

Explore the Bible Adult Leader Guide Teaching Plans

Session 4: Resurrected!

Text: Luke 24:1-12

Memory Verse: Acts 2:32

PREPARE TO LEAD THE GROUP TIME

READ Acts 2:14-46; Luke 23:1–24:51, and Understand the Context. Consider how these passages of Scripture are connected, even though the passage from Luke focuses on the days immediately following the resurrection and the passage from Acts was written after Christ's ascension.

STUDY Luke 24:1-12, using Explore the Text and additional information from Explore the Bible Adult Commentary (available in print and digital format from *lifeway.com*). Read parallel passages from Matthew 28; Mark 16; and John 20. Take note of the ways the resurrection events cause you to respond in awe.

PLAN the group time using the ideas under Lead Group Bible Study and More Ideas. Visit *blog.lifeway.com/explorethebible* for additional ideas and tips.

GROW with other group leaders at the Groups Ministry blog (*lifeway.com/groupministry*).

GATHER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

Personal Study Guides; A whiteboard and a marker, or a large sheet of paper and a pen; and **PACK ITEM 5** (*Bookmark: Memory Verses*).

LEAD GROUP BIBLE STUDY

FOCUS ATTENTION (FIRST THOUGHTS)

DISCUSS: Greet the group as they arrive. Begin by asking about significant days in history that have occurred during their lifetimes. Some may include VE Day (May 8, 1945); John F. Kennedy's assassination (Nov. 22, 1963); the space shuttle Challenger explosion (Jan. 28, 1986); the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania (Sept. 11, 2001).

TRANSITION: *How many of you remember where you were when you received the news about one or more of these events?* Explain that our Bible study today will focus on the greatest news of all, the most significant event in human history. *Where were you when the message of Jesus' resurrection first impacted your life?* Allow for some personal responses, but be cautious not to put people on the spot.

SAY: *As we celebrate Easter today, we will look back at the events of that magnificent day, but we will also look into the present and celebrate the hope that we have because of Jesus Christ's resurrection.*

PRAY: Thank God for the death and resurrection of His Son and for the gift of salvation that is available to us because of His love and sacrifice.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: As you read aloud Luke 24:1, ask the group to record in the margin of their PSG when and why the women went to the tomb.

CLARIFY: Identify the women who were present based on Matthew 27:56; Mark 16:1; and Luke 24:10. Ask: *What is the significance of the day and time of their visit? What was the purpose of their visit?* Draw insights from the PSG (pp. 48-49).

READ: Enlist a volunteer to read aloud Luke 24:2-3.

EMPHASIZE: Imagine the sight that morning: In the pre-dawn hours, in an area that was perhaps filled with tombs, a group of grieving women arrived to find what appeared to be the scene of a crime. Tomb robbers had snatched the body, or so they thought. Ask: *How would a news reporter have described the scene that morning? How might you have responded if you had read a news story about this event?*

DISCUSS: Read the paragraph under Verse 3 in the PSG (p. 45). Then ask: *How does the empty tomb serve as a testimony of Jesus' identity? How can you use the fact of the empty tomb to witness to the lost today?* (PSG, p. 45)

READ: Read aloud Luke 24:4-8, as the group follows along in their Bibles.

GUIDE: *Whether the women were overcome with grief, simply forgot what Jesus told them about His resurrection, or did not believe Jesus' promise to rise again, the women were obviously confused and unable to comprehend what had happened at the tomb.*

ASK: *What would have frightened you most: the disrupted tomb, the men in white, or the missing body of Jesus? Explain.*

HIGHLIGHT: Remind the group that it's easy for us to be critical of the women and question why they didn't remember or believe Jesus' words concerning His resurrection. Point out that we are all guilty of forgetting (or ignoring) Jesus' words to us. Say: *In their grief, the women were looking for a way to honor Jesus by anointing His body. Instead they were the first to hear the news of His resurrection!*

ASK: *How can times of uncertainty become opportunities for remembering truths from Scripture about Jesus? How can a time of uncertainty in another person's life be an opportunity for you to share Jesus with them?* (PSG, p. 47)

READ: Enlist a volunteer to read aloud Luke 24:9-12, as the group listens for the apostles' response to the news.

