

Week Beginning: 28th April 2019

Worship Series: #1 in series



lifegroups
live life abundantly

living sharing growing

Theme Verse

“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”
Revelation 1:17-18

Remember This Week

Living in Christ; means there is nothing too great for God's power to handle or too insignificant for his love to embrace. It's a reality that says from beginning to end, God is in control and his powerful love is transforming everything: our past, our future and how we live right now.



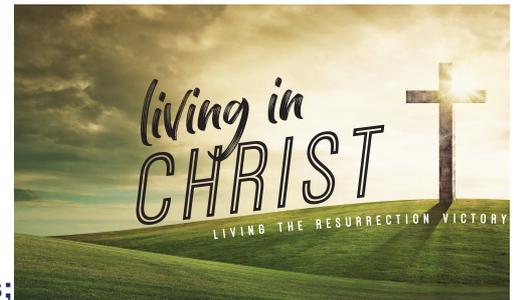
I keep my eyes always on the Lord.

With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

**Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,**

**because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will you let your faithful one see decay.**

**You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.**
Psalm 16:8-11



Risen Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and the resurrection and life for all who put their trust in you. Raise us up from the death that comes with sin, and give us the new life of faith you have won for us through your resurrection, so that we may always live to please you and remain faithful to the calling you have given to us. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen..



1. *Share your highs and lows since you last met with one another.*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *What's the scariest/most frightening movie you have ever watched?*
4. *What difference has the resurrection of Jesus, celebrated just over a week ago, made to your everyday life and why?*
5. *What do you know about the book of Revelation and is it one you have read, want to read or have avoided reading? Why?*

C.S. Lewis once said, “Isn't it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back everything is different?” That's what the resurrection does for us. Resurrection is all about a new reality, a fresh perspective, a renewed life that changes everything...even if what you experience in this world seems to be the same...or getting worse. When we wonder who is in control of this world, when life seems too big or you feel too small, not good enough, inadequate, or that you have somehow disappointed Jesus...or made him mad at you...never forget, "the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead" (Eph 1:19-20) is in you. In Christ's presence, by his power, we live the promised journey toward fullness of healing and life and discover a grace that is “making all things new” including us. For from beginning to end, God is in control of all things. In this series, we begin a journey where John unveils the reality of what God's 'making all things new' resurrection living looks like.

Read Revelation: 1:1-17



6. *What were your first thoughts/observations/questions when hearing this passage?*
7. *How would you describe Jesus based on this passage?*
8. *Why do you think it is so important that the book of Revelation begins (and ends) with such a clear declaration of who Jesus is? How does that affect the way that we read or value the rest of the book?*



9. How are we blessed by hearing what John writes down for us (v. 3)?
10. What do you make of all the things happening in the world at the present time and what does it lead you to believe about who is in control of the world? What is the different reality that we are offered in this passage?

The book of Revelation is a fascinating, perplexing, intriguing, and challenging book. It is not a book that holds a secret code that we have to try and unlock to understand the world. Neither is it a book about the second coming/future as there are only half a dozen verses that describe the Lord's return. It is not an apocalyptic book either although John uses apocalyptic conventions and forms in his own style. Rather, it is a book about the present reality in which we live; where God speaks of everyday things such as political realities, economics and living in a world where Christians are in the minority. It offers an alternative reality of life—through the eyes of God - a reality that is ours through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The power of the resurrection knows no bounds. All of time – all of history and all of creation – is under the risen Christ's loving embrace. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." That changes everything.

11. What is the significance of a God "who was, who is, and who is to come." for you?
12. In verses 17 and 18, Jesus comforts John with some statements about himself. What does each statement mean?
 - "the first"
 - "the last"
 - "the living one"
 - "died"
 - "am alive"
 - "keys of Death"
 - "keys of . . . Hades"
13. Which statement about Jesus speaks most to you in your life right now and for what reason?



Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To say that Christ is the beginning of all our endings is to acknowledge that Jesus is able to redeem your broken dreams and failed attempts in life; that when you feel like we've come to the end of all you can do, when we've hit that place that seems hopeless—that is precisely the point at which Christ steps in to offer hope and a way where there is no way. Likewise to say that Jesus is the end of all your beginnings is to concede that there is nothing you can do apart from him. Every attempt at life that you make will eventually drive you to him and reveal—unveil—your need for him in your life. For Jesus is the one who loves you, knows you, frees you, claims you, and calls you by name; and because he is the beginning and the end, your past is redeemed, your present makes sense, and your future is secure!

14. How have you experienced the hope and encouragement of the resurrected Christ?
15. Martin Luther once said, "**It really doesn't matter if Jesus rose from the dead if He isn't risen in you!**" To what extent would you say there is evidence in your life that Christ is risen in you at this present time?
16. What needs to change in your life so that Christ is more readily seen or heard in your life?



- * Praise God for being the first and the last, the beginning and the end of all things. Thank Jesus for the hope that his resurrection victory gives to your life in all circumstances. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you daily live in Christ and to let the reality of his resurrection flow from your own life.
- * Pray for those people around the world who are suffering at this present time - from those grieving the massive loss of life in Mozambique Africa from flooding/cyclones, to the people of Sri Lanka trying to put lives together after the terrorist bombings on Easter Sunday.
- * Pray for the Church that it may be a faithful witness to God's gracious rule in this world
- * Pray for each other that your lives may daily reveal more and more of Christ.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

Name, Jesus is the beginning and end of life for you. Amen.

