

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

Jesus' resurrection restores our lost humanity.

SCRIPTURE

John 20:15-17, Hebrews 2:14-15, Romans 5:15-19

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

- 1 There are so many ideas in Romans 5 that Eugene Peterson draws out in the Message. Don't worry about nailing down all the concepts. Allow the group to experience the hope that often got Paul excited when he wrote to the church in Rome.
2. Easter Sunday is about hope. Jesus brought the whole world with him when he came out of the grave on Easter. It's not just about individuals getting right with God; Easter is about God putting everything right. The New Testament tells us that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is now at work in the church so that through our mission, we are partners with God in restoring God's dream for the world.
3. The Bible passages in John and Romans 5 are a reversal of the Garden of Eden story. Adam and Eve are the gardeners, but because they reach for wisdom apart from God's goodness, they suffer the consequences of the grave. In the New Testament, we see that the resurrection of Jesus has launched a new creation where Jesus is the gardener calling us out of the grave into the garden to walk with him in the cool of the day. John and Paul pull out all of those themes in their narratives and letters.
4. The story of Adam and Eve is the story of everyone who has ever lived. Through our unfaithfulness, we break the world around us. Yet, the faithfulness of Jesus paves the way for us to come out of the grave into the garden.
5. The last two questions will be a strong challenge for people to think about how they can take the next step in their relationship with Jesus and how the group can work together to live out the way of Jesus. Be encouraging and supportive of those who share. You might need to model this by going first as the leader.
6. Spend the last part of your group praying for one another. Depending on how vulnerable your group gets, you might spend time praying over each person in the group. We don't need to manufacture a sense of hope; we can invite the Holy Spirit to come and minister to each person.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized? communitychristian.org/baptism
4. Who have you been able to B.L.E.S.S.?