

I BELIEVE STAY POSITIVE

KEY SCRIPTURE:

John 2:19 (ESV): 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

John 12:23–24 (ESV): 23 And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

First Prediction: Matthew 16:21–22, Mark 8:31–32, and Luke 9:21–22

Second Prediction: Matthew 16:21–22, Mark 9:30–32, and Luke 9:43–45

Third Prediction: Matthew 16:21–22, Mark 10:32–34, and Luke 18:31–34

Psalms 22, Isaiah 53, Zechariah 12:10, Psalm 34:20, Psalm 69:21
The above are just some of the more prominent crucifixion prophecies. During His life and ministry, Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies, many of which were written hundreds of years prior

Matthew 27:62–66 (NLT): 62 The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. 63 They told him, "Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise from the dead.'" 64 So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent his disciples from coming and stealing his body and then telling everyone he was raised from the dead! If that happens, we'll be worse off than we were at first."

65 Pilate replied, "Take guards and secure it the best you can." 66 So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it.

Mark 16:9–10 (ESV) ⁹ [[Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept....this is after John 20.

Mark 16:11 (ESV) ¹¹ But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

John 20:19 (NLT) 19 That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders.

Start Talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What was the highlight of your Easter Weekend? Do you have a favorite Easter memory or tradition?

Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- The main point of this message is to establish the trustworthiness of Jesus ministry through a focus on the resurrection. Is there a part of Jesus' life or ministry that you have a hard time believing or comprehending? If none, what part of His ministry outside of Easter do you find most inspiring?
- Recount the six reasons to believe from Pastor Jeff's message. Which one stood out to you the most? