

Small Group Questions: Easter: Surprised by Hope

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Read

Mark 16:1–7; Proverbs 13:12; and Luke 22:61–62

Reflect

Jesus foretold that he would rise from the dead, but it was still a shock to people—even to his disciples. We know how the story ends, but they didn't. After the Sabbath, the women went to the tomb to anoint Jesus with burial spices, wondering how they would remove the stone. Instead, they found the stone rolled away.

Three Easter surprises that the Resurrection brings:

1. My obstacles will be removed.

- a. What is the stone (obstacle) keeping you from doing the next right thing?
- b. The women who came to anoint Jesus' body with burial spices wondered who would move the stone for them. How has God removed obstacles in your life and for what purpose?

2. My expectations will be fulfilled.

- a. When has God fulfilled your expectations, but in an unexpected way?
- b. The disciples expected Jesus to set the Israelites free from Roman rule. How did Jesus far surpass these expectations?
- c. How does the story of the Resurrection help you to trust God's plan for your life?

3. My failure will not be final.

- a. Peter denied Jesus three times. How do the instructions given to the women at the tomb show Jesus' forgiveness and continued faith in Peter?
- b. Do you feel like you don't belong because of something you've done?
 - i. How might you be letting guilt or shame keep you from growing closer to God?
- c. How does the story of Peter show that Jesus doesn't define you by your past failures?

Respond: Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you?