

Luke 24:45-47 NLT - 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. 46 And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. 47 It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.'

Jesus Himself opened the disciples' understanding to what had happened. It had been prophesied in the Old Testament and now was fulfilled.

Luke 24:47 is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. As wonderful and miraculous as the resurrection was, there was even greater news. What did Jesus' death and resurrection make possible for us?

WRAP-UP

When the disciples grasped the truth of what had happened their lives were radically changed. Their Messiah, their King was alive, and their sins were forgiven. Could there be any better news than that?! As we read the book of Acts and the birth of the Church we see people who preach to the crowds despite risk to their lives, sell what they have to give to the poor, pray and heal the sick, sing when imprisoned and claim victory over death and the grave because their King is risen. Our King is risen. Let's hold firmly to the truth and the hope of forgiveness and eternal life. Let's live like our King is risen.

MEMORY VERSE

He isn't here! He is risen from the dead!

- - Luke 24:6a NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

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

Challenge – Look for opportunities this week to share the Good News of Easter and forgiveness of sins with someone who needs encouragement this week.

Living Like My King is Risen

Easter Sunday

INTRODUCTION

Christ is Risen! Oh, did you already know that? On that first Easter morning this was news to the world, that the tomb was empty. After witnessing His crucifixion, all were in shock and mourning the loss of their Messiah, their King, their friend. So, when the women who cared for Jesus so deeply in life, took spices to the tomb to care for Him in his death, they expected to find His body. The evidence pointed to the fact that things were over, done, halted. They had either forgotten what He said, or perhaps not listened to Jesus. They should have been expecting this, but they weren't. Maybe we are guilty of the same thing- have we been told that Jesus is alive, but we aren't really expecting to come face to face with Him? Is Jesus' life making a difference in how we live? Are we living like our King is risen?

Ice Breaker

What recent news, either personally or in the media, has surprised you and resulted in a change in the way you live? (health, relationships, financial)

Key Passage

He isn't here! He is risen from the dead! Remember what he told you back in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and that he would rise again on the third day."
- Luke 24:6-7 NLT

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Where is Your Focus?

In Luke 24 we find women who were Jesus' followers preparing spices to apply to His body as part of the Jewish burial tradition. They had to delay visiting the tomb because Jewish law forbade them to do work on a Sabbath. So, they arrived on the third day after Jesus' death. They were expecting to find a body.

Luke 24:3-6 NLT - 3 So they went in, but they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 As they stood there puzzled, two men suddenly appeared to them, clothed in dazzling robes. 5 The women were terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men asked, "Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? 6 He isn't here! He is risen from the dead! Remember what he told you back in Galilee,

The two “men” (John’s gospel refers to them as angels) asked why they were seeking someone who was alive among the dead. These two knew the answer- the women thought all hope was lost and Jesus was gone. *What experience and circumstances were the women focused on which had led them to this conclusion? In verse 6 we have the declaration of fact and a reminder that Jesus had told them what would happen. Have you ever been faced with a choice to believe the truth of the Bible or your own experience and circumstances that seem to contradict it? If so, share what that was like to wrestle with the two opposing viewpoints.*

Jesus knew what lie ahead as he had prepared His followers for a very harsh reality. A reality that defied logic. In the passages below look at the detail that Jesus had given them. He refers to Himself as The Son of Man, a reference to the Messiah and a link to the prophecies of the Old Testament which foretold what would happen.

Luke 9:22 NLT - 22 "The Son of Man must suffer many terrible things," he said. "He will be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He will be killed, but on the third day he will be raised from the dead."

Mark 10:33-34 NLT - 33 "Listen," he said, "we're going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die and hand him over to the Romans. 34 They will mock him, spit on him, flog him with a whip, and kill him, but after three days he will rise again."

What do you suppose the disciples thought Jesus meant when He said, “On the third day He would be raised from the dead”? They had seen Jesus raise Jairus’ daughter and Lazarus from the dead, so why do you think they either forgot or didn’t believe? How does Mark 8:33 shed light on their response?

Mark 8:32-33 NLT - 32 As he talked about this openly with his disciples, Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. 33 Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples, then reprimanded Peter. "Get away from me, Satan!" he said. "You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

We will all be challenged as the disciples were to shift our focus from a human point of view to a Godly point of view. That is not easy, and it doesn’t happen all at once. As we experience God’s faithfulness to His Word and His promises, we will find it easier to have faith in what we have yet to see. God knows the future and sometimes we must trust Him as we wait for that future to be revealed.

2. Skeptical

It took an angelic encounter to jog the memory of the women. Then they remembered, and of course, they had seen an empty tomb. They were ready to believe and spread the good news.

Luke 24:8-11 NLT - 8 Then they remembered that he had said this. 9 So they rushed back from the tomb to tell his eleven disciples--and everyone else--what had happened. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and several other women who told the apostles what had happened. 11 But the story sounded like nonsense to the men, so they didn't believe it.

Who did the women share the news with first? Had these men also heard Jesus’ words about being raised from the dead? What was their excuse?

The men’s refusal to believe may have been based on their unmet expectations, their fear, or just unwillingness to believe the supernatural.

But these men who walked with Jesus and heard His words still needed further proof. The resurrected Jesus did appear to them face to face. What happened when they saw Jesus? Were all of their doubts immediately gone? Have you similarly experienced any times of great faith followed by nagging doubt?

Matthew 28:17 NLT - 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him--but some of them doubted!