

Easter Sunday!

Alive (April 12th, 2020)

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-2 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestions of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank God for sending His son on a mission to live a sinless life making way for a new humanity, to suffer sin's eternal consequences in our place, to conquer death and resurrect 3 days later, and to ascend back to the right hand of God victorious over sin and as king over our lives! Praise God for coming to us as our eternally spotless lamb offered as a sacrifice on the cross so that we might be filled with God's presence and possess the hope of eternal life! As we shelter in place, pray that we would listen to and obey the commands of our resurrected king Jesus through the Holy Spirit! Finally, pray that the kingdom of Jesus would continue to transform this world plagued by the Coronavirus by renewing our hearts with God's love for those who are suffering!

Discussion: (45-60 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Danny led us in our *Easter Sunday Service!* Pastor Danny brought our attention to the story of Jesus' resurrection in John 20:1-18 in order to show us how the message of Easter was always meant for those who are mourning. Pastor Danny points us to the example of Mary as a great reminder that even though the original disciples of Jesus were mourning the tragedy of the cross, God is able to use this horrific incident as the means to bring about salvation and the promise of eternal life for those who have faith in the resurrected Jesus!

“Easter will never make sense to you until Jesus opens your eyes to the truth of the resurrection!”

- Pastor Danny Strange

Suggested Questions

Check-In: *Philippians 2:5-11* – This Easter Sunday, we celebrate the fact that **Jesus is risen, he is risen indeed!** What are some of your most memorable Easter moments? Do you have any fun Easter traditions?

Study Tip: This week's primary text comes from the crucifixion and resurrection narrative found in John's gospel. The study guide concludes with John 20:31 which states the purpose of John's gospel: "But these [the work's of Jesus] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name." This is the theme you should keep in mind as you facilitate your discussion! First, John's gospel is notorious for wrestling with the identity of Jesus. Chapter 1 immediately links Jesus to YHWH when John describes him as the divine Word who was with God, who was God, and who became flesh and dwelt among us. (Jn. 1:1-18). The rest of the gospel surveys the various miracles, teachings, and titles of Jesus in which he continually associates himself with the great, "I am" (Ex. 3:14-15). Furthermore, the Greek word for belief (πιστεύω, *pisteuo*) appears upwards of 98 times! John showcases what Jesus *believed* about himself and what the crowds *believed* about him so that you too would come to *believe* that Jesus is the Messiah. Finally, in this week's study guide, immerse yourself in the crucifixion and resurrection story so that you may abide in the work of Jesus and may take part in the fruit of His resurrection life united with Him (Jn. 15:1-17)!

- **Objective #1: Discuss how this season has affected your Easter celebration.**

Primary Texts: John 19:1-20:2 – In the introduction, Pastor Danny mentions several examples of people trying to make this COVID-19 season as joyful and "Easter-y" as possible. However, he points out that just like the first Easter, it has been a very difficult season for many of us because of isolation, sadness, and even death. After discussing the **Check-In** question above, what was this year's Easter like for you and your family? What has been the hardest thing for you in this weird season?

Supporting Texts: If your group has time to read the entire story, start at John 18

- **Objective #2: Identify where God has been working in this season of life!**

Primary Texts: John 20:3-13; – Next, Pastor Danny points to the example of Mary and encourages the church that even though the original Easter Sunday took place within the context of her mourning, God is in fact alive and continues to work through all difficult situations. Are you able to trust that God is at work during this season? If yes, where have you been able to see God moving in your life? If no, where do you hope to see Him work in your life?

Supporting Texts: (God's Will in Tough Times) Psalm 27; Prov. 19:21; Is. 43:1-13; Matt. 5:4; 2 Cor. 1:3-7

- **Objective #3: Live transformed by the reality of Jesus' resurrection this Easter Season!**

Primary Texts: John 20:14-31 – Finally, Pastor Danny points out that Jesus opened the eyes of Mary so that she could understand the truth of his resurrection. This set her on a new life trajectory based upon the new reality of a resurrected Jesus who continues to live each and every day! How might this truth about Jesus' resurrection affect your day-to-day life as you shelter in place? What does it look like for you to live this week in light of the reality of Easter Sunday?

Supporting Texts: (The Resurrection Hope) Eph. 1:15-23; 1 Cor. 15:50-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-14; Rev. 21:1-8

Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank Jesus for being the way, the truth, and the life in our world today! Ask that the Holy Spirit would open our eyes to the reality of Jesus' resurrection and what that means for our lives today! Finally, pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to transform our minds so that we can set our thoughts on obeying Jesus and seeking the promise of eternal life as we walk through this COVID-19 season.

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Stay up to date with our Coronavirus webpage: Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to [3Crosses.org/coronavirus](https://3crosses.org/coronavirus)

-Follow Along with our Pray Podcast: For the next 30 days, our challenge for you is to step into the prayer movement around 3Crosses by listening to our [Pray Podcast](#).

-Further Reading and Exploration! *Check out Alpha* Are you, or is anyone around you, craving community during this time and seeking answers to life's most difficult questions? Check out our new 3Crosses Alpha course designed to welcome the voices of anyone with questions or doubts about the Christian faith. Learn more at [3Crosses.org/alpha](https://3crosses.org/alpha) and feel free to invite the skeptic in your life along with you starting *online April 15 at 7:30 pm*

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that the members of your group would be willing to obey as they look to love their neighbor by serving those around them!