



God's Grand Story, Pt. 9: Jesus Dies & Lives Again

Everything in Jesus' ministry led up to a singular crisis climax: his death and resurrection. Even though Jesus told his disciples that his death was coming, they couldn't wrap their minds around it: the Messiah wasn't supposed to die prematurely. Upon the first reports of his resurrection, it seemed to his closest followers as an unrealistic fantasy. Yet this dramatic event was the centerpiece of God's plan and became the foundation of his plan to restore a broken and fallen world.

Bottom Line: Jesus' death and resurrection provide forgiveness and salvation to all who turn to him.

Discussion Questions:

1. What have been some of your most meaningful Easter traditions (and why)?
2. **Read Romans 3:23, 6:23; Matthew 1:21; John 1:29; Matthew 20:28; Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; and Hebrews 10:1-4, 11-14.** What do you learn about God's redemptive plan from these passages?
3. **Read Matthew 27:50-54.** If the cross had been your first introduction to Jesus, as it was to some Roman residents of Jerusalem, what would you have thought of this criminal who apparently prompted a reaction from heaven? How would you have addressed these events?
4. John 19:38-42 tells us that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus the Pharisee had been secret believers in Jesus. In asking for Jesus' body and handling it, they not only made their faith public, they made themselves ritually unclean as Passover began (which prohibited them from celebrating it for a month). What does this tell you about their faith? About their regard for Jesus over and above their own reputation? Under what circumstances do you think you would risk your reputation for Jesus?
5. **Read John 20:24-29.** In what ways can you identify with Thomas? Why is Jesus' statement in verse 29 significant for us today? As children, we believe what we are taught from our parents. At a point, however, we come to our own conclusions. What has helped you work through the historical reality of the resurrection of Jesus?
6. What does the empty tomb tell you about how God can deal with hopeless situations? How does that encourage you in the situations you face?
7. What was the most challenging idea/thought to you from the message? What was the most helpful/encouraging thought or idea from the message this week? How did it help you? How can the group encourage you this week?

For resources that will help you better understand God's Grand Story, please visit this link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PaziqJT1TQlpNQL14EH2UUvzcao0vM0OAdPs2DketA/edit?usp=sharing>

*If time doesn't allow for you to discuss all of these questions, use only the ones you feel would be most helpful for your group.