DEFINE: Write these four statements on the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper: 1) *The women returned.* 2) *They reported.* 3) *They were not believed.* 4) *Their report was confirmed.* Share insights from your study on these basic facts from Luke 24:9-12. (Consult the Leader Guide for more information.)

DISCUSS: *When the women shared their news, how was it received? Why might the disciples have responded the way they did? Why is it not surprising that Peter ran to the tomb?* (Refer the group to John 20:1-10 for more details about Peter's visit to the empty tomb.)

MEMORIZE: Reinforce that we as Christians are all witnesses of Jesus' saving grace through His work on the cross that day. Read this session's memory verse (Acts 2:32), and use **Pack Item 5** (*Bookmark: Memory Verses*) to emphasize this point. Encourage the group to use Scripture memorization as a way to prepare our hearts to be His witnesses.

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE (IN MY CONTEXT)

TRANSITION: Guide a discussion of how the evidence of the empty tomb changed the lives of the early believers and how it changes lives today. Ask: *Describe how the empty tomb changed the lives of the people present that Sunday. How are these changes seen in the lives of people who trust Jesus today?* (PSG, p. 49)

CHALLENGE: Remind the group that believers today are faced with similar decisions as those in the early church. Ask the group to consider their responses to these rhetorical questions from the second question set in the PSG: *What evidence can you point to in your life that demonstrates the resurrection of Jesus has changed you? How can you celebrate those changes? Record steps you will take to celebrate the power of Jesus' resurrection.* (PSG, p. 50)

CONCLUDE: Review the inside front cover of the PSG to make sure the group understands how to accept Jesus as Savior. Lead in prayer, asking God to speak to every heart. Tell the group that you are available to talk with anyone who has questions about salvation.

PRACTICE

Follow up with individuals who may have questions about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Ask the Lord for discernment and guidance as you share and answer questions or address doubts.

As you spend time this week in prayer for each group member, ask the Lord for sensitivity for each person and for wisdom in communicating the Scripture in an accurate and effective manner.

MORE IDEAS

FOCUS ATTENTION (FIRST THOUGHTS)

Before the group arrives, write each of the famous quotes and their authors from First Thoughts (PSG, p. 42) on the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper. Greet the group and direct their attention to these quotes. Ask: *How did these quotes stimulate change or motivate hope in those people who first heard these admonitions?* Add this quote to the list on the whiteboard or a large sheet of paper: “Jesus Christ is alive!” Ask: *How does this fact stimulate change, motivate hope, and define the future?*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

To supplement the examination of Luke 24:2, emphasize that many people were skeptical of the resurrection and many today are skeptical as well. Guide the group to do some brief online research concerning various explanations skeptics gave for the empty tomb. Suggest the commentary sections from these sites that can be accessed from most mobile devices: mywsb.com, biblehub.com, and biblegateway.com.

To clarify the message of the gospel in Luke 24:7-8, read and discuss the Key Doctrine of salvation (see PSG, p. 47).

To enhance the examination of Luke 24:12, direct the group to complete the Bible Skill activity (PSG, p. 45). Use this as a tool to tie today’s study into the current series from the Book of Acts.

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE (IN MY CONTEXT)

Share your personal salvation testimony with the group. Include brief details about your life before you met Christ, what circumstances or people pointed you to Christ, how you initially gave your life to Him, and how He is currently alive and working in your life today. Transition from your personal experience to a brief explanation of how to become a Christian, using the inside front cover of the PSG for a resource.

SUGGESTED MUSIC IDEA

Use the lyrics to “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” by Charles Wesley as a responsive reading or by singing all the verses together in unison. Emphasize the triumphant sound of victory that resonates in this timeless hymn.