

EASTER at Sun Grove

Icebreaker: How does your family traditionally observe or not observe Easter?

Let's look at the Easter story! It's Friday, Sunday's comin'!

Friday (Jesus Hung on the Cross)

Matthew 27:45-46, 50-56 *45From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. 46About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli,Eli, lemasabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?")*

50And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up His spirit. 51At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split 52and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. 53They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people. 54When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely, He was the Son of God!" 55Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for His needs. 56Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

1. What might have caused Jesus to cry out while hanging on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?" (Luke 22:39-44, Isaiah 53:10, Psalm 22:1)

Luke 22:39-44 *39Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. 40On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." 41He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, 42"Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet*

not My will, but Yours be done.” 43An angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him. 44And being in anguish, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Isaiah 53:10 *Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.*

Psalms 22:1 *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?*

2. What is so significant about the curtain in the temple being torn in two?
(Hebrews 10:19-22)

Hebrews 10:19-22 *Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

3. What miracles happened after Jesus gave up His Spirit?

4. Why was the soldiers’ conclusion important? (Matthew 27:54)

5. How would you have reacted if you have been with Jesus and then witnessed His crucifixion and subsequent miracles?

Sunday (Empty Tomb)

Matthew 28:1-10 *1After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6He is not here; He has risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay. 7Then go quickly and tell His disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him.' Now I have told you." 8So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell His disciples. 9Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," He said. They came to Him, clasped His feet and worshipped Him. 10Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see Me."*

6. Why were the women afraid when they heard from the angel and then from Jesus? (Matthew 28:5,10)

7. How were the women's responses different upon hearing from the angel and then from Jesus?

8. What role did Mary Magdalene and the other women play in the Christ's resurrection account? (Matthew 27:55, 28:1,6, Luke 24:9-12)

Luke 24:9-12 *9 When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. 12 Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.*

9. In what manner can we respond like Mary and the other women?

Significance of Christ's Resurrection

10. How was Christ's resurrection prophesized in the Old Testament? (Psalm 16:10, Acts 2:31-32)

Psalm 16:10 *because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay.*

Acts 2:31-32 *Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.*

11. Why did Jesus have to die and then be raised from the dead? (Romans 5:19, 1 Corinthians 15: 3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

Romans 5:19 *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one Man the many will be made righteous.*

1 Corinthians 15: 3-4 *3Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *21God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

12. What hope does Christ's resurrection have for us? (Matthew 27:58, 1 Corinthians 6:14, 2 Corinthians 5:1, 1 Corinthians 15:44)

1 Corinthians 6:14 *By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.*

2 Corinthians 5:1 *Our bodies are like tents that we live in here on earth. But when these tents are destroyed, we know that God will give each of us a place to*

live. These homes will not be buildings someone has made, but they are in heaven and will last forever. (CEV)

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 *42So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.*

13. How did you accept Jesus as the risen Savior and Lord? (Romans 10:9-10)

Romans 10:9-10 *9If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

14. How does belief in the resurrection help us to deal with anxiety and fear? (See sermon notes and note below)

Note from Sermon: We do not need to be afraid because:

- God is with us
- God is for us
- God saves us

15. What fear and/or anxiety do you need to let go of in the light of the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life?

Now greet one another:

- Facilitator says, "Christ is risen."
- All resounding responding, "He is risen indeed!"

If you just now realize Jesus is alive and are moved to take the step of faith in confessing Jesus as Christ (the Anointed One) who died for your sin, we invite you to pray the following prayer:

Dear God, I believe Jesus is God and He died for me so I can be forgiven of my sins. I'm sorry for my sins, I believe He is risen. I want to live the rest of my life the way You want me to. Amen.