



The Curious Rise of Jesus' Movement Luke 23:44-24:12

study questions

Use these questions in your community group time to dig deeper and discover how you can apply today's message to everyday life.



INTRODUCTION

It's a curious thing, Christianity. Unlike any other movement or cultural paradigm shift in history, it starts with the death of its leader who himself was such an integral part of the movement that there was no one left who could take up the charge when he was gone. It should have died right there with him -- that is, until something happened.

Just "what happened?" is life's most important question, if what the New Testament writers say is true. Ignoring it is to answer the question by default because, this historical event that is so powerful, world changing, and history altering, has a personal side. If it's real, it changes everything.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your general sense of what it means to be a Christian today? How do most people view Jesus? How do you think Christians viewed by most people?
2. Talk about a time when God surprised you by not doing what you hoped he would. How did that impact your faith? Does that help you interpret Jesus' crucifixion and burial in terms of what his followers saw?
3. **Read Luke 23:44 – 24:12 together -Try to put yourself in the story, as if you didn't know what comes next.**
 - a. Luke later tells of Jesus appearing to the disciples all together, but why do you think he leaves them hanging here?
 - b. What evidence were these folks *not* considering and why weren't they?
 - c. If you were writing the story, would you include all the skepticism and unbelief? Why do you suppose Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John do?
4. During the message, Dwain said, Jesus' followers reengaged because of someone they saw: Jesus. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
 - a. Why would God choose to do it this way? [Note: God's approach is overt (visual), but He could have avoided all the doubt and wondering if Jesus had established His earthly kingdom right then and there. Or did he actually do that to but in the most unsuspected way?]
5. Read together what Peter said a few weeks later when asked what this all meant – Acts 2:38-39. What was the point of the whole event, according to Peter?
 - a. What does the forgiveness Jesus offers by dying and rising mean to you?
 - b. In light of Jesus' resurrection, when you think of Jesus' statement, "I Am the resurrection and the life," what's your first thought after that?
6. How can this group help you and support you as you take a next step in the new life Jesus offers you because *He's alive*?

MOVING FORWARD

The resurrection of Jesus is so world altering that it is the reason one third of the world calls themselves *Christians*, and is even the reason for culture's moral compass for over 2000 years. Yet the "Jesus event" is so all consuming that, through it, he puts claim to our individual and personal lives. The first step in responding to his offer of a new life is to acknowledge that it happened, ask to receive that forgiveness, and tell him you want to be his follower too.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

"The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:39 – Peter, an eyewitness

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