TLC Study Guide for Easter Sunday 2016

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: Christ is Risen! This is incredibly good news for us today, because it means that God indeed has a plan to overcome sin, death, and the devil, and redeem our world. That makes Christians “good news people” who get to live in Christ’s victory and proclaim it to the world. The troubles of sin and death are still a reality in our daily life, but with Jesus’ victory we can overcome them and live with the joy of life in Christ.

Getting Started:

1. What are your top favorite Easter songs?

2. What are your God-sightings from Holy Week and Easter Weekend? How did you see God working either in your own life or the lives of friends/family members? (you can spend some considerable time here on this question – it’s a good one!)

In the Word: Read John 20:1-9

3. The four Gospel accounts of Jesus’ resurrection each give their own eyewitness details, and no two are identical. This gives credibility to the accounts, as they are from four independent sources, rather than from only one testimony. From what you know about the other Gospels (Matthew 28, Mark 16, and Luke 24), what/who does John leave out of his Easter account, and what/who does John bring in that the other Gospels do not?

4. Mary Magdalene (and possibly the other women who went with her) left while it was still dark, early in the morning. After the 20-30 minute walk to the tomb, the sunrise had begun, and it must have been light enough to find the tomb, and see that the stone had been rolled away. What did she first assume when she saw the stone rolled away? (verse 2)

5. Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved (John) are the first disciples to then run to the tomb. There are several details in verses 3-9 that bear the hallmarks of an eye witness account. They do not have any bearing to the story, but simply describe “how it actually happened.” What details do you notice in these verses that serve no other purpose other than to describe “how it actually happened”?

6. Verses 8 & 9 describe a progression of the disciples’ understanding and interpretation of what they saw. Verse 8 says that John “believe,” but verse 9 says that they did not yet “understand from Scripture.” What do you think these two verses are trying to say?
Read John 20:10-18

7. Verse 10 picks up where the other Gospels begin, with Mary Magdalene (and probably the other women who were with her) standing outside the tomb baffled by the opened entrance, and then seeing two angels who speak to her. They ask the question, “Why are you crying?” Why do you think Mary was crying?

8. Why do you think Mary did not recognize Jesus in verse 14?

9. Mary must have been holding tight to Jesus and never intending to let him go. Jesus tells her that he must tell the brothers (the disciples) that He must return to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God. God is the Father of Christ as he is our heavenly Father, but not exactly in the same way. How is it the same, and how is God the Father different with Jesus than with us?

Putting the Pieces Together

10. This all happened very early on the first day of the week. How does the message of Jesus’ resurrection usher in a new day, a new dawn, and a new era for all of humanity?

11. Read 1 Corinthians 15:14-23. How important is the Resurrection of Jesus to the Christian Message?

12. What is the implication of Jesus’ Resurrection for believers today in 1 Corinthians 15:22?

13. How does Jesus’ Resurrection give YOU hope?

Prayer: Pray giving thanks to God for the HOPE that we have in Jesus’ resurrection and our resurrection to eternal life. Give thanks for the God-sightings you listed above in #2, and ask God to continue to work through us and in us. Ask God to be with those who are struggling, hurting, and in need of Easter hope. Ask for prayer requests from your group before you begin.

Next Week: Jesus not only appeared to the women outside the tomb, but he appeared to his disciples personally – and a number of times at that! Each one gave them an important insight into who Jesus was. It finally sinks in completely for Thomas, who proclaims Jesus to be “my Lord and my God!”