



SMALL GROUP STUDY



CONNECT
in a group

Participant Guide

April 12 – May 17, 2020

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People of the Kingdom – Resurrection through Revelation

Introduction

This study explores what happened after the resurrection. What was next for the disciples and what is next for each of us?

The disciples faced issues similar to people today. Do you remember a time when you were deciding what might be next for your life? Examples include: 1) a high school student deciding which college to attend and what to study, 2) a worker who wants to change jobs or pursue a new career, or 3) a couple deciding if they want a future together for the rest of their lives. These are life-changing decisions which lead to uncertainty.

The disciples experienced similar dilemmas. Their leader was gone. They didn't know the future. They were afraid and believed they were the next to die because they were followers of Jesus.

This sermon series illustrates why Jesus' death was not the end but the beginning of the Christ movement in the world.



SESSION 1: HE IS RISEN

BIG IDEA: Christ is risen!

REMEMBER VERSE

He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" (Mark 16:6b-7)

CHECK-IN [15 MINUTES]

- Where have you seen God this week?
- What were your highs and lows this week?
- Tell how you did/are doing on the last challenge.

ICEBREAKER [10 MINUTES]

- What stories have you heard people tell of a "near death" experience?
- What are the similarities in these stories?

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION [45 MINUTES]

Read Mark 16:1-8

1. Why did the women go to Jesus' tomb?
2. How did the women know the location of the tomb?
3. How was the stone across the entry moved?
4. The women see the stone had been rolled away and an angel speaks to them. What does the angel say? What were the women's reactions?
5. What is the significance of the angel specifically mentioning Peter?
6. Both the birth of Jesus and His resurrection were witnessed and heralded by few people. What does this say to you?

7. Describe what you think happened when Jesus rose from the tomb. What were the guards' reactions to the event?
8. Why was it so easy for the Jews to believe the guards' false report?
9. How would you respond to someone who asks, "Did Jesus really die?"

Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-17

10. Why is Jesus' resurrection considered the core of Christian faith?
11. What would the consequences have been if Jesus had not been raised from the dead?
12. Why is Christ's resurrection significant to you?

Read Galatians 2:20

13. Why are the words "crucified with Christ" important?
14. What would we be crucifying?
15. If Christ is in us, what chance does Satan have to tempt us away from our faith?
16. What act in worship services comes to mind when we talk of Christ living in us?
17. How does this intimacy with Jesus affect your worship and your walk of faith?

CHALLENGE [5 MINUTES]

Live in the grace of Jesus resurrection and show that to the world with joy.

CLOSING PRAYER [5 MINUTES]

Use the traditional Easter greeting that has been used for many years:

LEADER: He is risen.

GROUP: He is risen, indeed! Hallelujah!



SESSION 2: THE GREAT COMMISSION

BIG IDEA: GO into the world

REMEMBER VERSE

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (Mark 16:15)

CHECK-IN [15 MINUTES]

- Where have you seen God this week?
- What were your highs and lows this week?
- Tell how you did/are doing on the last challenge.

ICEBREAKER [10 MINUTES]

- Share a story when you were given the weirdest or most amazing task ever.

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION [45 MINUTES]

Read Mark 16:9-13

1. How excited would you have been if you were one of the people who saw Jesus after His death?
2. How would you have reacted if you were one of the people who heard Jesus was alive but didn't see yourself?
3. What would it have taken for you to believe Jesus was alive?

Reread Mark 16:14

4. If you were a disciple, what would your reaction have been to seeing Jesus?
5. If you were a disciple, what would your reaction have been after Jesus rebuked you?

Reread Mark 16:15-20

6. What were the disciples called to do?
7. Verses 17-18 describe the signs of what the disciples will do. List the signs. What do they mean for Jesus' kingdom?
8. Jesus was taken to heaven and "sits at the right hand of God." What does this mean to you?
9. What happened, according to verse 20?
10. What does verse 20 encourage us to do today?
11. Are you a disciple of Jesus?

CHALLENGE [5 MINUTES]

Follow the calling of verse 20. While you may not be able to go out and heal people, you can comfort and show Jesus to the world. When you are the light of God in others' lives, they can be healed spiritually.

