



Easter- April 12

Discussion Guide

Face the Issue:

Happy Easter! He is Risen!

In his Easter message, Brian shared the story of the encounter that the women who came to the empty tomb of Jesus had with the angels. The angels asked them why were they seeking the living among the dead. Jesus was (and is) alive. Brian challenged us concerning what were we doing because of this.

The Easter story is very familiar to many of us. We have grown up hearing it. Brian's message reminds of the powerful, life changing meaning of the Resurrection.

Has the Resurrection story become boring and routine to you? Why or why not?

How did the disciples change as a result of the Resurrection?

What difference has the Resurrection made in your life?

Into the Word

Read John 21:1–14.

Notice that disciples heard a voice in the darkness speaking to them from the shoreline. They did not know who the speaker was. It told them to make a change. "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." For some reason—maybe desperation, maybe inspiration—they obeyed the voice, and bam! The net filled with so many fish that it nearly broke. We are told that John believed but we have no idea about the other six. Peter jumped out of the boat to see for himself. Maybe the others were not convinced but amazed by what they'd received, hungry for some genuine food after a very long night, all seven men eventually accepted the invitation to come to the shore.

This is how it often is for people who come to Jesus. We will find ourselves in one of the people in this story:

- Some of us become aware that a mysterious voice has been guiding us on life's seas—that it has led us to blessing—and now we simply want to get closer to the One that has been speaking to us.
- Others of us come to the breakfast after a long night on our own. We're not really sure who or what we'll find, but we know we're plenty hungry, and whatever's cooking where this voice is smells good.
- Some of us are like the nameless disciples in the story. We were just along for the ride but now we're here by the fire. We're in position for what comes next, we are learning that this Jesus is feeding not only our bodies but our spirits.

Which of the above do you most identify with in terms of how you came to Jesus?

Read John 21:15–25

“When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?’” If you know the story of Peter, then you know this was a devastating question. It laid Peter open like one of those fish on the grill, exposing the truth about him.

Peter’s primary problem in life was his pride. It was never enough for Peter to be just one of the group. He had to be better than other people, more valued and noticed. And so, on the night when Jesus revealed that he would soon be betrayed, Peter had spoken up: These guys might forsake you, Jesus, but I never will! I love you more than these guys do. And then, to save his own skin, Peter had denied Jesus—not just once, but three times.

Three times—once for each of the three times Peter denied him earlier—Jesus asked: “Peter, do you truly love me more than these” others do? You can sense the frustration and guilt building in Peter until Jesus reassures him that he still has a job to do.

What is the question Jesus might ask at breakfast today that would cut to your very soul, exposing the thing you need to face? Here are some examples:

- *Are you protecting your family so much that you aren’t reaching out to others?*
- *Are you keeping the vows you made?*
- *Do you want to know God and not just about God?*
- *Do you walk your talk?*

Take a quick look at Matthew 4:19. What were the first words that Peter heard Jesus say? How do you think he felt when he heard these words again (John 21:19)?

Apply The Word

How do you respond to the question Christ asks you: Are you My disciple? Are you taking the steps needed to grow in My likeness, to fulfill My mission through you?

If your answer is like Peter’s, at least you are being honest. It’s okay to admit, “I’ve got a long way to go, Lord. I could use some help from others.” That’s a great new beginning. Christ will work with that, and we can help, for He still meets and feeds his imperfect people.