



EASTER
devotional guide
FOR FAMILIES



a matter of death and life

Most years, if you were to ask the average person in our culture what Easter is about, you may hear them say something about Jesus. But most people tend to associate Easter with things like: the start of spring, the Easter bunny, candy, eggs, egg hunts, and pastel colored dresses. These things may seem cute or pleasant, but they are trite. They are small.

With our world in the state the it currently is in, more than ever, it is vital that we teach our children that “Easter” is actually about something of infinite, eternal significance. It is about the death and resurrection of Jesus, the central point of all human history. It is about the Son of God dying on the cross in our place, being laid in a tomb, and then miraculously and undeniably being raised from the dead. It’s a story—a true story—that has changed the world, and that we can be part of.

It’s a matter of life and death—or rather, death and life.

So, we’ve created a tool to help you and those in your home think about Easter in the right way—to focus on the **death** and **resurrection** of Christ—the two weeks leading up to that high day of the year, Resurrection Sunday.

You can choose to do the readings however you’d like, but we would encourage you to skim the material in advance, especially the activities that are listed, so that you can make appropriate preparations to begin the week of March 30 and end on Resurrection Sunday (April 12)

Also, though the Scriptures are included the booklet itself (in ESV), we would encourage you, especially those of you with older children, to open up your Bibles and read the text together. We pray that this tool will be an encouragement to those in your home as you reflect on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus together.

Amidst the great suffering in our world, we wish you a blessed Easter season!

-CCC Pastors and Staff

Week ONE

A Matter of Death: We'd encourage you to use the readings below to generate thought and discussion in your home about: a) why human beings die *in general*, and b) why Jesus had to die *specifically*. Use your discretion, of course, as you talk with your children about these things. We don't want to think about death in order to be morbid, but rather to help them see the seriousness of our predicament and the extent to which our Savior went in order to reconcile us to God!

This upcoming Sunday, we'll preach from Isaiah 53:1-9. Thus, a few of the readings are from there.



READING 1 >> Genesis 2:15-17

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

QUESTIONS >>

- What did God say would be the consequence for disobeying Him?
- Why do you think that God took sin so seriously?



READING 2 >> Isaiah 53:1-4

¹ Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

QUESTIONS >>

- The prophet Isaiah was predicting things that would be true about Jesus long before He was ever born. What did Isaiah say about how Jesus would look physically? (Hint: Look at verse 2)
- How did Isaiah say that people would treat Jesus when He came? (Hint: Look at verses 3 and 4).



READING 3 >> Isaiah 53:5-7

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned-every one-to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

QUESTIONS >>

- Whose sins was Jesus punished for on the cross? (Hint: Look at verse 5.)
- We often complain when a parent or teacher tells us to do something difficult. But when Jesus was told by God the Father to suffer on the cross, how did He respond? (Hint: Look at verse 7.)



READING 4 >> Luke 23:39-47

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!"⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."⁴² And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."⁴³ And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour,⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!"

QUESTIONS >>

- The centurion and the second criminal both realized the same thing about Jesus as He was dying on the cross. What did they both realize? (Hint: Look at verses 41 and 47)
- If humans die because of sin (remember Reading #1!), and if Jesus hadn't sinned, why did He have to die?

Week TWO

A Matter of Life: This week as we approach Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday, we'd encourage you to use the following readings to prompt discussion about: a) the factual truth of the resurrection, and b) the hope that it provides us!

This upcoming Sunday, we'll preach from Isaiah 53:10-12. But we've included a few additional readings from the Gospels about the Resurrection.



READING 1 >> Isaiah 53:10-12

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

QUESTIONS >>

- Most people think that when Jesus died on the cross, it was the soldiers who killed Him. But who does Isaiah say would be the one that crushed Jesus?
- Even after talking about Jesus dying, Isaiah talks about Jesus receiving rewards and representing us before God! How could a dead person do things as if he was alive?!
 - Share how amazing it is that there were hints in Isaiah, 700 years before Jesus would come, that Jesus would not only die for us, but be resurrected for us! God had planned this all along.



READING 2 >> Luke 24:1-12

¹ But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" ⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."⁸ And they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

(Continued on the next page)

QUESTIONS >>

- Jesus had been buried in a tomb nearby the cross on Friday. But when His friends went to the tomb on Sunday morning, what did they find?
- Who were the two men “in dazzling apparel?” What did they tell Jesus’ friends who were looking for Him?



READING 3 >> Luke 24:36-43

³⁶ As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.³⁸ And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

QUESTIONS >>

- Jesus’ disciples were gathered together and had *heard* that Jesus was alive, but they hadn’t *seen* Him yet! When He finally showed up among them, they seemed to have a hard time believing He was really there. Why do you think it was so hard for them to believe?
- How did Jesus show them that it really was Him—that He really was alive?



READING 4 >> Luke 24:44-49

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,⁴⁶ and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

QUESTIONS >>

- Jesus told His disciples that they were to now become “witnesses.” What is a witness? And what were they supposed to be a witness to?
- Jesus said that people all over the world needed to hear about His death and resurrection, and that they could be forgiven of their sins if they repent (see v. 47). What does it mean to repent?

