

**INTRO**

- How did you celebrate Easter?

**READ**

- 1 Peter 1:3-9

**REFLECT & RESPOND**

After having his own encounter with the risen Christ, Peter writes some 30+ years later to Christians experiencing a level of persecution and trials under Emperor Nero.

*According to God's great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. — v3*

Biblical hope is different from desiring a future we are uncertain of attaining (like in sports). It is a confidence in God and his future for us which has power to produce change in how we live.

**A LIVING HOPE GROUNDED IN THE PAST**

*"Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ"*

We can have a confident hope based on what has happened in the past: Jesus rose from the dead. And this vindicates and gives credibility to everything Jesus said, promised and did.

*Qu: why is the resurrection of Jesus so important for our hope?*

**A LIVING HOPE FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE**

Hope is future-focused and it is a good future because the resurrected Jesus is the first fruits of new creation and the sign that God has begun the renewal of all things (reversing the curse of sin and death). It has begun in Jesus, continues with his followers, and will one day be completed at his return.

*Qu: what is something you personally hope to see in your lifetime? How does that impact the way you live today?*

**A LIVING HOPE VITAL FOR THE PRESENT**

*"He has caused us to be born again"*

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, we look back in faith and forward in hope, and that should lead us to live in new ways today. Living Hope is what you get when you begin to reinterpret the world, yourself and the future through the resurrection of Jesus.

For one, it **energizes** us to join God in his redemptive purposes for people and his world. It also **reframes our perspective** and helps us persevere through times of trial and suffering, knowing that God will even use those for our eventual good.

*Qu: what does the death & resurrection of Jesus mean to you personally? How has/is it changed/ changing your life?*

The resurrection of the crucified Christ is not a mere affirmation of a historical event or belief in a creed. It is personal in that it means trusting in God, in this God, who raises the dead, who calls for our commitment to love & trust Jesus, and to the worldwide mission that the resurrection has launched.

**WATER BAPTISM** is our public response to confessing Jesus is Lord and believing God raised him from the dead (Rom 10:9-10): I identify with Jesus in his death and resurrection myself. I am made new and pursue a new way of life as his disciple!

*(Note to leader: this may be a good time to see if any would like to be baptized at a future baptism service)*

**RESPOND & PRAY**

- Pray for this living hope to become a reality in our lives
- Pray for one another to practice a life of up-in-out in the week ahead.