

# A Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Ministry Resource

## Easter Life: Experiencing Christ 6-Week Bible Discussion

From: Second Baptist Church, Liberty, Mo.



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# Easter Life: Experiencing Christ in New Life

## Words for Easter

The English word “Easter” is connected to the word for “dawn” and a pagan goddess named Eostre. In Latin/Greek languages, Easter is called “Pascha,” which refers to the Jewish festival of Passover. (Find out more on Wikipedia)

- Which metaphor do you prefer?
  - Dawn (light, new day)
  - Passover (spared from death, mercy)
  - Exodus (freedom, journey)

## Cross people or Resurrection people?

- Which is more important to the Christian faith: Jesus’ death or Jesus’ resurrection?
- Most churches’ central symbol is the cross. In a graphic/icon/image, how would a church represent the resurrection?

## Read Roman 6:1-14

- List the most important words connected to/associated with the cross
- List the most important words connected to/associated with resurrection
- Which words are most important to you?

## Metaphors for Following Christ

- If the cross is characterized by obedience and suffering, what is the resurrection life characterized by?

Romans 6 points to the resurrection as a means to and metaphor for new life. Adapt these cross-related phrases/songs for post-resurrection life:

- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross -> \_\_\_\_\_
- The Old Rugged Cross -> \_\_\_\_\_
- Take up your cross daily and follow me. -> \_\_\_\_\_

## Easter Life: Experiencing Christ in What We Hear

### Read 1 John 1:1-4:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our (your) joy complete.

Living into the reality of the resurrection was a challenge for the first disciples. As it is for us.

- In this passage, which words suggest ways we can experience Christ.
- Which word/sense resonates with you most?
- In our modern culture, what is the best medium to share about Christ?
- In our modern culture, what is the best medium to share Christ?
- What's the difference?

### “Which we have heard”

- Has anyone ever told you a story you didn't believe without some convincing?
- For you, what affects believability more: a story's details or a story's teller?

### Read Luke 24:9-27

- During a second reading, list all the occurrences of “hearing.”
- Why weren't the women believed?
- The two are “kept from recognizing him.” Why?
- The disciples call Jesus “a prophet.” Have they changed their expectations, lost their faith, or misunderstood?
- In v. 27, Jesus explains everything. Why didn't he do that 3 years before?

### Written Word and Living Word

- Does Christ's resurrection change where/when/how we hear the words of God?
- Have you ever heard God's words from an unexpected/surprising source?
- Besides the Bible, what is your go-to source for inspiration and encouragement?

# Easter Life: Experiencing Christ in What We See

## **Read 1 John 1:1-4:**

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our (your) joy complete.

- Think of your daily routine. What part could you do with your eyes closed?
- How does familiarity affect how you see or fail to see something?

## **“Which we have seen with our eyes”**

- What do you think would have happened if the disciples had never seen Jesus after the resurrection?
- Does the sense of sight play a major role in your faith?

## **Read Luke 24:28-35**

Jesus is finally recognized upon breaking the bread.

- How does sharing a meal help to see Christ better? Is there something “magical” about the bread or was God just being dramatic?
- Think of ways this experience is similar/different from Luke 22:19: “And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

## **Read John 21:1-14**

A simple meal again plays a role in recognizing Jesus.

- How does sharing a meal help us to see other people better?
- The focus of this meal (and passage) is fish, not bread. What are some possible reasons for this?
- How does sharing our vocation with Christ change everyday life?

## **Bread and fish for today**

Sharing meals and sharing work are common paths to human connection.

- How can you use these experiences to see Christ and see others this week?

## Easter Life: Experiencing Christ in What We Touch

### **Read 1 John 1:1-4:**

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our (your) joy complete.

### **Faith?**

Previously, we discussed the importance of eyewitness accounts of Jesus' resurrection.

- How does our cultural reliance on “evidence” compare to the biblical definition of faith found in Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”?
- How does past experience affect your confidence in someone?

### **“Which...our hands have touched”**

- Think of an experience in your life that was enhanced/changed by the sense of touch. (Example: lamb's wool, stinging nettle)
- If the phrase “and our hands have touched” was omitted from the above passage, how would this change the message?

### **Read John 20:24-31**

This is a well-known passage, and Thomas' words have become emblematic of an enlightenment/modern worldview.

- Is your reaction to the resurrection like Thomas' or different? How?
- Is “life in his name” a good summary of your Christian experience?

## Rubric for spiritual growth?

909

**May 1st Sunday**  
**MY REGULAR OFFERING FOR THE**  
**UNIFIED BUDGET OF MY CHURCH**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
If used in Sunday School fill in spaces below.

Visits \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Calls \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other Contacts \_\_\_\_\_

Present 20%	On Time 10%	Bible 10%	Offering 10%	Lesson 30%	Preaching 20%	TOTAL GRADE

Total Contacts \_\_\_\_\_  
Class \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept. \_\_\_\_\_

- What is being measured/evaluated with this Sunday School envelope?
- Replace the categories and percentages at the bottom with your own ideas.

# Easter Life: Experiencing Christ in What We Say

## Read 1 John 1:1-4:

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## The ability to speak

Can't see = \_\_\_\_\_. Can't hear = \_\_\_\_\_. Can't speak = \_\_\_\_\_.  
Can't taste = \_\_\_\_\_. Can't feel = \_\_\_\_\_. Can't smell = \_\_\_\_\_.

- Which ability would you rather be without?
- Why isn't speaking classified as one of the senses?

## "Testify...and proclaim"

- Name something you'd be willing to testify to and something you'd be willing to proclaim.
- What's the difference between these two ideas?
- What kinds of experiences/knowledge are you least likely to proclaim?

## Read Mark 16

Mark's resurrection story isn't read very often in church.

- What elements make this version of the resurrection more difficult to proclaim?

In this story, fear is a big factor in not testifying/proclaiming.

- How does fear affect your willingness to proclaim Jesus' resurrection?
- What other emotions affect your proclamation?

## Telling the story

- Do you think testimony and proclamation are important to belief?  
What happens to faith if we stop telling the story?  
What happens to faith if you tell it more?
- What other kinds of responses help to make Christ real?

Testimony and proclamation seem to involve intentionality.

- Does our church have a plan for proclamation? Should we?
- As an individual, do you have a plan for testifying and proclaiming?  
Sketch out some steps.

# Easter Life: Experiencing Christ in Fellowship

## **Read 1 John 1:1-4:**

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our (your) joy complete.

## **Fellowship**

- Outside of a church setting, when is the last time you experienced “fellowship?”
- Does it surprise you that fellowship is the purpose of their proclamation (rather than forgiveness, salvation, etc.)?
- What is the difference between fellowship and salvation?
- How do joy and fellowship connect?

## **Read Luke 24:33-53**

- Why do you think the disciples are continuing to stay together?
- If Jesus had not risen or appeared, how long do you think their group would have lasted?
- Is there a difference between gathering together and fellowship?

## **The Not-As-Great Commission**

“Repentance and forgiveness of sins” is the focus of the proclamation in Luke.

- What’s your initial reaction to these ideas?
- How do these ideas relate to fellowship and joy?

## **Joy**

Joy is mentioned specifically a couple of times in this passage.

- What causes the disciples’ joy?
- How long do you think this joy lasted? Why?

Since Christ is alive, it is also possible for us to have this sort of joyful experience.

**This week, meditate on one thing that Christ’s being alive makes possible for you.**