



Easter: Evidence and Experience

Date: Sunday 4th April

Speaker: Becky Stamps

Key Verses: John 20:1-18

Talk Summary:

The gospel accounts (and other, non-Christian historical sources) provide us with good evidence for the actual, physical resurrection of Jesus. The tomb is empty, the disciples saw things that made them happy to worship, live and die for a person who came back from the dead. We also see evidence in the early Christians' experiences of Jesus, including Mary, Peter and John's (who are in the Bible passage above). Jesus wants to meet them, help them, comfort them, speak to them, be with them and change their lives for the better.

This happens today too. In Reza and Rob's stories, both men talked about how their lives had been changed by an encounter, a meeting with a God who is real and available now. When we're struggling with doubt or fear or despair, when we have concrete problems that need solving like a home, a job, a family, Jesus can come by the Holy Spirit and meet with us. The disciples are a motley collection of unusual people, not ones you might have expected to be picked out for special attention by God himself. We can feel the same - but these are exactly the people Jesus decided to meet with first. This means that he wants to meet with you too.

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?

- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? (*Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it*)

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- How easy do you find it to believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus? Be as honest as you can! (If your group is new to faith or has some people who haven't investigated this before, you could watch the Alpha week 3 talk together, or even sign up for the course as a group).
- How easy do you find it to talk about your experience of Jesus with people who don't go to church or believe in him? Why is that?
- **Special question!** Your 'testimony' (the story of how God met you and changed your life) is really powerful. Can you practise telling someone your testimony in two minutes? You could practise this in breakout rooms, or to the whole group. It's worth spending some time on this, so you could encourage people to keep practising, perhaps with some bullet-points, while thinking of the questions their friends might, or have, asked.

Witness

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- Who could you invite to the Alpha course starting 14th April? Get your group to write down 2 names each, then pray for those people together. Commit to praying for them over the next week, and see if you can encourage one another to make the invite!
 - More details at bvc.so/alpha