

3. Resurrection clothes

Mark 16:5-7 NIV - 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.' "

In Gethsemane a young man fled naked as Jesus faced the cross, but at the empty tomb the women found a young man clothed in white, declaring "He is risen!" and will go ahead to meet you as promised.

Our journey of faith parallels the young man. In the garden our sinfulness is exposed, and we are ashamed of our guilt. But the power of God, demonstrated in the resurrection of Jesus, covers our sin, not with fig leaves nor animal skins, but by the blood of the Lamb of God.

Our baptism bears witness to the resurrection power of Jesus in our lives when our old nature was plunged beneath the water, and we emerged a new creation. Share with your group the differences you found before and after your faith in Jesus. Also, encourage one another by the "resurrection clothes" you see on display in each other's lives.

WRAP-UP

The story of our sinfulness began in Eden and the ending of the story was written in Gethsemane. The power of the Gospel is not that we are sinful, and God keeps overlooking it. The Power of the gospel is that we are sinful and naked, and God is his grace and power makes us new.

MEMORY VERSE.

"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 - Mark 16:6NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life _____

Challenge.- God uses nature to reveal His truths. Take time to notice God's message of hope and resurrection as all nature declares His glory in spring.

"Naked in the Garden" **Mark-Grace•Sacrifice•Hope- #4**

INTRODUCTION

It all began in a garden, the relationship between God and man. In the garden Adam and Eve walked and talked with God openly, honestly, without shame or pretense. And then sin changed all that. The sinful nature of man was exposed, and in shame we tried to cover ourselves. But the fig leaves were simply inadequate and so God sacrificed animals so the sin of man would be covered as they left Eden. But Jesus returned to a garden where He offered himself as the final sacrifice to cover our sins, because even in Gethsemane, we find ourselves naked and ashamed.

Ice Breaker

What do you grow in your garden? Is gardening a pleasure or a chore for you?

Key Passage

Genesis 2:25 NLT - 25 Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Two Gardens

Genesis 2:15-18 NLT - 15 The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. 16 But the LORD God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden-- 17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die." 18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

The story of the Garden of Eden may be so familiar that we miss the amazing truth of what was lost there. In Genesis 1:15-18 we see the nature of the relationship we had with God in the Garden.

Imagine yourself as the first human in the garden. How is God treating you? What is He doing for you through this garden?

Genesis 3:8-10 NLT - 8 When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. 9 Then the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

Now compare how man's relationship with God changed after sin entered the garden (v. 8-10). What was forfeit when man sinned? It wasn't the nakedness of his body that shamed Adam but the exposure of his sin.

Mark 14:50-52 NLT - 50 Then all his disciples deserted (aphiēmi) him and ran away (pheugō). 51 One young man following behind was clothed only in a long linen shirt. When the mob tried to grab him, 52 he slipped out of his shirt and ran away naked.

The threat of evil came to Eden through the serpent, but in Gethsemane it came through the betrayer. When Judas arrived with Roman soldiers, temple guards, torches and weapons, the disciples "escaped to safety" (pheugō). In verse 50 the Greek word for deserted (aphiēmi) means to send away, as in a divorce. After every one of the disciples had vowed never to leave Jesus, they all did exactly that. Their sin of faithlessness had been exposed, and just as Adam and Eve fled from God's presence when their sin was exposed, the disciples and "the young man" ran "naked" from the presence of the Lord.

Mark 14:32, 37-40 NLT - 32 They went to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and Jesus said, "Sit here while I go and pray." ... 37 Then he returned and found the disciples asleep. He said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? 38 Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak." 39 Then Jesus left them again and prayed the same prayer as before. 40 When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open. And they didn't know what to say.

What was it Jesus asked of his disciples in Gethsemane? Were they able to do that? Did that change Jesus' faithfulness to them? In 2 Timothy 2:11-13 what is Jesus asking of us and what are His promises to us? What's the difference in disowning and faithless?

2 Timothy 2:11-13 NIV - 11 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; 13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

2. Peter's Denial

Mark 14:67-72 NIV - 67 When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. "You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus," she said. 68 But he denied it. "I don't know or understand what you're talking about," he said, and went out into the entryway. 69 When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, "This fellow is one of them." 70 Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." 71 He began to call down curses, and he swore to them, "I don't know this man you're talking about." 72 Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times." And he broke down and wept.

Thank God for Peter. When we look at him we know there is hope for us. Hours earlier Jesus had explained in detail how Peter would deny Him. But Peter does it anyway (Mark 14:67-72).

Have you ever found yourself headed for disaster but you just didn't stop? How do such failures make you feel? How did Peter react?

Acts 5:29 NIV - 29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"

On the shore of the Sea of Galilee the resurrected Jesus spoke to Peter and called him to "feed my sheep". Peter's faith and his relationship to Jesus was being restored. He went on to preach boldly, heal the lame, and defy authorities (Acts 5:29). Peter's greatest failure didn't define him.

Has there been a failure in your life that felt insurmountable? You are not defined by those failures, but by Christ's love and power.