

Small Group Discussion Questions



// Week of March 30-31, 2024

LEADER INFO

- 74 people gave their lives to Jesus over this Easter weekend!

GROW This section is based on the sermon from Sunday. You can find it here: <https://www.southsidelife.com/>

ICE BREAKER Do you have any favourite Easter memories or traditions?

Easter at Southside

“If you’re in a season of darkness and you feel like this is how life is now, Jesus wants to say ‘good morning’ to you. There’s a light at the end of the tunnel.”

Read

Isaiah 53:5-6

“But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—everyone—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

John 20:11-16

11 Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb **12** and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

13 They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." **14** At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

15 He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

John 21:15-19

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

18 Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." **19** Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

John 20:19

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Matthew 28:1-9

1 After the Sabbath, as the first light of the new week dawned, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to keep vigil at the tomb.

2 Suddenly the earth reeled and rocked under their feet as God's angel came down from heaven, and came right up to where they were standing. He rolled back the stone and then sat on it. **3** Shafts of lightning blazed from him. His garments shimmered snow-white. **4** The guards at the tomb were scared to death. They were so frightened, they couldn't move.

5 The angel spoke to the women: "There is nothing to fear here. I know you're looking for Jesus, the One they nailed to the cross. **6** He is not here. He was raised, just as he said. Come and look at the place where he was placed.

7 "Now, get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, 'He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.' That's the message."

8 The women, deep in wonder and full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb. They ran to tell the disciples.

9 Then Jesus met them, stopping them in their tracks. "Good morning!" he said. They fell to their knees, embraced his feet, and worshipped him.

1. Mary Magdelene

- a. Mary experienced a “Death of Dignity” at the hands of the world - before Jesus, she was considered morally unclean, disgusting, and an object to be used and desired for only one thing. When Jesus died, it seemed like her dreams of escaping those labels had died too.
 - i. But Jesus rose again. He appeared to Mary first, and the first word that He spoke to her was her first name. He truly saw her, loved her and was delighted by her.
 - 1. Can you recall a time when you felt completely misunderstood or marginalized? When?
 - 2. Can you recall a time when you felt completely seen and understood? When?
 - 3. What do you feel when you think about Jesus speaking your own name?

2. Peter

- a. When Jesus died, Peter experienced a “Death of Identity”. During Jesus’ time on earth, Peter was considered the head of the disciples: important, bold... a winner. And then before Jesus died, leading up to His crucifixion, Peter denied that he even knew Jesus 3 times.
 - i. But Jesus rose again. He appeared to Peter and asked him “Do you love me?” Jesus emboldened and freed Peter in that conversation - to go out into the world and fearlessly preach the gospel.
 - 1. Have you ever felt like a loser? When?
 - 2. Have you ever felt like you wanted to conceal your faith? When?
 - 3. Who does Jesus say you are and how does that embolden and free you?

3. The 50 Disciples in the Locked Room

- a. After Jesus died, those who followed Him (His disciples) experienced a “Death of a Dream.” Jesus was supposed to free them, to lead them and to save them... but He died a cruel and tragic death, and His followers feared that they’d be killed in the same way.
 - i. But Jesus rose again. He suddenly appeared in their locked room, surprising His disciples, proving that He is absolutely their Messiah and Saviour, and solidifying their hope, once and for all.
 1. Have you ever experienced the death of a dream? When?
 2. Can you think of a time when things didn’t work out as expected, but looking back, you can see how God used the situation for good? When?
 3. Have you ever doubted Jesus would show up in your circumstances?
 - a. Do you currently have doubts that this group can help you pray through?

4. Jesus’ Mother, Mary

- a. Jesus’ Mother, Mary, experienced a “Death of Daylight” when her son was beaten, humiliated and hung to death on a cross. The trauma that she would have experienced is unimaginable to most of us.
 - i. Some things in life feel so traumatic that you feel like you will never “bounce back” or heal. Hopelessness tells you that “this is just the way life is now...” grey, dull and empty.
 - ii. But Jesus rose again. He appeared to His mom and the first words He said to her were “Good Morning!”
 1. How do you think Mary felt in that moment?
 2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like there was no light at the end of the tunnel? When?
 - a. Are you currently in one that this group can help you pray through?
 3. Jesus promises all of us that He works all things together for our good and His plans for good WILL happen - on this side of eternity or the next.
 - a. What does that hope mean to you?

COMMUNION

If you weren't able to take communion as a group last week, this is another excellent week to do it!

All that is needed for communion is:

- Crackers or Bread
- Juice

Why Communion?

Communion is something God tells us to do as Christians, to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made by dying on the cross for us.

When He did that, he took our sin and made us spotless. So we don't have to be perfect... in fact, we were never going to achieve perfection in the first place... so instead Jesus lived a perfect life, died and rose again so that we could be made right.

The only "requirement" for taking communion this week for you and your group is that you believe that Jesus is the son of God, who died for your sins and rose again.

In other words, take part in communion if you have asked Jesus to be the Lord of your life, and are taking steps to follow Him, day by day!

Disclaimer: Matthew 5:23-24 instructs us to examine our hearts and our relationships with people before we thank God for His forgiveness!

If anyone in your group has it in their power to go and (safely) extend an apology or forgiveness to someone and hasn't yet, advise them to take care of that ASAP, skip taking communion with everyone this week, and come back to do it all together as a group again next week! As a group, pray for courage and grace for them as they take this step.

How do you lead your group through taking Communion?

If you have NO idea what to do, the good news is, it's simple! Traditionally, red wine has been used for communion, but for this week, just make sure you have juice on hand. It's not important what is in your cup: the important thing is that we remember that it represents the blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross for our sins.

1. Lead your group in saying "**Jesus, with this cup, we remember that Your blood was shed for our sins.**" Then, drink the juice.

You'll also need a small piece of bread or cracker for each person who will be taking communion. This represents the body of Christ which was broken on the cross for your sins and mine.

2. Lead your group in saying "**Jesus, with this bread, we remember that Your body was broken, hung, and buried for us. And 3 days later, You rose again and stepped out of the tomb - defeating death for us, once and for all.**" Then eat the bread.

That's it! It's that simple but it's a meaningful pause, as we all take a moment to fix our eyes on Jesus and His sacrifice for us.

PRAY