CLOSING PRAYER [5 MINUTES]

Leader Pray

This week, invite each person to take a turn being in the center of your group. Have the other members lay hands on the one in the middle. The person to the right (before going into the middle) prays for that person. Pray for each other's calling as you are sent out by Jesus.



SESSION 3: PENTECOST

BIG IDEA: Pour out my Spirit (Fan the flame)

REMEMBER VERSE

"In the last days, God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit on all people. (Acts 2:17a)

CHECK-IN [15 MINUTES]

- Where have you seen God this week?
- What were your highs and lows this week?
- Tell how you did/are doing on the last challenge.

ICEBREAKER [10 MINUTES]

- Tell the story of a time you spoke in front of an audience, e.g., a speech or a solo. What was it like? How did you feel? What happened?

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION [45 MINUTES]

Read Acts 2:1-13

1. Describe the sound that would be like the blowing of wind. How loud would it have been so that all of Jerusalem heard it?
2. What would have been your reaction to what the disciples experienced?
3. Count the number of countries or languages represented in Jerusalem at that time. (See verses 9-11.)
4. How many disciples were at the scene? (See Acts 1:26.)
5. Explain why everyone could understand the disciples in their native tongues and yet the number of languages outnumbered the disciples.

Read Acts 2:14-21

6. In the words of the prophet Joel (verses 17-21), Peter said all this had come true. What came true?
7. Describe what verse 21 means to you.

Read Acts 2:42-47

8. What does this passage describe?
9. How does this passage give you a vision of what discipleship looked like then and what it looks like now?
10. Does your PEACE Group look like this? Does another group in which you are involved look like this?
11. If your group does not behave like this, what could you do to exemplify the Acts 2 disciples?
12. Regardless of what your group resembles, what person or persons could you invite to the group?

CHALLENGE [5 MINUTES]

Be like the Acts 2 disciples. Listen for the breath of the Holy Spirit and the calling from God. Then, follow it to help the Kingdom on earth grow. How? One step at a time. What one thing can you do to follow God's calling in your life? Share it with the group and ask them to keep you accountable to follow through.

CLOSING PRAYER: [5 MINUTES]

Popcorn Prayer

This week, say a popcorn prayer. Gather as a group and give everyone a chance to pray. Then, close the prayer with a preselected person praying for the whole group to live the Gospel every day.



SESSION 4: SAUL BECOMES PAUL

BIG IDEA: My chosen instrument

REMEMBER VERSE

“Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. (Acts 9:15)

CHECK-IN [15 MINUTES]

- Where have you seen God this week?
- What were your highs and lows this week?
- Tell how you did/are doing on the last challenge.

ICEBREAKER [10 MINUTES]

- Tell a story of when life “threw you a curve ball” and you were forced to change direction.
- Describe a time when you were afraid to help someone. Did you still help? Why or why not?

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION [45 MINUTES]

Read Acts 9:1-9

1. What are your thoughts regarding Saul in this section of Scripture?
2. What was Saul doing for work?
3. Describe the events when Saul meets Jesus. How do you imagine the scene?
4. Who appeared to Saul?

Read Acts 9:10-19

5. Who was called to help Saul?
6. How do you think he felt about helping Saul?
7. Why would God place Ananias into that kind of situation?
8. In this passage, Saul becomes Paul, one of the greatest apostles in the New Testament. Why did God choose him?
9. Saul was called to serve God and became a model servant. What does this tell you about your own serving abilities and calling? Challenge [5 minutes]

This week, see yourself as a friend and someone who has been called by God. It does not matter what you have done, God can use you to perform His will. Live and look for where God is directing you to be His instrument on earth.

CLOSING PRAYER [5 MINUTES]

Find a prayer partner. Find a quiet place and pray for each other to see and follow God's calling.



SESSION 5: A HAPPY ENDING

BIG IDEA: Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

REMEMBER VERSE

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen (Revelation 22:20-21)

CHECK-IN [15 MINUTES]

- Where have you seen God this week?
- What were your highs and lows this week?
- Tell how you did/are doing on the last challenge.

