

Easter 2020

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

On Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, we celebrate major events surrounding the atoning work of Christ. The Jews of Jesus' day had certain expectations surrounding Jesus, hoping he would fix what they felt most needed to be rectified--release from foreign oppression. But this would not turn out to be Jesus' agenda. Today, people still think they know what they most need to be made whole, but it is often different than what Jesus sees and aims to provide. He isn't always the fix we want, but he is definitely the fix we need.

Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic of Sermon & Life Group
1	4/5	Palm Sunday
2	4/12	Easter Sunday

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Easter Sunday

The Big Idea

The Resurrection of Jesus is the unchanging reality we can cling to in the middle of a rapidly changing world.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: What have you been most in need of during this quarantine (toilet paper, milk, social interaction)?

Move #1: The resurrection of Jesus gives us hope for our ultimate destiny.

1. What was your biggest takeaway from the Easter sermon?

Read 1 Peter 1:3-7 (NIV)

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

2. What is a “living hope” (verse 3)? What does the Resurrection of Jesus Christ have to do with our living hope?
3. What are some things in your life that have turned out to be a false hope? How do these differ from the living hope we have in Jesus?

Note: In verse 6, Peter addresses the distress they were feeling over the trials they were facing. In their case, these trials were particularly related to persecution for their faith. Presently, we're feeling distress over the trial of this pandemic.

4. How does having hope through the Resurrection change the way you face difficult times (verses 6-9)?
5. Our salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection is based on God's great mercy (verse 3) rather than our own performance. Why is this good news?
6. What does the power of God protect us from (verse 5)? What doesn't it protect us from?

Move #2: Next, let's look at a short text from the Apostle Paul in which he speaks of some profound implications of Jesus' Resurrection that we can cling to.

Read Romans 8:9-11 (NIV)

9 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

7. What is the connection between the Holy Spirit and the Resurrection of Jesus? Between the Holy Spirit and our own future resurrection?
8. The words “life” and “live” are used multiple times in this text. What kind of “life” are we given through the Spirit? How does this promise affect our lives *right now*?
9. Paul contrasts being oriented towards the “realm of the flesh” versus the “realm of the Spirit” (verse 9). What are some ways that we tend to block or obstruct the life of the Holy Spirit in us?
10. Share a piece of your own life story. How have you experienced resurrection power in your life?
11. How does the Resurrection specifically affect your perspective in this global pandemic?

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. Receive the good news of Jesus’ resurrection. If you haven’t yet, turn to Jesus in faith, repentance and baptism.
2. Live out the good news of Jesus’ resurrection. Try praising Jesus specifically as your resurrected King in your prayers this week, affirming his powerful presence, and see how it shapes your perspective.

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 Romans 8

Paul signals a shift in direction by turning directly to his readers: “You, however, are controlled not by the flesh but by the Spirit.” Paul’s “two-regime” theological framework is evident here. What he says, literally, is that “you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.” Flesh and Spirit are two of the main powers belonging, respectively, to the old regime and the new (see 7:5–6). By God’s grace in Christ, Christians have been taken out of the realm dominated by “flesh”—the narrowly human outlook that leads to sin—and placed in the realm dominated by God’s Holy Spirit. It is clear, then, that the “in flesh”/“in Spirit” language is metaphorical—a way of indicating that people are dominated by one or the other of these forces.

This becomes even clearer at the end of verse 9, where Paul shifts to the opposite metaphorical concept: We are “in the Spirit” if the Spirit “lives in” us. In whom does the Spirit live? In every person who is genuinely a Christian. Not to have the Spirit of Christ is not to belong to Christ at all. The New Testament teaches that the gift of the Holy Spirit is an automatic benefit for anyone who knows Christ (see comments on 6:1–14). We must, then, give full force to the indicative mode of verse 9: Every Christian really is “in the Spirit”—under his domination and control. We may not always reflect that domination (see 8:12–13), but it is a fundamental fact of our Christian existence and the basis for a life of confidence and obedience to the Lord.

In an effort to maintain balance that is typical of Romans, Paul goes on to comment about a situation in which the Spirit’s dominance might not be so obvious: the believer’s continued existence in a physical body that is doomed to die and is still all too susceptible to the influence of sin. Yes, Paul says, even with Christ in us, our bodies are still “dead because of sin.” Physical death is a penalty for sin that must still be carried out.

...Paul refers here to the Holy Spirit, the power of “life” that has come to reside in every believer. It is because of this power of life within us that we can be certain of future resurrection. Our bodies may be doomed to die, but the Spirit, the Spirit of life, the Spirit of the God who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead, dwells within us and guarantees that our bodies will not end in the grave. God, through the Spirit, will give life to those bodies again. (Douglas J. Moo, *NIV Application Commentary: Romans*)