

Rise

Life Group Leaders Guide

Objective

This guide contains the information and questions you will need to lead a life group study during our current sermon series. Our aim is to spark Spirit-led, Bible-centered conversations that anyone can participate in regardless of how biblically literate they may or may not be. **The win** that we want you to experience is when your group members **connect** more closely with each other and with God so that they are encouraged to move forward in living out their faith.

Directions

The *Purpose* and *Move* sections are for the leader to read to the group to provide clarity. **Do not feel pressured to cover all the questions.** Decide which ones may work best for your group. You will see brief notes interspersed between groups of questions to help give the group context for their answers. The *Notes and Commentary* section (when included) is optional reading for the leader to get background information and better understanding of the passages before leading the discussion.

Series Overview

The Resurrection of Jesus may not seem like it affects our everyday lives. But the truth is, that without it we would never have received the Holy Spirit and the power he brings to live victoriously.

Easter 2019 Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic of Sermon & Life Group
1	4/21	Rise

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Rise

The Big Idea

Jesus' resurrection unleashed the Holy Spirit to empower us.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: If you could be any age for the rest of your life, what age would you want to be? Why?

Move #1: Let's start by unpacking this Sunday's sermon.

1. Did anything stand out to you from the message this weekend?
2. Is there anything from the message this weekend that you want to apply?

Move #2: Next, let's explore how essential the Resurrection is to the Christian faith by discussing a passage from Paul's letter to the Corinthians where he addresses the belief that there is no resurrection of the dead.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-26 (NIV)

12 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

3. What's stands out to you from this passage?
4. Why is the Christian faith "useless" and "futile" without the Resurrection (verse 14, 17)?
5. What about the Resurrection gives you hope, and what does that hope look like (verse 19)?

Note: Verses 20-23 speak of how Adam's disobedience to God introduced the curse of death into the human experience--both physically and spiritually--while Jesus' resurrection reversed that curse to bring the possibility of eternal life to everyone.

6. How have your perspective and feelings about death been shaped by your experiences?

7. How does the Resurrection of Jesus affect your view of death?

Note: Verse 23 tells us that the Good News of the Resurrection benefits those who belong to Jesus.

8. If you belong to Jesus already, why did you decide to give your life to him?

9. If you aren't sure that you belong to Jesus yet, what barriers are holding you back?

Note: Verses 24 and 25 emphasize the kingship of the risen Christ who is reigning over all.

10. What have you observed or discovered so far about what it is like to live under the reign of Jesus?

Move #3: Now, let's return to the text from the sermon and discuss how God's gift of the Holy Spirit empowers us as a result of the Resurrection.

Read Acts 2:32-33, 36-38 (NIV)

32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear....

36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

11. If you are following Jesus, how has the Holy Spirit helped you in living the life that Jesus invited you into?

12. When have you felt "far off" (verse 39)? Describe your struggle to believe that God's promise of the Holy Spirit is actually for you.

Next Steps: The following are things you could challenge your members to do in order to take what you studied in this curriculum farther.

1. If you haven't yet, would you like to give your life to Jesus and follow him in baptism? If so, let's talk afterwards. [Group leaders, if you don't feel comfortable explaining baptism to them, please ask if you could have your pastor or Life Group Director follow up with them.]
2. Try thinking about how the Resurrection of Jesus relates to the challenges or opportunities you face this week. Ask yourself, "How should I see this differently in light of the fact that Jesus rose again?"

Prayer: End your study with a time of praying with and for each other. Take requests, but be sure to pray also about what you've discussed today.

Notes and Commentary

The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.

On 1 Corinthians 15:12-26

The point of course is that those who have fallen asleep *in Christ* (v. 18) will not perish, but are destined for resurrection. This is the final mention of Christ's resurrection in the argument, but everything that follows is predicated on it. Paul's present concern is to demonstrate not only that the resurrection of Christ stands logically against their view that there is no resurrection of the dead (vv. 12–19), but that his resurrection has inherent in it that which makes the resurrection of the believing dead inevitable.

He does this first by calling Christ the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Although this term has a rich OT history, Paul's interest is not in its biblical overtones, which have to do with consecrating the firstfruits of the harvest to God (cf. Lev. 23:9–14), but in its function as a metaphor for the first of the harvest serving as a kind of guarantee for the full harvest. In his usage, therefore, the metaphor functions similarly to that of the "down payment" or "earnest money" of the Spirit in 2 Cor. 1:22 and 5:5 (cf. Eph. 1:14); both serve as a present pledge on the part of God for the final eschatological [i.e., relating to the end times] harvest or payment. Thus the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2:13) and the household of Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15) are the "firstfruits" in a given geographical area, which means not only that they are the first converts but the first of a much larger harvest that is yet to be realized. So too with Christ. He is God's "firstfruits," God's own pledge that there will be a full harvest of those who will be raised from the dead. By calling Christ the "firstfruits," Paul is asserting by way of metaphor that the resurrection of the believing dead is absolutely inevitable; it has been guaranteed by God himself. (Gordon Fee, *New International Commentary on the New Testament: 1 Corinthians*)