ICEBREAKER [10 MINUTES]

- What is the best book or novel you have ever read?
- What is the best ending you have seen or experienced (TV show, movie, book, or real life event)?

In this study of Revelation, remember that this is John's dream. He is talking about an imagery that has meaning for our lives. Remain cautious, knowing that John's dream describes what is to come but not the actual sight of what will happen.

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION [45 MINUTES]

Read Revelation 22:1-5

1. What is the purpose of the tree of life?
2. How do verses 4-5 make you feel?
3. What is described in this short passage?
4. What does John say about Eden being restored? What does that mean for your life today?

Read Revelation 22:6-11

5. When is Jesus coming?
6. What is our responsibility?
7. How do you keep the words of this prophecy?
8. What happened when John tried to worship the angel who showed him everything?
9. In verse 9, the angel implores John to “worship God.” What would that look like in your life?
10. In light of verses 10-11, how might we treat others?

Read Revelation 22:12-21

11. What do verses 12-13 say to you? (Note: Verse 12 may seem like words of righteousness. That is not how we will be judged. What we have done refers to our faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection for our salvation. If you question this, read Ephesians 2:8-10.)
12. How are we as Christians preparing for the Lord’s coming? (See verses 7 & 14)
13. Who does not get in?
14. What is the gift referenced in verse 17?
15. How do you think you would react if Jesus suddenly appeared?

CHALLENGE [5 MINUTES]

Reread verses 20-21 and live as though Jesus is coming soon. What does that look like for you?

CLOSING PRAYER [5 MINUTES]

Ask a volunteer to pray

Have each member of the group write down prayer requests on a piece of paper. Collect the papers and have everyone choose one at random. Each person prays for the requests on the piece of paper.



SESSION 6: I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

BIG IDEA: I love to tell the story

REMEMBER VERSE

Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (Romans 10:4)

CHECK-IN [15 MINUTES]

- Where have you seen God this week?
- What were your highs and lows this week?
- Tell how you did/are doing on the last challenge.

ICEBREAKER [10 MINUTES]

- What is your favorite fictional story or book?
- What is your favorite family story to share with others?

SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION [45 MINUTES]

Read Romans 10:1-13

1. What is Paul saying to the reader in verses 1-4?
2. How is Christ the culmination of the law (verse 4)?
3. What does this passage say about salvation (especially verses 8-10)?
4. What do verses 12-13 say to those who believe? to those who do not believe?
5. As you read verses 5-13, what is the main theme? Or what is Paul saying to the reader?

Read Romans 10:14-21

6. Why are the feet in verse 15 “beautiful”?
7. How can you be an effective witness to those who do not believe?
8. How do you know those who are from God?
9. What does verse 17 say to you about faith and understanding God?
10. What did the prophets of Israel say to the Israelites?
11. Verse 21 tells us the response to what they heard. What was their response?

CHALLENGE [5 MINUTES]

Share with the group what you hear God telling you based on these passages. What do you intend to do about what you heard.

CLOSING PRAYER [5 MINUTES]

Popcorn Prayer

This week, say a popcorn prayer. Gather as a group and give everyone a chance to pray. Then, close the prayer with a preselected person praying for the whole group to hear God and respond according to His will.

Appendix

Group Participant Quarterly Close Discussion Guide

Directions: These questions are for groups to discuss at the close of each study or, at a minimum, at the close of the quarter. Consider planning a relaxed discussion over food. The hope is that the conversation will serve two purposes. First, give God praise and glory for all He has done in and among us. Second, be an encouragement for each other as you share God-sightings and spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

