



## THE BIG IDEA

The Jesus who lives,  
lives in you.

## THE BIBLE

Luke 23:44-24:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4,  
12-17, 54-57; Romans 3:23-24

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### DISCUSSION

- When you face a challenge – would you rather...
  - Be comforted by someone who's been through something similar? OR
  - Be trained by someone who's an expert?
- When you were little, what's one thing you needed an adult to help you learn how to do? How did that adult treat you when you failed?
- When we fail or sin, how do you think God is (or isn't) like those adults we just described?

In tough times, we need comfort, but we often need someone who can help us move forward.

- Sometimes we suffer for reasons we can't control, but sometimes we suffer because of a decision or a failure we made.
- Last week, we talked about suffering – both our suffering and Jesus' suffering. We talked about how Good Friday is a reminder that Jesus can comfort us when we're hurting because He's been hurt too.
- Jesus has experienced everything you and I have experienced – except for one thing. The difference between us and Jesus is that Jesus never messed up, never hurt people, and never made a bad decision . . . but we do. All the time.
- It's amazing that Jesus can comfort and care for us, even when we've caused our own suffering through our bad decisions. But when we screw up, sometimes we need more than just God's comfort – we need God's help.

**SO WHAT?** *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

### SCRIPTURE | Luke 23:44–24:8

- Good Friday might show us that Jesus can comfort and understand us when we're hurting, but (fortunately for us) Good Friday isn't the end of the story. Just like Jesus' story didn't end in hopelessness, our stories don't have to end there either.



- After Good Friday (the day we remember Jesus' suffering) comes Easter Sunday (the day we remember Jesus' victory).
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Luke 23:44–24:8 together.*
- Was Jesus' suffering on Good Friday worth it? He would tell you yes! You and I were worth the pain, because His pain led to His resurrection – the moment in history that changed everything.
- Yes, it was worth it.

### **SCRIPTURE** | 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 12-17, 54-57

- But this story of Jesus' resurrection almost sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? How do we know Jesus' miraculous resurrection from the dead is anymore real than Easter bunnies?
- What if the resurrection of Jesus never really happened? And if it never happened . . .
  - Does our faith mean anything?
  - Is there any real power in the Gospel we believe, or is this story just there to make us feel good?
  - If Jesus stayed dead, is following Him or His teachings really worth it?
- We're not the first people to ask these kinds of questions. Decades after the resurrection, there were some Jesus-followers in a city called Corinth who weren't so sure the resurrection had *really* happened the way Scripture describes.
- The apostle Paul wrote a letter to those believers to help them understand that the resurrection really *had* happened, and that it changed everything!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 together.*
  - Paul isn't sugar-coating it here. If the resurrection never happened, Paul says we've believed in Jesus in vain.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-17 together.*
  - Again, Paul says if the resurrection never happened, then our faith is meaningless! Those are strong words.
  - Here's why that's so important: if Jesus never rose from the dead, there is no power that can free us from sin.
  - You see, Jesus didn't just suffer so He could *comfort* us when our sin leads to suffering. He suffered and died to *give us a way out* of that suffering, both now and forever.
  - Because of our sins, we hurt ourselves, we hurt others, and we hurt God. In our own power, we can't make this right. But through God's power and the resurrection of Jesus, our sins can be forgiven and we can be redeemed.
  - Without the resurrection, we're stuck in our sins both now and forever. But because the resurrection is true . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 together.*



- Jesus' resurrection overcome death and sin forever, giving us the chance to experience resurrection too.
- Through Jesus, we can be resurrected right now. Despite the sins we've committed, the resurrection gives us power through Jesus to live differently.
- Through Jesus, we can be resurrected forever. Despite the ways our sins have separated us from God, Jesus' resurrection makes a way for us to be with God forever in eternal life.
- Do you see how much this matters? The resurrection of Jesus is the key to everything! If Jesus was simply a good teacher, a miracle-worker, or a guy who suffered, died, and stayed dead, then following Him would be pointless.
- But that's not what happened. Jesus suffered and died, but then, three days after His death, Jesus opened His eyes and stepped out of His own grave.
- This moment changed everything for you and me. Because of the resurrection, if you trust and follow Him, the Jesus who lives now lives in you.
- When Jesus rose from the dead, He conquered sin and death. Now, that same Jesus wants to give you the power to conquer sin and death too.

### **NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

#### **REFLECTION** | How Has Your Sin Caused Pain?

- We need Jesus' power to conquer sin and death, because for as long as we live, we'll continue to see sin lead to death in our lives and in our world. Sin is constantly causing pain and destruction.
- When someone hurts us, it's easy for us to see how their sin has caused us pain, but it's not always so easy to see how our own sin causes pain.
  - Can you name the last time your sin caused you pain? When did your choices last result in negative consequences? Think about that moment for just a second.
  - Can you name the last time your sin has caused someone else pain, either intentionally or accidentally? Think about that moment.
  - Can you name the last time your sin caused God pain?
- When we mess up, hurt someone, or make a bad decision, it's human nature to try to forget about the pain we've caused as soon as possible. But today, let's try to do something a little more difficult.
- As you think about the sin you've committed and the pain it has caused . . .
  - **DON'T MAKE EXCUSES.** Instead of telling yourself or God that your actions weren't really *that* bad, own up to it. Admit the harm you've caused. It's okay — we've all been there. You're not alone.



- **DON'T SHIFT BLAME.** Maybe someone else shares blame with you for the harm you've caused, but that doesn't matter right now. We're talking about you.
- **DON'T HIDE.** I know it's painful to admit you've messed up, fallen short, or caused harm, but you can't find healing until you acknowledge that you're sick. You can't understand the power of resurrection until you understand your sin has led to death.

### DISCUSSION

- **What are some examples of the ways our sin can harm us, others, or God?**
- **Read Romans 3:23-24. Have you seen this passage to be true in your life? How?**
- **Why do you think it's sometimes difficult for us to admit we've failed or sinned? What would make it easier?**

Easter Sunday is the day we celebrate Jesus' victory over sin. Sin brings death, but Jesus conquered death, and sin along with it.

So the next time you find yourself experiencing difficulty, pain, or loss because of your own choices, I hope you remember what we've talked about – that the Jesus who suffered suffers with you, and the Jesus who lives, lives in you.

This Easter, I hope you're more convinced than ever that, to Jesus, you are worth it, and that Jesus will always be worth it to you too.

### DISCUSSION

- **If it feels like sin has power over your life right now, share what you're struggling with, if you feel comfortable.**
- **What can you do when you feel like you can't break the power sin has over you?**
- **How would you explain how Jesus' death and resurrection can solve the problem of our sin?**
- **If Jesus had never risen from the dead, what do you think you and I would believe about Jesus today?**
- **Has Jesus' resurrection made a difference in your life? If so, tell us how.**