

"The Hope of Glory"

Easter 2021

Discussion Questions

Read the passage together to prime your thoughts about the resurrection of Jesus and how it can shape our lives now.

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

⁵⁰ I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

*⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"*

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. I Corinthians 15:1-8, 50-58

1. What is hope biblically and how important is it? What's your read on the general culture, are people more optimistic about the future or pessimistic? What is your outlook?
2. What reasons do we as believers have for being optimistic about the future? Where does our certainty lie that our best days are ahead?
3. Comment on the ways Christians were different from their pagan neighbors? Our nation is experiencing similar situations the Early Christians faced. How is the Church

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doing in addressing the problems our culture is facing? Is it giving our message about Jesus greater credibility or less?

4. How certain are you of the resurrection of Jesus and your own resurrection? Have you ever faced the possibility of your own death? What affect did that experience have on your faith and outlook on life?
5. What arguments have you heard as to why people do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus or the resurrection itself? What do most people believe about the future and the afterlife? How certain are they in their belief...if faced with their mortality do they face death with a calm assurance or are they afraid?
6. How did you come to faith in Jesus and what difference has it made in your life in reference to the future and what you can or cannot handle?
7. What does our future look like? Pastor Richard did not cover everything. That would take hours but he did mention three or four things we can look forward to regarding our future. What did you hear and which one gives you the most peace and optimism about your future?
8. How did you view your life post-death? What is heaven like? What’s your reaction to what Pastor Richard said about us being not less physical but more physical?
9. What do you look forward to the most in the next life? Do you fear anything about life after death? Does death still scare you or is it the dying process? What have you done to calm your heart when you contemplate your mortality?
10. Further comments, insights or questions regarding the resurrection and its implication for life now and our outlook on the future.

I created the discussion questions in case there are small groups who have been using the sermon and the discussion guide as the curriculum for the group. I don’t expect every group to meet the week after Sunday. My group is taking a holiday break and that’s okay if your group does as well. I was going to provide only an outline for the Easter message but then I thought, perhaps there are some people or groups who never have discussed the resurrection, the afterlife, heaven the future etc. and this might be a great opportunity to do so.

So if you use it, great. If not, no guilt! Perhaps in 2 weeks your group will meet and may want to discuss these topics. If so, this is why I created the guide.

HAPPY EASTER!

Pastor Richard