

Week 7

Did Jesus Rise from the Dead?

April 4



(~90 minutes needed)

[In this series, we'll be taking an intentional dive into some of the most important questions we can ask as human beings. They have to do with God, our existence, meaning, purpose, suffering, salvation, and more. For your group discussion to flourish, it is paramount that everyone in your life group access the content ahead of time, think through the reflection questions, and consider some of the resources sent out each week. The discussion guides allow time for each person to reflect on the questions, but conversation will go best if people do most of their thinking beforehand.]

Begin with silence and prayer (1-3 minutes)

As you begin your gathering, spend a minute or two together in prayerful silence. Then, after a few moments of quiet centering, have a specified person in the group pray for your time together.

Read this overview (1 minute)

For the Christian faith, everything rises and falls on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In fact, this is even what Paul the Apostle himself said to the church at Corinth: "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (**1 Corinthians 15:17**).

As a faith family, we confess that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried, and that on the third day He rose again from the dead.

That may be what we profess, but sometimes it is hard to reconcile in our minds the idea that someone could come back to life from the dead. Sometimes doubts can arise in our minds about whether or not Jesus really rose from the grave. Sometimes we can have questions about the truth of what we read in the Bible.

That's okay. This week, like every week, we're exploring a question. This week's question is simply, but importantly, "Did Jesus really rise from the dead?"

Personal reflection (10-15 minutes)

Give everyone about 10-15 minutes to sit with God and reflect on the question, “Did Jesus really rise from the dead?” Actually have people write out their thoughts on the questions below. *You’ll want to have some pens and paper ready for people to jot down any thoughts that they have.*

Have people reflect on the following questions:

- What are your thoughts/feelings about the Resurrection story in the Bible? Can it be trusted? Why or why not?
- How would you answer that question if someone asked you?
- How does your answer to that question impact your everyday living?

Debrief these questions in triads (30 minutes)

Split your group into triads to share their thoughts on the questions above.

Have each triad read and reflect on one of the accounts of Jesus’ resurrection in the Gospels. You might have one group read and reflect on **Matthew 27:57–28:20**, another group read and reflect on **Mark 15:42–16:15**, another group read and reflect on **Luke 24:1-49**, and another group on **John 20:1-31**.

In each of these smaller groups, you might have people reflect on the following:

- What stands out about this Resurrection account to you? Why?
- How would you react if you were in this story?
- What do you think God is inviting you into as you hear the words of these eyewitnesses to Jesus’ resurrection?

Once the personal reflection time is completed, have everyone come back into a large group to share about their triad discussion, to read Scripture, and to debrief the sermon.

Gather as a large group for discussion (30 minutes)

Once you have debriefed your personal reflection time, spend time in the Scriptures below as well as debriefing the sermon from this weekend. *There are lots of questions here, so feel free to pick a couple as you see fit to guide the discussion.*

- What were some things from your smaller group discussions that stood out?
- How did the sermon this past weekend challenge or deepen how you answer the question, “Did Jesus really rise from the dead?”
- What underlying assumptions about how the world operates do you think people who don’t believe in the resurrection might have (e.g., materialism, naturalism, etc.)? How would you

respond to those assumptions? In what ways do you perhaps have similar assumptions about how the world operates?

- What promises does Jesus' resurrection hold for you and for our world? (See passages like **1 Thessalonians 4:14**, **Romans 8:11**, and **1 Corinthians 15:35-58**.)
- If you were to have a conversation with someone who asked you whether the Resurrection really happened, what would you say? What do you think would be important to emphasize? How would you want to present yourself if a conversation like this came up?
- What new questions did this message or topic raise for you?
- What is one key takeaway from tonight's conversation that you need to do or think more about?

Finish with prayer (10 minutes)

Like each week, finish your group session with prayer. You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is on your heart that you need prayer for?
- Who in your life needs prayer?

Have someone close your time together by interceding for the requests that were shared.