

## Talk Five: THE RESURRECTION

### Why did Jesus rise?

#### AIM

- To present the facts about the resurrection of Jesus.
- To show how the resurrection brings both hope and a warning.
- To challenge group members to consider the implications of this for their own lives.

#### EXPLORE

- Ask for any questions over last week's follow-up reading and questions:
  1. *Jesus directly predicts His own death and resurrection three times (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). What does he say "must" and "will" happen?*
    - He must suffer, be rejected by the religious leaders, be killed, and rise again three days later (Mark 8:31).
    - He will be betrayed, killed, and rise again three days later (Mark 9:31).
    - He will be betrayed. He will be handed over to the Gentiles by the religious leaders in Jerusalem. He will be mocked, spat on, flogged, and killed. Three days later He will rise again (Mark 10:33-34).
  2. *In Mark 8:31 Jesus said He "must" die. Why did He have to die? (See Mark 10:45)*
    - Jesus came to serve by dying—giving His life as a ransom for many.
  3. *What did Jesus say that following Him would mean? (See Mark 8:34)*
    - He said His followers must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him.
  4. *Each time Jesus predicts His own death and resurrection, Mark records the disciples' response—or lack of it. (See Mark 8:32-33; 9:32-35; 10:35-45.) How do the disciples respond in each case?*
    - Each time Jesus tells His disciples about His death, an event immediately follows that shows that the disciples have not understood His teaching:
      - Peter rebukes Jesus because He has not understood that Jesus must suffer and die. Peter has in mind "the things of men," not God.
      - The disciples argue about who is the greatest (Mark 9:34). They haven't understood Jesus' teaching on denying themselves (Mark 8:34).
      - James and John want to sit next to Jesus in His glory, because—again—they haven't learned to deny themselves and put others first.
  5. *In Mark 8:29 Peter recognizes that Jesus is the Christ, God's only chosen King. In taking Jesus aside and rebuking Him (Mark 8:32), Peter is not treating Jesus as God's King. How do you think you have treated Jesus? How would you feel about Jesus being King in every area of your life?*

- Have a leader read Mark 14:27-31.
  - *In this section Jesus is speaking to His disciples. What predictions did Jesus make? (See Mark 14:27, 28, 30)* In verse 27, Jesus predicted that the disciples would fall away (i.e., turn away from Jesus); in verse 28, Jesus predicted that He would rise to live, and then go to Galilee (where the disciples would join Him); in verse 30, Jesus predicted that during the night, before the rooster crowed twice (i.e., before daybreak), Peter would disown Jesus three times.
  - *In what ways does Peter disagree with Jesus predictions? (See Mark 14:29, 31)* In verse 29, Peter said that he would not fall away (turn his back on Jesus), even if all the other disciples did; in verse 31, Peter said that he would never disown Jesus, even if it meant dying with Him.
  - *In Mark 14:27, Jesus quoted from the Old Testament (Zechariah 13:7) to explain what He was about to suffer and why the disciples would scatter. How do we know that Jesus fully intended to gather the “sheep” who would be scattered by His death? (See Mark 14:28 and Mark 16:6-7)* We know from Mark 14:28 that Jesus was as sure about rising from the dead as He was about dying. We also know from Mark 16:7 that Jesus had told the disciples they would see Him, alive and well, in Galilee.
  - *Which of Jesus’ predictions did Peter pay attention to? Which did He ignore?* Peter focused on Jesus’ prediction that the disciples would all fall away—and insisted that He wouldn’t. But he seemed to ignore what Jesus said about rising again and going ahead of them into Galilee.
  - *Jesus had spoken plainly and repeatedly about His resurrection from death. (See Mark 8:31; 9:30-31; 10:32-34.) Did the disciples understand what this meant? If not, why didn’t they ask Jesus about it? (See Mark 9:32)* Mark 9:32 tells us that the disciples didn’t understand what Jesus meant but were afraid to ask Him about it. The whole mission of Jesus—His rejection, suffering, and death—was beyond the grasp of the disciples’ minds. It was difficult for them to come to terms with these terrible aspects of His death—and even more difficult to grasp the concept of Him rising from the dead. It is important to note that Mark doesn’t present the resurrection as something people readily accept, but as something truly mind-blowing.

## **LISTEN (DVD)**

- Mark 16:6-7 – “He has risen! ... just as He told you.”
  - Jesus repeatedly claimed that He would be raised to life on the third day after His death (Mark 8:31).
  - So much hangs on this—if Jesus was right in advance about His own resurrection from death, then it means He’s trustworthy. It also proves that there is genuine hope in the face of death—if Jesus really was raised from death, then we can, too.
  - Jesus really did die: the three women, Joseph of Arimathea, the Roman centurion, and Pontius Pilate were all certain that Jesus had died.
  - 36 hours later, the huge, heavy stone covering the entrance to His tomb had been rolled away. Inside, Jesus was nowhere to be seen. Instead, a young man in a white robe told the women that Jesus had risen from death. He also said that the disciples would see Jesus in Galilee, just as He had told them before He died.
  - Jesus appeared to His disciples on at least ten separate occasions after His death. He also appeared to more than 500 people at the same time.

- As the years passed, many of the disciples ended up joyfully dying for their faith, simply because they knew beyond any doubt that Jesus really was raised from death. They'd seen it with their own eyes, and no threat or torture could make them deny what they knew was true. They had seen first-hand that Jesus had triumphed over death, so death no longer had any fear for them or power over them.
- But Mark is under no illusions about the outrageousness of this claim. He doesn't gloss over the struggle to believe what has just happened, as is evidenced by the response of the women (Mark 16:8). And it may be a struggle for you, too. The temptation may be to forget all the evidence we've seen about who Jesus is and what He said He would do. Our instinct may be to run away from the resurrection. But, just as death wasn't the end of Jesus, so it won't be the end of us (Mark 16:7)—you will see the resurrected Jesus (Acts 17:31).
- The resurrection guarantees that one day we will all be raised physically from the dead. And Jesus will be our Judge on that day. The question is will we be ready? Peter certainly wasn't (Mark 14:72), but in Mark 16:7, Jesus' message to Peter (through the man in the white robe in the empty tomb) was one of specific and individual hope in Jesus' forgiveness. The friends would be reunited!
- From Mark's gospel, we've come to know that we really are sinners. But we also know for certain that Christ died and rose again for sinners. Jesus died to pay for sin and rose from death to prove that sin was truly paid for. If we put our trust in Jesus, all of our sin will be fully and finally forgiven. Then, we can know what awaits us beyond death—a real, physical resurrection of our body and a reunion with our Savior, Jesus.
- Because of the resurrection, we can trust Jesus with our own death. Are we ready to meet Him?

## DISCUSS

- *Was there something in particular that stood out or stuck you from the DVD?*
- *"For God has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the Man He has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). What's your reaction to this?* Some don't believe that they deserve judgment or think they will be judged as "good" and thereby demonstrate that they haven't yet understood the seriousness of sin. Others are worried that they will "fail" the judgment, for they understand their true heart problem, but need to remember that Jesus' death and resurrection proves that their sin, however serious, can be forgiven. Judgment is not a fearful thing for those whose trust is in the Judge.

Every prediction Jesus made in Mark 8:31 came true. Is it unreasonable to believe that His prediction in verse 38 will also come true? Furthermore, His return is logical—having conquered sin and death, He will not leave the world in its sinful struggle forever.

- *Do you believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Why or why not?*

## FOLLOW-UP

Sometime during this next week, I encourage you to read through Mark 11:1-13:37 and answer the 7 questions that are in your notes.