



How do we handle life the week after the party? What do we do when the celebration is over? Especially if, for some reason, we missed it. The power and majesty of Resurrection Sunday does not describe my usual experience. Most days just aren't like that. If the weight of the world has replaced joyous hope in your life, then trust me: you are not alone. And, in the wake of the happiest event in the history of the world, three followers of Jesus share your story. But it won't be theirs for long. And, if you are willing to accept the good news, it won't be yours for long either.

These questions are intended to deepen your experience of the message. Use them for your personal or family study time, or with an open Bible as you share the good news with your neighbor.

Group Ice-Breakers:

(1) What does it feel like when you missed a major party or event?

(2) Describe the mood AFTER a major party (the clean-up after Thanksgiving dinner; the feeling after all the kids go back home after a Christmas gathering).

AFTER. Most days are not "mountain-top" spiritual highs. Our lives are more like roller coasters, with periods in the low valleys. Share how this reality affects you. Do you feel afraid/ashamed to acknowledge this?

THREE STORIES.

Cleopas on the Road to Emmaus. Read **Luke 24:13-35**. Read those words: "we had hoped." Why is Cleopas so down? Discuss the setting of this story. How can you relate to Cleopas and his companion?

Thomas inside the Locked Room. Read **Luke 24:36-42 & John 20:19-28**. Thomas is often called "doubting" Thomas. But he simply wants the same proof of life all his companions already have. Do you ever feel like that? How can you relate to Thomas?

Peter on the Shore of Lake Galilee. Read **John 21:1-14**. Peter is fresh off a humiliating experience. Have you ever had one of those? Discuss what feeling humiliated does to you. How can you relate to Peter?

CHRIST CARES ABOUT OUR DOUBTS. How is it comforting to know that Christians doubt? How is it comforting to know that Christ cares about us, even in our doubts? How does Christ respond to our doubts?

CHRIST REVEALS HIMSELF TO TROUBLED HEARTS. When we feel uncertain, afraid, and alone, how does God make himself known to us? Discuss how God shows up when we need Him most.

THE REVELATION OF CHRIST FOREVER SHAPES OUR PERSPECTIVE. Jesus doesn't erase our past as much as he reframes our past. How has this been true in your life?

GOD WANTS US TO DISCOVER HIM IN COMMUNITY. How does gathering a church and sharing communion allow us to meet/see the Lord? How does showing love and living as part of the body of Christ allow us to meet/see the Lord? Discuss.