SONGS

On these two pages, we have the lyrics of a few songs that you could sing together as a family! Don't feel like you need to be the Von Trapp family from *The Sound of Music*. Just give it a try, and show your kids what's worth singing about!

How Deep the Father's Love For Us

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom.



You can listen to these songs and others by going to our Easter 2020 playlist at <https://sptfy.com/9348>

In Christ Alone

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

to sing

Living Hope

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation, I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness, Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished, the end is written
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken, I am forgiven
The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Savior, I'm Yours forever
Jesus Christ, my living hope

CHORUS:

Hallelujah, praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah, death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ, my living hope

Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
Jesus, Yours is the victory!

See What a Morning

See, what a morning, gloriously bright,
With the dawning of hope in Jerusalem;
Folded the grave-clothes, tomb filled with light,
As the angels announce, "Christ is risen!"
See God's salvation plan,
Wrought in love, borne in pain, paid in sacrifice,
Fulfilled in Christ, the Man,
For He lives: Christ is risen from the dead!

See Mary weeping, "Where is He laid?"
As in sorrow she turns from the empty tomb;
Hears a voice speaking, calling her name;
It's the Master, the Lord raised to life again!
The voice that spans the years,
Speaking life, stirring hope, bringing peace to us,
Will sound till He appears,
For He lives: Christ is risen from the dead!

One with the Father, Ancient of Days,
Through the Spirit who clothes faith with certainty.
Honor and blessing, glory and praise
To the King crowned with pow'r and authority!
And we are raised with Him,
Death is dead, love has won, Christ has conquered;
And we shall reign with Him,
For He lives: Christ is risen from the dead!

Optional Activities

Each year, we share a list similar to the one below, with Easter-related activities that you and those in your home could potentially do together. Some may not be feasible right now with our current situation. But take a look, and decide which ones may be best for your family!

Make Easter Cards: Families often send out Christmas cards, but consider sending out Easter cards to friends and family or passing them out to neighbors (you could even include an Easter treat)! You can find homemade card ideas online, or you can buy Easter cards at the store. Include a note about the good news of Jesus' resurrection and why you love celebrating Easter. Pray together as a family for your card recipients, and then put them in the mail or pass them out!

Research a Seder Meal: A Seder meal is a Jewish feast that marks the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Passover, which generally falls during Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter Sunday). Consider researching the Seder meal and then getting together with your Life Group, friends, or family to share what you learned!

Plant Seeds: Plant some seeds in cups or pots and watch what happens over the next few weeks. Talk about how seeds have to die to bring forth new life (see John 12:24). How is this related to Easter?

(At a later date) Walk Through a Cemetery: Take a walk through a local cemetery and talk about the headstones you see. Use our Cemetery Scavenger Hunt Guide (on the next page) for ideas of what to look for. Eeeewww, you might think! A cemetery scavenger hunt? Are you serious? Yes! Believe it or not, this is a REALLY cool activity, because cemeteries are chock-full of history and present great opportunities to talk about life, death, and eternity.

Sing Together: Check out our list of songs related to the cross and resurrection earlier in this booklet to find some simple songs that your family could sing together (if you already know them) or learn together (if you don't).

Bake Hot Cross Buns: This traditional Easter sweet bun is marked on top with a cross that's either piped in icing or etched into the dough. There's no one clear explanation for why hot cross buns make their way to our table around Easter, but we're sure they'll still taste good and be a fun project!

Make Resurrection Rolls: The recipe to the right is one that you could use to provide a visual and tasty reminder that Jesus' tomb was empty. Though His body was placed in the tomb on Friday, it was not there on Sunday. As the marshmallows bake, they "disappear." They're no longer there!

Resurrection Rolls

- 1 – 10 oz. can of refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
- 8 – large marshmallows
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 2 Tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 2 Tablespoons white sugar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet. Separate crescent rolls into individual triangles. In a small bowl, mix together cinnamon and sugar. Dip a marshmallow into melted butter, then roll in sugar mixture. Place marshmallow into the center of a dough triangle. Carefully wrap the dough around the marshmallow. Pinch the seams together tightly to seal in marshmallow as it melts. Place on a baking sheet. Repeat. Bake in a preheated oven until golden brown, about 15 minutes.

CEMETERY

scavenger hunt

Can you find these items and answers at your local cemetery?

- a war veteran
- someone born in another country
- angels
- an American flag
- someone with your first name
- The letter "Z"
- a cross
- a bird (on a stone or flying by)
- someone named Mary
- a flower (real or on a stone)
- a statue
- someone who died before 1900
- a heart
- the last name Smith
- the year 1935
- the letter "Q"
- someone who lived to be over 100
- something written in another language
- someone who died before the age of 10
- a gravestone taller than you
- a passing squirrel
- someone with your last name
- a gravestone that tells a person's job
- a gravestone with only initials
- a lamb
- the word "wife"
- a gravestone of someone famous
- a sports logo
- a coin
- a Bible verse

When was the cemetery founded?

What are the three most unusual names you found?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Write out a transcription of the oldest gravestone you found.

Youngest Age Found

Oldest Age Found