Lesson 2:
The Resurrection Changes Everything

LESSON OVERVIEW

Series: The Resurrection
Lesson: 2 of 2
Estimated Length: 20 Minutes
Audience:
Spiritually curious high school or college students with little or no biblical background.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson students should:

- Understand that the resurrection gives us reason to take Jesus' claims seriously.
- Recognize that Jesus' resurrection demonstrates victory over sin and death.
- Understand that Christianity offers more than forgiveness of the past, it offers new life.
- Recognize that the resurrection gives Christians hope beyond physical death.
- Understand that the Gospel includes Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.
- Begin considering how they should personally respond to Jesus.

TEACHING APPROACH

Every group is different, and every leader has their own teaching style. This lesson can be taught as a discussion, a devotional, or a combination of both.

Lesson 1 asked students to investigate the historical claim:
Did Jesus really rise from the dead?

Lesson 2 moves from **evidence to meaning.**

The goal is not simply for students to believe that something miraculous happened 2,000 years ago. Help them consider what the resurrection reveals about Jesus, what it means for our greatest problems, and why it gives us hope for both this life and eternity.

The goal is not to pressure students into making a decision. Invite them to honestly consider:
If Jesus really rose from the dead, what does that change for me?

PURPOSE STATEMENT

To help students understand why the resurrection matters personally.

Students will discover that the resurrection confirms the claims of Jesus, demonstrates His victory over sin and death, offers the possibility of a new life, and gives us hope beyond the grave.

The resurrection isn't simply something Christians celebrate.

It changes everything.

WHY THIS MATTERS

It is possible to believe that Jesus rose from the dead without understanding why it matters.

Students may think of the resurrection as the happy ending to the Easter story: Jesus died.

Then Jesus came back.

But the Bible presents the resurrection as much more than that.

The resurrection means Jesus did what no ordinary person could do.

It means the cross wasn't a defeat.

It means death doesn't get the final word.

And it means the life Jesus offers is greater than simply becoming a better person.

The resurrection turns Christianity from good advice into **good news.**



LEADER INSIGHT

Throughout this lesson continually reinforce one truth:
Jesus didn't only rise so we could know that He is alive. He rose so we could experience new life through Him.

Be careful not to turn this lesson into the full salvation/New Birth lesson.

The goal is to establish **why the resurrection matters** and create a natural bridge toward a future conversation about how we personally respond to the Gospel.

? BIG QUESTION

If Jesus really rose from the dead, what does that change for me?

KEY SCRIPTURES

- John 20:24–29
- Romans 1:3–4
- 1 Corinthians 15:3–4
- 1 Corinthians 15:17–22
- Romans 6:4–5
- Romans 8:11
- John 11:25–26
- 1 Corinthians 15:54–57

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Lesson Goal
The previous lesson examined the evidence surrounding the resurrection.

But evidence creates another question.

Imagine becoming convinced that Jesus actually rose from the dead.

Now what?

The resurrection forces us to move beyond:
“Did this happen?”
to:
“What does this mean?”
This lesson should help students make that transition.

Don't rush immediately toward telling students what decision they need to make.

Help them first understand the significance of what happened.

If Jesus really defeated death, then we need to seriously consider **who Jesus is, what He accomplished, and what He is offering us.**

REVIEW & CONNECT
(Optional)

Begin by revisiting last week's challenge.

Students were encouraged to read **1 Corinthians 15:1–20** and write down one observation and one question.

Invite anyone who is comfortable to share.

Questions could include:

- What stood out to you?
- Did you discover anything new about the resurrection?
- What questions came up?
- Which piece of evidence from last week do you still find most interesting?
- Did anything challenge what you previously believed?

There is no pressure to share.

Transition:
“Last week we asked whether Jesus really rose from the dead. Today we're going to assume for a moment that He did and ask the next question:
”**What does that change?”**

ICEBREAKER

Ask:
What's one event that can completely change everything that comes after it?

Allow students to answer.

Examples might include:

- Graduating
- Moving to another country
- Getting accepted to university
- Winning something
- Losing someone
- Meeting someone important
- Receiving life-changing news

Then ask:
Why can one event change everything that happens afterward?

Transition:
“Christianity teaches that one event changed the course of human history, the resurrection of Jesus. But the resurrection isn't only supposed to change history. It changes what is possible for us.”

TEACHING POINT 1

THE RESURRECTION CHANGES HOW WE SEE JESUS

MAIN IDEA

If Jesus really rose from the dead, His claims about Himself deserve to be taken seriously.

READ TOGETHER

John 20:24–29

TEACHING

Thomas gives us one of the most relatable stories surrounding the resurrection.

The other disciples told him:
“We have seen the Lord.”

Thomas wasn't immediately convinced.

Essentially, Thomas said:
I need evidence.

He wanted to see Jesus' wounds for himself.

Jesus later appeared while Thomas was there.

Instead of rejecting Thomas because he had questions, Jesus met him in those questions.

Thomas sees the risen Jesus and responds:
“My Lord and my God!”

