

## **BIBLE VERSES**

### **Question 1**

Isaiah 59:20 ESV - 20 "And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression," declares the LORD.

John 4:25 ESV - 25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."

Matthew 11:2-5 in your Bible

### **Q2**

Isaiah 9:6-7; 40:10-11 ESV - 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this... 10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 ESV - 5 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

### **Q3**

Genesis 1:2-3 ESV - 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Read John 20:11-16 in your Bible

John 20:17-22, 29 ESV - 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"--and that he had said these things to her. 19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ... 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Romans 8:34 ESV - 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

# ***"The Worst Thing Doesn't have to be the Last Thing"***

*Easter 2018*

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Easter we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. But before there was a resurrection there was a crucifixion. His followers had been told Jesus would rise from the dead, but in the face of his death and burial they encountered the worst thing that could have possibly happened. The one who offered them hope was gone and now they were in despair. The Bible tells us that when Jesus rose to life their hope was restored, but why is that important to us today? Let's consider how Jesus' resurrection can restore our hope as well.

## ***Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)***

Have you ever given up all hope of finding a lost item, only to discover it where you least expected?

## **STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)**

### **Historical and Evidential Truth**

Q1. Read Isaiah 59:20; John 4:25; Matthew 11:2-5  
God had promised His people through the prophets of the Old Testament that He would send a Savior (Isaiah 59:20). When Jesus appeared on the scene the Jews were already watching for their Messiah to come. (John 4:25) From his prison cell John the Baptist sent a message to Jesus asking if He was the one they were waiting for (Matthew 11:2-5). What did Jesus point them to in answer to that question? The important truth of who Jesus is can be seen both in historical fact and impactful evidence. When you think of someone whose life was changed by following Jesus what kind of evidence would you point to in their life?

## Hopes of the People

Q2. Read Isaiah 9:6-7; 40:10-11; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 11:5

The promise of a Messiah offered God's people great hope. What were some of the things they expected the Messiah to do? After generations of oppression Jesus appeared to offer the promised relief they sought. What works had they already witnessed Jesus doing (Matthew 11:5)?

## Hopes Dashed

Q3. Read Genesis 1:2; John 20:11-16

Contrary to what the people might have expected Jesus did not lead a rebellion or overthrow the oppression of Rome. Instead He submitted to God's will and offered himself to be brutally crucified as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind. And when He died, the hopes of his followers died as well.

A life without hope is not unlike the condition of the earth in Genesis 1:2; shapeless, filled with darkness and without direction. But just as God spoke and brought light into the world, He has the ability to breathe light back into a hopeless life. How was Mary Magdalene's hope restored? (John 20:11-16)

## Resurrection and Restoration of Hope

Q4. Read John 20:15

Jesus' question to Mary was "Why are you crying?" Her response was that they had taken away her Lord, and in so doing they stripped her of all hope. Have you ever experienced placing your hope in something that died (job, person, relationship...)? Has the appearance of Jesus in your life restored your hope in that situation? Ask your group to pray that God would touch any circumstances that have caused you to lose hope and ask God to bring restoration.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

We know both historically and through the evidence of changed lives that Jesus lives, and the power that raised Him from the dead is at work in us. We do not have to remain hopeless, even in the face of loss. Because Jesus has ascended to the Father and intercedes for us there, we now have access to the throne of God, where we find forgiveness and eternal life. When we allow Jesus into our hopeless situations He can restore us and bring new hope, because the worst thing we face doesn't have to be the last thing in our lives.

## PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Even after Easter, the news of the resurrection needs to be shared. Find someone this week who might feel hopeless, perhaps experiencing a loss, and share with them the comfort and the good news that Jesus can restore hope and bring light in their darkness.

## MEMORY VERSE

*Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised--who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

*Romans 8:34 ESV*

## PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you will apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for your group members' needs:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## \*\*\* GOING FURTHER ON YOUR OWN \*\*\*

Make a list of all the things that weigh heavily upon you and as you do pray specifically that you will trust Jesus with each and every situation so that you will not lose hope.