

## Easter 2021.

### Scripture and Background Information for April 04-April 10.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

Last week, we celebrated Easter, the primary holiday for believers. Christ died for all the world so that everyone who believes in him can have eternal life. Today, we will look at **John 20:19-29**, the account of Jesus encountering his disciples for the first time after his resurrection.

#### **Background for John 20:19-29:**

Today, we celebrate Easter as a holiday of resurrection; the disciples experienced the first Easter in a totally different way. After the crucifixion, the disciples were scared and hid in a room, fearing the leaders would persecute them too.

The disciples had spent the last few years with Jesus. They experienced Him as the best person they had ever known, a teacher and friend. The disciples thought that Jesus would become an earthly king and rule while having them on His side (Matthew 20:20-23; Luke 22:23-26). The story ended totally different than expected. Jesus was captured, tortured, and crucified. The disciples were scared, ran off, and hid from the leaders.

Our text deals with the disciples hiding from the leaders. While they were hiding, Jesus encountered them in the closed room. The risen Christ changed the ending of the story. Note, the disciples believed that Jesus was dead, His appearance totally changed their lives. Their lives changed from grief to joy, from fear to courage, from doubts and disappointments to hope.

Some questions to engage with the text:

1. When Jesus encountered the disciples for the first time, who was not there? Why was he not there?
2. What made the difference in the disciples' lives? Remember, Jesus told them that he would leave them soon again. Their circumstances were not fixed immediately on Easter, but their stories were, why?
3. How does the Easter story change our story??

*Remember: Christ's resurrection is the hope of our life! His resurrection means that our story's worst things don't ever have to get the last word! Resurrection power can change our lives so that we can live with joy, courage, and hope.*