Notice that Thomas doesn't simply say:
"Wow, you're alive."

His understanding of **who Jesus is** becomes clearer.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus had made incredible claims.

He forgave sins.

He claimed authority over eternal life.

He said:
“I am the resurrection and the life.”

He said:
“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.”

The resurrection gives us reason to take those claims seriously.

Anyone can claim something about themselves.

But defeating death is different.

If Jesus really died and rose again, then we cannot easily place Him into the category of simply being another good teacher.

The resurrection forces us to ask:
Who is Jesus really?

DISCUSSION QUESTION



If someone truly defeated death, how would that affect the way you viewed the things they said about themselves?

ILLUSTRATION IDEAS

Credentials: Anyone can claim to be qualified for something, but eventually their credentials have to support their claim. The resurrection gives us reason to seriously investigate Jesus' claims.

Prediction: Imagine someone making an impossible prediction about themselves and then it happens. You would probably start paying closer attention to everything else they said.

Thomas: Thomas himself can be the illustration. Questions did not end his journey, his questions eventually led him to a deeper understanding of Jesus.

TRANSITION

The resurrection changes how we see **Jesus**.

But it also changes how we see one of humanity's greatest problems: **death**.

TEACHING POINT 2

THE RESURRECTION MEANS DEATH DIDN'T WIN

MAIN IDEA

Jesus didn't simply die for sin, He defeated the power of sin and death through His resurrection.

READ TOGETHER

1 Corinthians 15:17–22

TEACHING

To understand why the resurrection matters, we need to remember the problem the Gospel is solving.

The Bible says:
“All have sinned.” , Romans 3:23

And:
“The wages of sin is death.” , Romans 6:23

Sin separates humanity from God, and death is ultimately the consequence of sin. That is why the cross matters.

Jesus took our sin upon Himself and willingly died for us.

But imagine if the story ended there.

Jesus dies.

Jesus is buried.

The end.

Paul says something surprising in 1 Corinthians 15.

If Jesus did not rise:
Our faith is useless.

And:
We are still in our sins.

Why?

Because the resurrection demonstrates that death could not hold Jesus.

The cross and resurrection belong together.

The Cross Says:
The price for sin has been paid.

The Resurrection Says:
Sin and death have been defeated.

Jesus didn't avoid death.

He went through it and came out victorious.

That's why the resurrection is just as important to the Gospel as the cross.

DISCUSSION QUESTION



Why do you think Christianity would lose its meaning if Jesus died on the cross but never rose again?

ILLUSTRATION IDEAS

Winning the Battle: Imagine a team making an incredible comeback but the game ends before they actually win. The cross and resurrection belong together, the resurrection reveals the victory.

Prison Door: Imagine someone's debt being completely paid but they remain sitting inside an unlocked prison cell. The resurrection shows that Jesus not only paid the debt but opened the way to freedom.

Defeated Enemy: Winning isn't simply surviving your opponent. Victory means the thing fighting against you has been defeated. Jesus faced death and overcame it.

TRANSITION

If Jesus defeated death, then the Gospel isn't only about what happened to Jesus.

It changes what can happen **to us**.

TEACHING POINT 3

THE RESURRECTION OFFERS NEW LIFE

MAIN IDEA

Jesus didn't rise simply to improve our old life. He offers us a new one.

READ TOGETHER

Romans 6:4–5
Romans 8:11

TEACHING

Sometimes Christianity gets reduced to:
“Try to become a better person.”

Be nicer.

Stop doing bad things.

Go to church.

Read your Bible.

Those things may become part of someone's journey with God, but they aren't the heart of the Gospel.

The Gospel isn't primarily about **self-improvement.**

It is about **new life.**

Look at the pattern of the Gospel.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

Jesus:

Died.

Was buried.

Rose again.

Romans 6 then uses the same picture when talking about our relationship with Jesus.

It describes an old life being buried and a new life beginning.

This means the resurrection isn't only something we admire.

It becomes the pattern of what God wants to do **in us.**

Our past doesn't have to determine our future.

Our mistakes don't have to become our identity.

Sin doesn't have to control the direction of our lives forever.

God offers transformation.

Later in our Bible studies, we'll explore more about how the Bible teaches us to personally respond to the Gospel.

But for now, understand the invitation:
The same Jesus who walked out of the grave offers us a new life.

DISCUSSION QUESTION



What do you think the difference is between becoming a **better version of yourself** and receiving a **new life from God?**

ILLUSTRATION IDEAS

Renovation vs. Rebuild: Sometimes a damaged building doesn't simply need another coat of paint. Something deeper needs to change. Christianity is more than improving the outside.

New Chapter: Your previous chapters are part of your story, but they don't have to determine how the story ends.

Restart vs. Update: Sometimes technology doesn't need another small update, it needs a complete restart. Jesus isn't simply offering a few improvements to our lives; He offers transformation.

TRANSITION

New life changes how we live today.

