (on page 1) where Paul was speaking to people who weren't raised with a Jewish background. What do you observe about Paul's approach with them?
5. Does God seem far away from you or near to you? What makes you say that?

FINAL APPLICATION

How can you share the hope of Easter with someone this week?