1. **Share an UP, IN, or OUT story from your group this past quarter.** (*Storyteller measure*)
These could be big or small ways you have seen God show up. Your group may have one or many stories. Each story is a win! Give space and time for each question below.
 - A. **UP to God** (*Child of God and Learner measures*) What UP stories stood out to you from your group this quarter? Thought starters: How did you see God at work in your life this quarter? What has God been teaching you through His Word? How have you grown in prayer? What have you learned about God or yourself this quarter?
 - B. **IN a family of believers** (*Friend measure*) What IN stories stood out to you from your group this quarter? Thought starters: How did the group encourage one another? Care for one another? Teach one another? Carry each other's burdens? (John 13:34, Rom. 12:10, James 5:16, Eph. 4:32, Rom. 14:13, Rom. 12:16, Rom. 15:7, Gal. 5:13, Gal. 6:2, Eph. 4:2, Col. 3:16, Heb. 10:24, 1 Thes. 5:11)
 - C. **OUT to a hurting world** (*Friend and Servant measures*) Summarize how the group reached out this quarter. Thought starters: Who did you invite to the group? How did you build relationships with others outside of the group? How did you serve people outside of the group this quarter?
2. **How are you doing balancing the UP, IN, and OUT components?** Where are you strong? Where are you weak?
3. **Based on this discussion, what do you think God is calling your group to do next?** Is it a topic to study? A new or deepened service to others? A new or deepened relationship with others? Explain.

Appendix

About PEACE Groups

PEACE groups bring people together to enjoy each other, learn how to live like Jesus-followers in daily life, and support one another on life's journey. They meet weekly or twice a month and are led by trained leaders. About 3-12 people are typically in a group. They meet in homes, at restaurants, or on the Prince of Peace campus.

PEACE stands for the essential elements of every group...

P – Prayer members pray for and with one another.

E – Evangelism Group members look to invite and bring new friends to the group. Newcomers are always welcome!

A – Apprenticing Leaders mentor individuals for future leadership. As more people join and new groups are formed, the need for more trained leaders increases.

C – Christ-study Groups discuss the Bible with the goal of not only knowing Jesus, but becoming more like Him and doing what He did.

E – Encouragement Groups are positive and uplifting where you are supported in your faith journey and personal life struggles.

To find out about joining a group or starting one, visit www.pop.church or contact the Discipleship Pastor, Matt Koenig (matt@pop.church or 847-359-3451 x122).

Leader Tips

- Before you start: Be sure to give people a copy of the study. Long passages in the upcoming study should be read ahead of group time if at all possible. Preparing answers ahead of time is not required, however, some people in the group may prefer to read ahead in order to have more time to think about their responses.
- Each session is written to take approximately 75-90 minutes long, however, you may tailor the material to the needs and length of your group time.
- Don't feel obligated to get through all the questions. The point is for the study to get through you, NOT for you to get through the study! Therefore, good discussion on fewer questions rather than brief answers on more questions is encouraged.
- Involve group members as often as possible in Scripture readings, hosting, prayer, and facilitating questions.
- You will need index cards or small pieces of paper on occasion. Keep some on hand.

Appendix

Sample Group Covenant

Leader: John Doe

Apprentice Leader: Jane Doe

Goals of our group:

- To support one another through Christian fellowship
- To strengthen one another through the practical study and active discussion of the Scriptures
- To actively pray with and for one another
- To be accountable to one another in our commitments to Christ
- To be bold witnesses for Christ through our conduct and actions
- To actively reach out to others with the Gospel

Length of covenant: Through the current study series then to be reviewed/updated.

Timing of meetings: Monthly on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays beginning at 7p.m. and ending no later than 9p.m.

Attendance: We will make this group a priority in our schedules and schedule other things around it. We will make every effort to attend every meeting.

Confidentiality: Nothing of a personal nature that is shared in this group will be shared with anyone outside of this group. What is said here, stays here.

Participation: We will be real and honest when sharing with each other. We will not pretend to be something we are not. We will love, support, and encourage each other unconditionally no matter what is shared as God has done the same for us.

Strategy for filling the empty chair: Partying (hosting a BBQ, service project, or fun outing each quarter) and being intentional about inviting others.

Responsibilities for:

Hosting: Switching each month

Food: Simple snacks – responsibility of host family

Babysitting: Responsibility of families with children

Signed by:

Appendix
Group Members Contact Sheet

Name	Phone	Email & Home Address	Birthday	Other Information (spouse's name, children's names & ages)



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