

OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

I STAND AMAZED IN HOPE! (LUKE 24:1-12; ACTS 1:4-11)

APRIL 1, 2018



MAIN POINT

The resurrection of Jesus gives His followers hope, both in this life and the one to come.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

1. Do you consider yourself someone who has a hopeful outlook on life?
2. How does hope affect the way you do life? How does it change your outlook, actions, and relationships?

Leader: The way that we spend our time and the things we most often talk about are good indicators of what matters most to us in life. Whether this is our family, work, favorite sports team, or a hobby, we dedicate time and attention to the things we value most. It could also be said that these things indicate where we most often put our hope. On a practical level, we give most value to the things we believe will provide the greatest satisfaction and fulfillment in life. Today we will look at the resurrection of Jesus, which gives the greatest hope of all for His followers. The resurrection makes certain the hope of eternity spent with God for those who trust in Christ. This is a hope that is truly life changing.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> [HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 24:1-8.](#)

3. If you were one of the women, what's the first thing that would go through your mind? What would you do?
4. What do the intentions of the women reveal about the hopes and dreams they had placed in Jesus? And what does it reveal about their relationship with Him?

Leader: The women came to anoint Christ's body. With the exception of John, the disciples did not go to the crucifixion. When Christ was arrested, they hid to try to protect

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

themselves. Jesus' followers had placed their hope in the things they could see, not in the promises of Jesus. The women must have been astonished that the tomb was open, especially given that Roman guards had been stationed there.

5. Mary thought that Jesus' body had been taken. Should the disciples have known that Jesus would rise from the tomb? Why or why not?

6. What does Luke 18:31-34 add to the discussion of whether they should have known or not?

Leader: Jesus knew He would die, and He told the disciples that after He died, He would be raised on the third day. The idea of their leader dying was difficult for the disciples, and they were unable to understand Christ's glimpse into God's plan. Because they had not understood the things Jesus told them, the disciples' hope seemed lost at His death. Remind group members not to be too hard on disciples given that God had a plan and there were some things they were not supposed to know yet.

[> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 24:9-12](#)

7. How did Peter react to the news of an empty tomb? Think about everything Peter had been through with Jesus, from the transfiguration to walking on water, and then his denial of Jesus the night of His arrest. Why do you think Peter, of all the disciples, was the one to run to the tomb?

Leader: When the women told the disciples about the empty tomb, they didn't believe them. Luke writes that "these words seemed like nonsense to them, and they did not believe" (v. 11). Peter was the one who had to see it for himself. He had followed Jesus to the high priest's house and denied Christ three times. If Christ was raised, then he could see Christ again and possibly make up for his mistakes. Peter marveled at the empty tomb. He saw a clear picture of the plan that Jesus had taught about all along: the plan to fulfill the Scriptures, die, and be raised.

8. Why is it hard to trust God when our plans don't match up with His plan? What does Peter's experience teach us about how to handle these uncomfortable and confusing situations in our lives?

Leader: To believe in God is to believe that He can accomplish the impossible. Faith inherently implies a belief in the supernatural. Before His death, Jesus shared with His disciples the events that would transpire, that He would die and rise again from the dead. Hearing Jesus share about this prior to His death and understanding the meaning while looking at an empty tomb are two separate things. Though we often may not understand the plan of God in our lives, we have been given a sure hope that cannot be shaken in Jesus.

SERMON BASED GROWTH GROUP

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

9. What difference does the resurrection of Christ make in your daily life? Why should the resurrection make us hopeful?

10. Who do you know who could use an infusion of hope? How could you tell your experience of hope, as you discussed it today, as an encouragement to them?

PRAYER

Guide your group in a time of praise and reflection as you think back on the meaning of the resurrection and all that Christ offers us. Pray that this Easter season your group would be motivated to share that truth about Jesus with others.

MEMORIZE

He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" – **Luke 24:6-7**

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

Luke 24:1-12

24:1 The first day of the week was Sunday. It was so early in the morning that it was still dark (Jn 20:1) when the women arrived at Jesus' tomb to anoint his body.

24:2 on their way to the tomb, the women pondered the difficulty the sealing stone would present. Who would move it for them (Mk 16:3)? However, when they arrived, they found the stone rolled away from the entrance. The stone had been moved by "a violent earthquake" (Mt 28:2).

24:3-8 Jesus' body was nowhere to be found, and the women had no answer for why it was missing. The two men who suddenly appeared and terrified them were angels (v. 23; Jn 20:12). Matthew 28:2-3 and Mk 16:5 mention only one angel. The angels announced the resurrection of Jesus to the women and reminded them that he had predicted this would happen. As soon as they were reminded of Jesus' assertion that he would rise on the third day, they remembered his words. Now they were better prepared to understand and believe the radical things Jesus had said.

24:9-12 in Jesus' day women were not considered to be credible witnesses. This is why the eleven (the apostles who remained after Judas' act of betrayal) did not believe the women's report about what had happened at Jesus' tomb, viewing it as nonsense. However, Peter was curious enough to run to the tomb and look for himself. When he saw only the linen cloths in which Jesus had been wrapped (23:53), he was amazed, but still skeptical.