

Title: Invitation to Hope, Pt 6: "Invitation to Rise & Share" – John 20:1-31

Big Idea: Believe, Rise, and Share! Ponder the evidence, have your doubts overcome, and hear and see Jesus!

What in the message stood out to you?

What questions do you have?

1. Ponder the evidence – John 20:1-10

Read John 20:1-10. Do you still struggle to believe in the resurrection? Why or why not?

What, to you, is the most compelling reason to believe in the resurrection of Jesus?

Reflect on the phrase "Jesus is risen" and its implications for our lives today. How does the reality of Christ's resurrection shape our identity, purpose, and hope as followers of Christ?

In what ways does the study of God's Word contribute to a deeper understanding and belief in the resurrection of Christ, as highlighted in verse 9?

2. Hear and see Jesus – John 20:11-18.

Read John 20:11-18. Have you ever experienced a moment where you felt like Mary, unable to recognize the presence of Jesus due to your circumstances or expectations? How did you overcome this?

The passage highlights the importance of hearing Christ's voice. How do you discern Christ's voice amidst the noise and distractions of everyday life?

Reflect on the idea of calling God "our" God and "our" Father, as noted in verse 17. How does this concept of being adopted into the family of God impact your understanding of your relationship with God?

3. Have your doubts overcome – John 20:19-20, 24-29:

Read John 20:19-20. Based on everything you know about the disciples' experience with Jesus on earth, do you think you would have expected the resurrection of Jesus to happen? Why or why not?

Read John 20:24-29. On both Easter Sunday and the following Sunday, Jesus appeared "among them" while they were gathered together. What does this suggest about the weekly gathering of the church? How does Matthew 18:20 help your answer?

Thomas needed both the witness of other believers and the personal words of Jesus to believe. Share some examples of how God has used both of these things in your own life.

4. Believe, Rise, and Share – John 20:21-23, 30-31.

Read John 20:21-23. What do you think it means to receive “peace” from Jesus?

The Holy Spirit is the gift of Jesus’ personal presence and power within us. What are some ways you have experienced the personal presence and power of Jesus through the Holy Spirit in your efforts to trust and obey Him?

Jesus has given us His mission of sharing of God’s message that He forgives those who believe in Him but withholds forgiveness from those who don’t. Acts 1:8 reveals this is one the reasons we need the Holy Spirit. Why is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit so crucial to fulfilling our mission?

Read John 20:30-31. What is the role of the Bible in our mission? Can people be saved without hearing God’s word from the Bible? Why or why not?

“Next Steps” Takeaways – Discuss and pray through the following:

- With God:
 - Pray. Be honest with God about your doubts. Ask Him to help you believe.
- With Others:
 - Commit to attending church every week and expect to Jesus to be “among us.”
 - Consider attending the “First Step Welcome Lunch” at 12:15pm on 4/7 if you have never done so. Invite someone newer to attend with you.
- On Mission:
 - Attend, and invite someone to attend, the “Reasons to Believe” apologetics conference with Sean McDowell on 5/3-5/4.
 - This will help strengthen faith and overcome doubts.