



LIGHT FROM THE LECTIONARY

LEADER PAGES

Easter C

April 11, 2004

From BIBLE STUDIES BY E-MAIL

RCL Readings:

Acts 10:34-43

Ps 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Cor 15:19-26

John 20:1-18 (Luke 24:1-12)

Discussion Questions

A. Sing a Hymn

Recite together Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (which may be in the back of your hymnal). Share some information about this psalm from page 2. Then sing together the chorus, "This Is the Day," which is based on the psalm reading. Or have them select one of their favorite Easter hymns to sing.

B. Visions & Conversions

Give some background on the Acts reading. Then have someone read it out loud to the class. God spoke to Peter and Cornelius through visions and dreams. How has God spoken to them? Share a story from your own life. Encourage them to do likewise.

Peter's sermon is a summary of the Gospel. Have them study it and outline it together, that is, identify the main points. The information on page 1 will help do this. Then ask them, "If someone asked you to sum up the Gospel, what you would say?"

(Optional) Cornelius must have told the story of his own conversion many times. Perhaps you could share your story with the class or have someone ready to do so.

C. Questions from 1 Cor 15:19-26. If someone asked you what Easter means to you, what would you say?

Have you ever had your doubts about it? How did you resolve them or have you?

If you could ask Paul one question about life after death, what would it be?

If someone expressed doubts to you that Jesus really arose from the dead, how would you respond?

D. Mary's Story

Is there a woman in your church with the gift for storytelling? Ask if she would come to class and just tell the story of Mary as found in John 20:1-18. Perhaps she could even dress up as Mary, tell her story, then let the class ask her questions.

Or use the senses to tell this story. Read verse one in which Mary is walking early Easter morn to the tomb. Ask the class questions like, "What was she thinking? Feeling? What did she hear as she walked? Why was she going there? What was her first thought when she saw the stone rolled away?" Then take the other verses and do the same thing.

E. Have the group compare the account of John and Luke, noting similarities and differences.

F. Summary

The reading from Acts shows us the power that the Risen Lord and message of Easter has to change lives. In 1 Corinthians we see the importance that Easter makes for us. The psalm calls us to give thanks for this wondrous work of God. And the Gospel reading bids us, like Mary, to go and tell others, "We have seen the Lord."

To close ask them to reflect on which character they most identify this Easter. Are they Cornelius, hungering for contact with the Risen Christ? Like Peter, called to grow and share the Good News? Like Mary before Easter dawned, or like her once it had come? Like some of the people Paul was writing to or the disciples the women came to - not sure what to believe about this Easter story? Then lead them in a prayer of thanksgiving for Easter and all that it means.

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