

Message-based Study

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Connection

What is something you do that makes you feel alive and gives you life back?

Cheer and Challenge

- How did it go living out your "I will..." statement from last week? Share your experience.
- Tell about any experiences you had this week following through on the B.L.E.S.S. challenge.

Content

***"Life" is greater than the physical; we were created for more.
The Biblical idea of "life" comes mysteriously close to "hope."***

1. HOPE LOST

Read Luke 23:48-49. As a handful of Jesus' followers watched Him breathe His last on the cross, they felt a stab of pain and humiliation that said, "You put your hope in Jesus and now He is dead." Can you relate to this emotion? Have you put your hope in something in the past or in the present, only to have that hope dashed to pieces?

The disappointment and heartbreak that Jesus' followers felt at the foot of the cross was compounded by what they found at the tomb three days later. Read Luke 24:2-3. What do you think they felt at that moment?

Verses 4-5 explain that the women were **puzzled** and **terrified**. That's how we feel when hope is lost.

2. HOPE RISING

No matter what your life looks like, with God there is always hope! Read Luke 24:4-8. Light was suddenly shed on their circumstances when "they remembered what He told them." Read the verses below slowly, reflecting on how the things Jesus had predicted earlier had actually unfolded in His life:

"The Son of Man must suffer many terrible things...He will be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He will be killed, but on the third day He will be raised from the dead." (Luke 9:22)

"He will be handed over to the Romans, and He will be mocked, treated shamefully, and spit upon. They will flog Him with a whip and kill Him, but on the third day He will rise again." (Luke 18:32-33)

What had they forgotten that they remembered as they stood by the empty tomb? (Circle in verses above)

Read Luke 24:8-12. The women **remembered and believe**. The men think the story **sounds like nonsense**. But Peter has a “however” moment and goes to the tomb to look for himself. His investigation leaves him **wondering**. Have you ever experienced a “however” moment? A place where you might say, “This is going on, however, I think something supernatural is happening”? If so, describe it here.

3. HOPE RESTORED

Jesus doesn't want them to miss what has happened, so He engages two of the disciples as they're walking along a road. Read Luke 24:13-34. Imagine this conversation! What part of it would you have loved to hear?

These two disciples were deeply impacted by this experience. Their **eyes were opened** and their **hearts burned within them**. As the two men are relaying this story to some others, Jesus appears in their midst and **opened their minds to understand**. Read Luke 24:35-46. Jesus showed up in their circumstance and said “Peace be with you, do not fear.” Where in your life do you need Jesus to show up and say “Peace be with you, do not fear”?

4. HOPE ALIVE!

Because Jesus is alive, our hope is alive! Everything changed for the disciples when they went from thinking their Messiah was dead to realizing He was alive. Take a moment in prayer and ask God to help you grasp the fact that Jesus is alive and how this brings hope into the troubling situation you noted in question #3.

Commitment

When faced with the resurrection of Jesus, people responded in various ways. Go back through today's lesson and look for the words in **bold** which describe the people's responses. List them here:

Which of the above are you experiencing as you consider Jesus' life? (Circle) Are there any you listed that you'd like to experience? (Put a star by) What will you do to move in that direction?

I will _____.



Begin with prayer. Listen with care. Eat / Engage with another. Serve. Share your story.

As you talk with others, **listen with care** to discern what their response to Jesus has been. Who is a friend you'd like to have spiritual conversations with? _____ Look over the list you made in the Commitment section above and list any words that describe where you think this person currently is in their thinking about Jesus: