

AFTERLIFE

APRIL 21, 2021

Week 3 of a 4-week series
about Easter

BOTTOM LINE

Because of the resurrection,
Peter knew he was forgiven.

SCRIPTURE

*A third time he asked
him, "Simon son of John, do
you love me?"*

*Peter was hurt that Jesus
asked the question a third
time. He said, "Lord, you know
everything. You know that I
love you."*

*Jesus said, "Then feed my
sheep."*

- John 21:17 NLT

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To point students toward
the forgiveness they
can find in Jesus and
to encourage them to
accept that forgiveness for
themselves.

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Don't be afraid to sit in the silence! Sometimes we tend to rush past the pause in conversation, but remember that the pause can mean a lot of different things. For some students, it may mean they've checked out or stopped engaging. But for other students, it may mean they're processing the information and thinking about what it means to them. That's when a pause in conversation can be helpful! After all, we want students to really think about what they feel and are experiencing rather than blindly accept what we tell them they're supposed to feel or experience. Giving them a moment to sit in silence and process allows them to do just that! As they ponder forgiveness this week, keep in mind that some of your group members may be dealing with major hurts or wrongs that have been done to them. Follow up with any students who open up about something that may need further attention or intervention.

>> DURING GROUP

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DISCUSS THIS:

- How do you tend to react when you feel guilty about something? (Hide, blame somebody else, make up excuses, etc.)
- Share a story about a time you did one of the things discussed above.
- Think about a time that someone forgave you for something. How did their forgiveness make you feel?
- Think about a time that you forgave someone else for something. How did forgiving them make you feel?
- Which one is more difficult for you: to give forgiveness or receive forgiveness? Why?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how easy is it to believe that Jesus forgives you?
- Does knowing you're forgiven change anything for you?
- What's one thing that keeps you from feeling like God forgives you? Or, what's one thing that keeps you from thinking you can connect with God?
- This week, what's one step you can take toward connecting with God?
- During the past three weeks we have learned about three people who encountered Jesus after his resurrection: John, Mary, and Peter. Which story was your favorite? Which of the characters was easiest to relate to? Why?

STUMMIN

SMALL GROUP
LEADER GUIDE

HIGH
SCHOOL
FOCUS

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>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: During small group this week, students might express things they feel guilty for. It is important that your reaction points them toward grace, not shame.

>> DURING GROUP

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed and ask thoughtful follow-up questions as the conversation unfolds. Don't feel like you need to answer every question.

DISCUSS THIS:

- What is something you got in trouble for as a little kid?
- Share an example from a movie, book, or Bible story where you saw the main character change after doing something wrong.
- What is your typical reaction when you feel guilty? (Place blame, hide, deny, etc.)
[Leader note: this is not a time to coach your group or correct what may be unhealthy ways of dealing with guilt. This is a time for them to attempt to identify their own style of dealing with guilt.]
- Read John 18:15-27. After reading this, how do you think Peter felt seeing Jesus face-to-face after the resurrection?
- Read 1 Peter 4:8. Years after Peter denied Jesus and then was forgiven by Jesus, Peter wrote this letter to his friends. How does knowing Peter's story change the way you read this verse?
- Knowing how Jesus responded to Peter after he denied knowing Him, what do you think Jesus would say to a high-schooler who has done something wrong? Is it easy or difficult to believe that's what Jesus would say to you?
- Think about a time or an area of your life where you have felt guilt. [Leader note: Give students time to identify the guilt in their own mind, but do not require them to share it with the group.]
 - ◇ Who is one person you could share that with who would encourage you and remind you of God's grace for you?
 - ◇ What characteristics does this person have that makes them feel like a safe choice?
- Do you feel like our small group is a place where you can confess mistakes and be encouraged when you feel guilty? Why or why not?
- What are some things we can do as a group to make our small group a safer place to have deep and honest conversations?
- How would your life change if you actually believed that God forgave you for what you've done, and you didn't have to carry your guilt anymore?