
Love Revealed

John 20:1-18

Isaiah 64:5

"New starts in life are possible."

Do you know the power of the resurrection in your life?

Love Revealed: Mind

John 20:1-10

Love Revealed: Heart

John 20:11-18

Jesus reveals Himself to us in our distress: 11b, *"As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw..."*

Jesus bursts the boxes we've put around His power: Verse 15, *"[Jesus] asked her, 'Woman, why are you crying?'"*

Jesus gives Himself for us: Verse 16, *“Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out.”*

...In effect Jesus was saying this empty tomb is not about me, it's about my love for you—“Mary”.

Annie Dillard, “I had been my whole life a bell, and never knew it until at that moment I was lifted and struck.”

Jesus sends us with a message of hope: Verse 18, *“Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!”*

Love Revealed: Invitation

John 11:25, Resurrection life begins here and now.

Group Discussion Guide

1. Mary encountered Jesus in a moment of suffering and confusion, as did many others on the day of resurrection. (Luke 24:13) How does the Presence of God continue to transform lives in the midst of suffering in a way that not only gives hope for the future but also transforms lives here and now? In other words, how does the Presence of God continually bring new life into families, culture, workplaces, our own mental stability and beyond today?

2. Many early Christians came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus based on the evidence of the eye witness accounts. For example, over 500 followers saw Jesus alive at one time after the crucifixion! (1 Corinthians 15:3-6) But there is also evidence in the transformation of the disciples' lives. The movement was dead, but suddenly the disciples began boldly proclaiming Jesus as alive. The historical evidence for a resurrection is reliably strong. (Acts 1:3) What historical evidence do you find most compelling about the resurrection? (Have a search online prior to your group meeting if needed)

3. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus presents an invitation for a fresh new start in our lives. The apostle Paul writes about this in terms of us coming into a relationship with Jesus and becoming a "new creation". (2 Corinthians 5:17) Therefore, in what ways does the resurrection actually inform the way we choose to live our everyday lives? What difference does the resurrection make for your life?

4. The resurrection is closely connected to the commissioning of the disciples to continue to spread the message Jesus was preaching of repentance and forgiveness. (Mark 16:7) NT Wright puts it like this, "Easter is all about God saying, 'This is the time when new creation is starting. You can leave the old behind and follow Jesus into the new life that he has prepared for all.'" What might you need to leave behind to find new life ahead? What steps can you practically take to respond to this invitation?

Group Exercise:

Read all of John chapter 20 as a group taking note as to the changes happening with Mary, Peter, Thomas and the other disciples as they encounter Jesus alive. Discuss what it might have been like to be in their position: fears, questions, joys and anticipations. Have you encountered Jesus in ways that have shifted your own perspective or the way you then have moved to live your life?

Read This:

"The Challenge of Easter", by NT Wright is an excellent historical look at the evidence of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus any thoughtful person will appreciate.

Watch This:

"The Case for Christ" is a feature film looking at the evidence of the resurrection of Jesus in a way that is both challenging yet heart-warming. Check out the trailer online as it's sure to be helpful and fun to watch as a family or with friends!

Try This:

Join the adventure ... Interested in exploring questions of faith and life? Come join us and invite someone else along for Alpha as we share food, drinks and friendly conversation. Alpha is the perfect next step for those who want to find out who Jesus is and why it matters.

Thursdays at Riverlife from 2 May to 27 June - 7-8.30pm.

Register interest by emailing church@riverlifechurch.org.au.