



LEADER'S NOTES

Lord of the Living and the Dead

John 8:12

QUESTION 1 allows your group to discuss the resurrection of Jesus in the book of Mark. Please don't rush through this question, but let your group members to spend some time soaking in this Scripture.

QUESTION 2 reminds your group of the importance of the resurrection. Like Question 1, this question has a lengthy Scripture to discuss. You might start by telling your group how this Scripture affects you personally. Then, you might point out all the things that are affected by the resurrection of Jesus. Our preaching is useless; your faith is useless. You might mention this is an interesting point because some say their faith sustains them through all life's difficulties. Paul would say if Jesus resurrection had not happened, that it would have been a mirage, and your faith is useless. Perhaps the two most important things mentioned here are that you're still guilty of your sin and you are lost. You might mention that many people admire Jesus and feel his teaching and example are inspiring. They take the path of valuing Jesus but do not believe in his resurrection. The scripture clearly shows us that the resurrection is the central event of the Christian faith.

QUESTION 3 presents some of the evidence for the resurrection. As you begin Question 3, remind your group that they may find themselves, especially in this Easter season, conversing with friends, coworkers, or family members who do not believe in the resurrection. Examining some extra-biblical evidence supporting the biblical account can equip them to have intelligent conversations. I mentioned three things in this question that are undisputed by any expert or scholar who has studied the resurrection.

The first may not initially seem very important: the historical fact that Jesus existed. But there are still uneducated people who say, even on television, that they don't believe Jesus ever existed as a person. This is ridiculous, and I want your group members to feel equipped. That's why I include this detail.

The second is the unquestioned fact that Jesus was crucified by Pontius Pilot, most certainly in the same timeframe the Bible reports. This is excellent evidence that the biblical account is accurate and trustworthy. You also might mention that even placing a large stone in front of the tomb is historically factual; it was how they protected tombs from grave robbers. You might briefly discuss with your group how this fact strengthens any discussion that they might have with a skeptic, knowing beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jesus existed and that He was crucified.

The third fact is incredibly important. All scholars, conservatives, and skeptics alike agree the disciples believed that Jesus had risen. This is evidenced by the fact that they changed the day of worship from the Sabbath to Sunday morning because that's the morning when Jesus rose again. They abandoned animal sacrifice, something they'd been doing their entire lives, understanding that Jesus was the Lamb of God. They faced persecution and death all because they believed in the resurrection. In this part of the discussion, you might also remind your group that those who deny the resurrection claim that the disciples made it up. It is now universally accepted that because the disciples believed in the resurrection, they did not lie or make up the resurrection.

Question 4 deals with Romans 14:9. This verse explains why Jesus died and returned to life. This question may also help your group to focus on something practical and talk about Jesus being Lord. When you discuss Jesus being Lord of the dead, you may mention that for Christians, this is a victorious understanding that after you die, you come face-to-face with Jesus Christ. We can face death with courage, knowing that we enter eternal life under the protection and with the companionship of Jesus. Jesus also desires to be Lord of the living. That means He is worshiped and put first over everything in our lives. The last question asks your group members what areas they are struggling to make Him Lord. This may be a good time to discuss the importance and difficulty of daily surrender to Christ.