

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, April 24, 2011

Passage: Matthew 28:1-10

Memory Passage: Matthew 28:5-6

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matt. 28:1-10.** Why did Mary Magdalene & the other Mary “(go) to see the tomb” early in the morning? What were they expecting to see?

(b) Why do you think only the women came early to the tomb? What emotions do you think they were feeling as they walked? How would you have felt if you were with them?

(c) The Scriptures are clear that the women were at the tomb early, and the men were not. Should the men have been there? Why or why not? Would you have been at the tomb early? Why or why not?

(d) *Family: Read Matt. 28:1-10.* Make 3 columns on your white board with the headings: “Who?” “What?” & “How?” Have your family name all of the characters found in these 11 verses, and have someone write them down under the “Who?” column. Now discuss “What” each person(s) did, and “How” you think they felt (i.e. what emotions were they feeling or displaying). Some characters may have multiple actions & emotions. This should lead to a great discussion of the details of the text. You are leading your family in demonstrating an important part of good Bible reading/study: Observation.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matt. 28:1-10.** What is the significance of the earthquake? Try for a moment to envision how the angel looked (“like lightning,” “clothing white as snow”). Why do you think these details were significant to Matthew? How would you have felt if you saw this being & what would have been your response?

(b) Why do you think the angel told the women not to be afraid (who are not described in the text as being afraid) but did not speak to the guards (who are described as being extremely afraid)? What reason does the angel give the women for not being afraid (“Do not be afraid *for* . . .)?

(c) What evidence does the angel give to the women to prove his claim that Jesus has risen? Why is this evidence important?

(d) The angel said that Jesus had risen “just as He said.” According to Matthew’s gospel, what had Jesus said to the disciples concerning His death (see 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; and cf. 12:40)? Do you think the disciples should have expected the crucifixion and empty tomb? Would you have expected these events or would you be sharing the same confused emotions as the women at the tomb?

(e) *Family: Read Matt. 28:1-10.* Have your family draw a picture of how they think the angel looked based on Matthew’s description (remind them to place the angel on the rolled-away stone in their drawings). Then have them add the guards and the women into their picture. Then ask: “Why do you think the women and the guards were afraid? Were they afraid for different reasons or for the same reasons? Do you think their reasons were valid reasons to be afraid?” Then teach them that angels were used to bring God’s message to men and **Read Matt. 1:18-24 & 2:13-21** to teach the other messages that the angels bring in Matthew.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matt. 28:1-10.** What major event is assumed but not described in these verses? Why do you think there was not an eyewitness to the actual, physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ?

(b) Since there was not an actual eyewitness to the resurrection, what evidence do you find in this passage that proves it to be true? Can you think of other passages of Scripture that stand as proof for the resurrection of Jesus Christ? What are they?

(c) There are some people who have argued that the resurrection was nothing more than a lie manufactured by the disciples in order to hide the fact that Jesus did not actually rise from the dead so that they would be able to establish themselves as the leaders in this new movement. What would you say to someone who held this view? Try to think about the circumstances presented in Scripture (continue reading through v. 15) as well the evidence that you have already found from the angel’s announcement (e.g. the fact that women were not considered viable witnesses in the 1st century).

(d) *Family:* Lead your family through questions a, b, & c. If you need a little help: (a)—some other passages: John 20:19-21:25; Acts 1:1-11; 1 Cor. 15:1-8. (c)—the description of the resurrection events is completely lacking in the exaggerations one would expect for a fabricated story; the disciples all fled after Jesus’ crucifixion, and they did not even remember that Jesus promised His own resurrection, so they wouldn’t make up a lie about something they actually forgot was promised, and the apostles would be persecuted and mocked for their claims of the resurrection (Acts 4:2; 17:18, 32; 23:6; 24:21, et. al.).

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Rom. 1:1-6.** What did God promise through the prophets? What truths about Jesus do we learn were promised by these prophets? What does the resurrection of Christ specifically declare?

(b) **Read Rom. 4:23-25:** Paul is applying Genesis 15:6 not only to Abraham, but also to his readers. What part does the resurrection of Jesus play in this idea? What benefit does the resurrection of Jesus provide to all those who believe?

(c) **Read Rom. 6:1-11.** According to these verses, what becomes possible for believers as a result of Jesus' resurrection? How does this become possible?

(d) Contemplate what you have learned from Romans concerning the resurrection of Jesus and its benefits for those who will believe (and there are more passages to which we could have turned in Romans!). Are you actively crucifying sin in your life based on the power of the resurrection? Are you faithfully agreeing with God that sin is sin, or are you justifying your sin as if it does not matter to God? How might you apply these truths & more faithfully live according to the power of the resurrection (read all of Romans 6 if you need some more help)?

(e) *Family:* **Read 1 Cor. 15:12-28.** Teach these verses to your family, highlighting the main truth: Our future resurrection is directly tied to Christ's past resurrection. The text is fairly straightforward but can be a little confusing to dissect for young ones, so tear apart the text by writing on your white board 2 columns: "Resurrection" & "No Resurrection." As you teach, write down the things that are true since Christ's resurrection is true, and the things that would be true if it were not.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Matt. 28:16-20:** What were some of the disciples doubting? How are Jesus' next words an antidote to this doubt?

(b) Upon what basis has "all authority" been given to Jesus (we sometimes forget how closely tied are the Great Commission & the resurrection of Jesus!)? In the text, how are the Great Commission & authority connected? Do you view the Great Commission as a command or a suggestion (you might have two answers here, one tied to what you believe to be true and one tied to what your actual obedience to this command conveys to be true)?

(c) We must be reminded during this Holy Week that the resurrection is intimately tied with the authority vested in Christ and the power we have to witness the Gospel and make disciples (see also Eph. 1:19-20). I trust that the Holy Spirit has already convicted you if you are not active with the gospel, if you are lacking in spreading this good news of Christ's death & resurrection. Spend some time right now repenting and returning to Christ and His power, and ask God to give you a greater desire to carry out this Great Commission.

(d) *Family:* **Read Matt. 28:16-20.** Teach through these verses (emphasize that Jesus has been granted all authority because of His resurrection, that He sends us into the same world over which He has authority so we should be eager to witness, that the command is to "make disciples" and the rest of the actions listed are how we do that, and that we should never fear because Christ has promised to be with us as we witness the Good News everyone needs to hear).

DATE: April 24, 2011

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He Is Risen!