

Grace Downtown CG Discussion Guide

March 26-29, 2018

Matthew 28: 1-10

Series: Signs of the King

Announcements:

Holy Week: The Grace DC network will honor the life, death, and resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ through these Holy Week services. Consider inviting a friend!

Maundy Thursday, **March 29**, 7:00 pm. Grace Meridian Hill, 810 Shepherd St NW

Good Friday, **March 30**, 12:00 pm. Calvary Baptist, 755 8th St NW. (Yes, at Calvary!)

Easter Sunday, **April 1**, 5:00 pm. Chinese Community Church, 500 I St NW.

Kingdom Prayer: The prayer team is hosting a **monthly** prayer the first Sunday of each month at 4pm. The next gathering will be **April 1**. Location: Classroom in the fellowship hall at Chinese Community Church. All are welcome and invited to pray for our church and our city.

Introduction to Grace Downtown: At this seminar, you'll hear from our pastors and other ministry leaders on the vision and core values of our church. Open to all. Required for church membership. Lunch, snacks, and refreshments will be served. **Sat April 7**, 9:00 am- 3:00 pm. Church office, 637 Indiana Ave NW, Suite 300.

CG Education Curriculum: Community groups will start a 10-week education curriculum the week following Easter. We will explore theology proper, presbyterianism, and topics of our day. The purpose is to generate healthy discussion and to guide each other in understanding a biblical perspective on these topics. Your care group elders will visit at some point across the 10-week span and will also be available via email to answer lingering questions.

Introduction:

Over the last few months, we have examined the Gospel accounts of Jesus' many miracles during his earthly ministry. The sick have been healed, the forces of nature have obeyed Jesus' commands (calming the storm & the fig tree), physical elements have been multiplied and changed (water to wine, loaves and fishes) and the demon-possessed have been freed. However, all of these miracles are a prelude to the ultimate miracle of Christ – the conquering of the grave through the resurrection.

There is great debate today among theologians about whether gospel-level signs, wonders and miracles continue today or whether they were primarily intended by God to accredit the inspired scriptures and thus ceased after the original apostles died. However, if there is unity in any area of theology across orthodox churches, it is the power and centrality of the resurrection to the entire Gospel. While Jesus performed miracles throughout his ministry that brought life to those suffering around him, the resurrection is the fulfillment of God's grand plan of salvation for his people. Without the resurrection, there is no hope for the fallen world and Christ's death becomes incomplete.

Spend time tonight soaking in the richness of the miracle of Jesus' resurrection and taste anew the sweetness that Christ brings us in defeating death itself.

Read and Discuss:
Read Matthew 28: 1-10 aloud together.

1. Why do you think Mary and Mary Magdalene Mary wanted to “go see the tomb.”? Other Gospels indicate that they were going to prepare Jesus’ body with spices, but do you think they expected the resurrection or was there another reason to go and see?
2. What significance might there be in the Saturday Sabbath coming and going before Jesus’ resurrection?
3. Given the tense environment and the fear and scattering of the disciples when Jesus was arrested and ultimately crucified, what might we take from the fact that these women were the first to go to the tomb and that they were the first people Jesus appeared to?
4. Notice the physical evidence in this passage – the earthquake, an angel rolling away the stone and showing the women where Jesus had been and then Jesus appearing in bodily form to the women. What role does physical or tangible evidence play in Jesus’ resurrection and in our own faith?
5. Matthew gives more description than any other Gospel about the circumstances of that morning. An earthquake, an angel descending to roll away the stone and scare the guards and then speaking to the two Marys. Jesus’ resurrection is obviously central to the passage, but what other miracles are present?

Application:-

6. What does the resurrection mean to your life today? How should it change the way we walk through normal day-to-day things?
7. Consider what we believe – that the Son of God came in the form of a man and resurrected after death on a cross. With this in mind, what areas of our lives are we failing to see the supernatural power of God? In other words, in light of the resurrection, Matthew 19:26 (...with God, all things are possible) becomes even more alive. What are specific things that we are struggling to believe God has the power to change and impact in our lives?
8. Consider the before and after for the two Marys as they walk to the tomb. On the way there, they are full of anguish, confusion, questions and uncertainty for the future. After they come to realize that Jesus has risen, and once the weight of all that Jesus has done sinks in, they are hopeful, elated, joyful and thankful. In our life, do we walk around more like the Marys before they realized Jesus had resurrected or after?

Prayer:

...for the education of children in Washington, DC. Pray that the Lord would bless these children with the skills they need to flourish. Give thanks for educators and administrators who have been called to devote their time and energy to helping the children in our community.

...for the whole world to hear about the miracle of Easter. Give thanks for our risen Lord who has conquered death and invites us into new life! Praise the Lord, for he is holy and mighty, and by his power he will redeem his creation. Pray that Grace DC would shine with the love of a community that is set upon the firm foundation of Christ and that we would seek to welcome others into our community.

...that we use this coming Easter Sunday for a time of celebration and reflection. Confess that we do not live as if our God became man and broke the chains of death by rising from the grave. Give thanks that he continues to change our unbelieving hearts. Pray that we live transformed lives as we carry the blessing of Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection in our hearts.