A Note to Community Group Leaders:

The truth of the resurrection of Jesus is extremely important to understand. Without it, there would be no Christianity. As a result, there is additional information provided that will help process the questions and lead your group. You may want to read the quotes I provide to your group as you facilitate the discussion. Please contact Pastor Jeff if you have a question about this information.

1 summary

John's account of the resurrection is nothing if it is not a singular affirmation that true historical events happened on that Easter Sunday. This is the chief reason we are given so many details about the character of the empty tomb (the placement of the burial clothes) and the nature of Jesus' resurrection body (his many wounds)... This Jesus is not a fantasy but a real man, a resurrected man who can talk and be touched despite the fact that he has been transformed by the power of his resurrection. [1]

The resurrection is the most significant historical event in the history of the world. The resurrection of Jesus changes everything!

2 questions & suggestions

1. What most impressed you about the resurrection story and today's message? Why?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 15:14. According to Paul, how important is the literal resurrection of Jesus? Why do you think he said that?

3. What stands out to you about the following quote?

    John has provided us with the best evidence he can muster to persuade us that belief (*in the literal resurrection of Jesus*) is not only a reasonable choice, but a necessary decision if we are going to follow Jesus. Jesus is not an idea... Jesus is a person—he is God incarnate in human history—... The resurrection is the capstone event in Jesus' career, which demonstrates the reality of what has happened... Without the resurrection, the infrastructure of Christological thinking falls apart and Jesus becomes merely one more Jewish teacher with a series of good ideas. [2]

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[1] Gary M. Burge, John, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 571–572.

[2] Ibid, 572.

4. Is it reasonable to believe that Jesus was just a good moral teacher?

    - No! The life, death and resurrection of Jesus leaves us with only three options as to the identity of Jesus. He is either:

        1. a **liar** (*he knew he wasn't telling the truth as he taught*),

        1. a **lunatic** (*he didn't know what he was saying was wrong*), or

        1. **Lord** (*God in the form of man*). His life, teachings, what others said about Him, His miracles and His historical resurrection leave not logical choice other than to believe that he is **Lord**!

5. How are we to respond to the truth that Jesus is Lord? Read John 20:30-31.

    - John tells us that he wrote his Gospel so that we all "believe" that Jesus is the Christ (*Messiah-the Anointed One promised in the OT*) and the Son of God (*Deity—John 1:1*)

6. What does the Bible mean by "believe?" Read John 3:16.

    - Although this is a very familiar verse there is a truth often missed in this verse. Your translation probably says "…believes "IN" Him… The preposition is actually "INTO." This is important because John is not telling us we need mere intellectual assent that Jesus lived and died to be "saved", but reliant trust "into" Him to forgive us and give us life as he promised. Note the following:

        - It is striking that John never uses the noun "faith" (Gk. *pistis*) in his Gospel. Yet the verb "to believe" (Gk. *pisteuo*) appears almost a hundred times... John's interest is to underscore the act of believing (as opposed to the content of faith). More than anywhere else in the New Testament, John's Gospel follows this verb with a preposition (*eis*, into), which demands not that we simply believe, but that we place our faith into someone; in most instances, it is into Jesus (e.g., 3:16; 4:50; 8:30; 12:11; 14:1). [3]

7. Since the resurrection is a fact of history and Jesus is God, what do you need to do to better align yourself with His authority over your life?

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[3] Ibid, 577.