But the resurrection also changes how we think about **what happens after this life.**

TEACHING POINT 4

THE RESURRECTION GIVES US HOPE BEYOND DEATH

MAIN IDEA

Because Jesus rose from the dead, death does not have the final word.

READ TOGETHER

John 11:25–26
1 Corinthians 15:54–57

TEACHING

There are many problems humanity has learned to solve.

We have developed medicines.

We have built incredible technology.

We can communicate around the world instantly.

We can travel farther and faster than previous generations could have imagined.

But there is one reality humanity has never been able to escape:

Death.

No amount of money can permanently stop it.

Success can't stop it.

Popularity can't stop it.

Technology can't stop it.

Every human life eventually faces death.

That's what makes Jesus' statement in John 11 so incredible.

He says:
“I am the resurrection and the life.”

Notice what Jesus doesn't say.

He doesn't only say:

"I know how resurrection works."

He says:
“I AM the resurrection.”

And then He demonstrates His authority over death through His own resurrection.

That's why Christians can have hope beyond this life.

Christian hope isn't based simply on:

"I hope everything works out."

It is based on a person who Christians believe **entered death and came back alive.**

Paul eventually celebrates this by saying:
“O death, where is your victory?”

Death is still real.

Grief is still real.

Loss is still painful.

But because Jesus rose, Christians believe death is **not final.**

The resurrection means there is hope beyond the grave.

DISCUSSION QUESTION



How do you think believing that death isn't the end could change the way someone lives their life today?

ILLUSTRATION IDEAS

The Final Page: Imagine reading a difficult chapter while already knowing the story has a hopeful ending. The difficult chapter is still real, but you understand it differently because you know it isn't the end.

Sunrise: Darkness can feel permanent when you're standing in it, but sunrise reminds us that darkness doesn't last forever.

Locked Door: Humanity has always viewed death as a door nobody returns through. The resurrection claim is that Jesus walked through that door and came back.

TRANSITION

Now bring everything together.

If Jesus rose from the dead, the resurrection changes much more than one moment in history.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Last week we asked:
Did Jesus really rise from the dead?

Today we've asked:
If He did, what does that change?

The answer is:
The resurrection changes how we see Jesus.

He isn't simply another teacher. His claims about Himself deserve to be taken seriously.

The resurrection changes how we see sin and death.

The cross paid the price for sin, and the resurrection demonstrates that death did not win.

The resurrection changes what is possible for us.

Jesus offers more than self-improvement.

He offers **new life.**

The resurrection changes how we see our future.

Death doesn't have to be the end of our story.

This is why the resurrection sits at the centre of Christianity

The Gospel is not:
“Be a good person and hopefully God accepts you.”

The Gospel is **good news about what Jesus has done.**

Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. And because He lives, He offers us new life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which meaning of the resurrection stood out to you the most?
2. How does the resurrection change the way we should think about Jesus?
3. Why are both the cross and resurrection necessary to the Gospel?
4. What do you think “new life” with Jesus actually means?
5. How might believing death isn't the end change the way someone lives today?
6. If you became convinced that Jesus really rose from the dead, what would your next question be?

PRACTICAL CHALLENGE

This week, read John 20.

Pay attention to the different people who encounter the risen Jesus.

As you read, ask yourself:

- How does each person respond to Jesus?
- Who doubts?
- Who believes?
- What changes after they encounter Him?
- What would my response have been?

Then write down your answer to one question:
“If Jesus really rose from the dead, what does that mean for me?”

CLOSING PRAYER GUIDE

Prayer Points

- Thank Jesus for His death and resurrection.
- Thank God that our past doesn't have to define our future.
- Pray for students who still have questions about Jesus.
- Pray that God would help each student understand what the resurrection means personally.
- Pray for hope for anyone experiencing fear, grief, or uncertainty.
- Ask God to help students continue exploring how to respond to the Gospel.
- Pray over any requests shared by the group.

You could close simply:
“Jesus, thank You for giving us hope through Your resurrection. Help us understand what Your resurrection means for our lives. As we continue learning about You, help us to know You personally and give us the courage to respond to what You show us. Amen.”

LEADER REFLECTION

After the lesson, consider:

- Did students understand the difference between the cross and resurrection?
- Did they understand that the resurrection offers more than historical evidence, it offers hope?
- Did “new life” make sense without getting too far ahead into the salvation lesson?
- Which teaching point connected most strongly?
- What questions did students raise?
- Is there anyone who seems ready to explore how to personally respond to the Gospel?
- Is there anyone I should follow up with this week?

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO LEADERS

This lesson should leave students with **an invitation, not pressure.**

Some students may be convinced.

Some may still be skeptical.

Some may believe Jesus rose but have no idea what that means for their own lives.

That's okay.

The resurrection naturally creates another conversation.

If Jesus really died and rose again, and if He offers new life, then the next question becomes: **How do I respond to the Gospel?**

That's an excellent place to end.

You don't need to force the entire answer into this lesson.

Let the question create curiosity for what comes next.

The resurrection is not the end of the story.

It's the beginning of a new one.