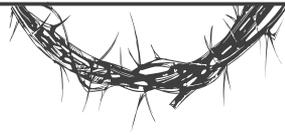




# EASTER



April 3-5, 2015 – Bob Merritt

**1 Corinthians 15:17, 20**

If Christ has not been raised, then our faith is useless and we are dead in our sins. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.

**Acts 4:20**

We can't help speak about what we have seen and heard.

**John 20:1-2**

Early, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Peter and John and said, "They've taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they've put him!" Both were running but John outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Peter arrived, went into the tomb and saw the linen lying there as well as the burial cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head.

**John 20:8**

He saw and believed.

**John 20:11, 15**

Mary stood outside the tomb crying. "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you're looking for?" "Sir if you've carried him away please tell me where you've put him and I'll go get him."

**John 20:25-28**

"We have seen the Lord!" And Thomas said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, and put my finger where the nails were, and touch his side, I will not believe." Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them, and he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out and touch my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God."

**John 20:30-31**

Jesus did many other miraculous signs, but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

**Additional scripture: Isaiah 53:5-6, John 11:25**

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# Discussion Guide

2,000 years ago, people witnessed Jesus' resurrection, and since then millions of people have put their faith in Jesus. He's changed their lives, forgiven their sins and given them hope for life after death. Belief in Jesus matters because through his sacrifice on the cross, we can be forgiven and have eternal life.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. John, Mary and Thomas were three of Jesus' closest followers. What did it take for them to believe? John saw and believed. Mary heard Jesus say her name. Thomas needed hard evidence. Who are you most like and why?
2. Think of a time that you wish you would have acted or spoke differently. Share how that one decision impacted your life or the life of a friend or family member. How can you be proactive in the future to make God-honoring decisions?
3. Even though many of our regrets in life are irreversible, they are forgivable. Read **Luke 23:34**. Jesus forgave those who crucified him on the cross, and he offers forgiveness to us when we turn to him. Why can forgiving others be so difficult? Why can forgiving ourselves be difficult? How can Jesus' example help us forgive?
4. Read **John 5:24**. The Bible says that death is our final enemy and nobody escapes it. But Jesus did. His resurrection matters because death was defeated and now we have hope. How can you share this hope with other people in your life?

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Share how God has given you hope on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using **#EBCEASTER**.

## COMMIT TO MEMORY

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying." **John 11:25**