

# GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

## JESUS' LAST NIGHT

### SERIES THEME//

In the lead up to Easter Sunday, this sermon series will spend time learning from Jesus' final words to his disciples in John 13-20. Jesus, ever the creative and engaging teacher, uses several rich images to help his disciples understand who He is, how He gives life, and why He will never leave them. We will explore each of these images. This Lenten series will give us a chance to see what was most important to Jesus as he spent his final night on earth, culminating in Holy Week. Each image He calls us to behold reveals the kind of people He's helping us to become.

## SERMON; HOPE | John 20

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017

**SERMON THEME//** He is risen: He is risen, indeed! And this is our source of hope.

### LEADER//

This is the sermon from Easter Sunday, as well as the last in the Jesus' Last Night series. The big objective for this growth group is not, "What did you think of the sermon series?", but rather – "How are we going to live in light of the truths we learned from this series?"

This is from Pastor Adam's sermon notes, let it help you prepare for discussion.

*A medicine can only cure as far as it travels. If a medicine can only touch 70% of the disease, it doesn't do the trick. It has to go the whole way. In the same way, the Gospel doesn't do us good if it only helps us live better lives, act like nicer people or make the world a better place. If the Gospel doesn't deal with the final enemy--Death--then it does us no good! In Easter, we are given hope that the full effects of sin can be fully remedied. Jesus, our savior, went all the way into the grave!*

### OPENING UP// Start with prayer

1. What did you and your family do for Easter?
2. How was your Holy Week? Did you take part in the fast, go to the church to pray during the open prayer times, attend the Maundy Thursday or Good Friday service? That is, how did Holy Week prepare you to celebrate Easter?
3. What are one or two things that stuck out to you this past Easter at Peace?

### DIGGING DEEPER//

- o As we read this passage, remember – Easter (Christ risen on the third day) is the defining factor for Christianity. Paul says that without the resurrection, we have not hope or reason for our faith and this is all in vain (1 Corinthians 15:14). As we study this passage, this is what changes everything...



- We are going to read John 20. The ESV breaks this chapter into 5 headings. Have a different person read each heading.

## JOHN 20 (ESV)

### The Resurrection

**20** Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>3</sup> So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup> and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' <sup>[a]</sup> head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup> for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to their homes.

### Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. <sup>12</sup> And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. <sup>13</sup> They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup> Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, <sup>[b]</sup> "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup> 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.'" <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her.

### Jesus Appears to the Disciples

<sup>19</sup> 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, <sup>[c]</sup> Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup> When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." <sup>22</sup> And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."



## Jesus and Thomas

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin,<sup>[d]</sup> was not with them when Jesus came.

<sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

<sup>26</sup> Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

## The Purpose of This Book

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

### Footnotes:

1. [John 20:7](#) Greek *his*
2. [John 20:16](#) Or *Hebrew*
3. [John 20:19](#) Greek *loudaioi* probably refers here to Jewish religious leaders, and others under their influence, in that time
4. [John 20:24](#) Greek *Didymus*

- o Take a moment to pray over this text, asking God to use this text to continue to shape your life as you take the word *preached* and make it the word *lived*.

### LEADER//

This will help stir the memories of all as they watch the sermon video and prepare for discussion.

- o Before we watch the sermon video, take a moment and go in a circle, having each person bring up one thing they remember from the sermon (doesn't necessarily have to be a teaching point, it can be something else Pastor said, or something that happened during the sermon).

## SERMON DISCUSSION VIDEO//

- o As you watch the sermon discussion video, take note of what you found intriguing or insightful as you hear Pastor Adam discuss the sermon he preached.



## **THE WORD PREACHED//**

- Pastor Adam gave several reasons to believe the resurrection really happened. What were some of these? What do you find the most convincing reason for believing in the Resurrection?
- How would you respond to someone who asked, "Why do you believe in the Resurrection?"
- The Gospel, unlike other world religions, is rooted in the message that God has done something that changes everything. World religions teach us what we must do. How does the Gospel contrast with this?
- During the sermon, Pastor Adam made reference that some major world religions need guns and laws to protect them. Not so with Christianity. In fact, Christianity is at its best when it is facing persecution! Why?

## **THE WORD LIVED//**

- o The Gospel claims that Jesus was raised from the dead. What are the implications for us if this *did not* actually happen? Why are we given so much hope because this message is true?
- o How would the Resurrection help you provide hope to someone who is going through a time of deep trial, on the verge of giving up?
- o How does the Resurrection help us in our own struggles, particular the struggle against sin?
- o If you have ever wondered, "God, why are you letting me go through this?" how does the Cross and Resurrection help provide an answer?
- o What are the two ways to live that Pastor Adam preached on – and which does your life reflect?
- o Just because Easter 2017 is over, that doesn't mean the mission has ended, or the gospel doesn't need to be proclaimed. With whom are you going to continue to share the gospel?

## **#SHAREHOPE//**

- o Did the person/people/family you invited for Easter for #ShareHope attend Peace for Easter? If so, tell us about that! Do you think they found *hope* at Peace?
- o Can you as a group pray for those who responded to the Gospel this week?

## **CLOSE IN PRAYER//**

### **LEADER//**

As you close in prayer, take some time to receive prayer requests from your group.

1. But this week, in addition to the prayer request, spend time focusing on and closing up the #ShareHope campaign!

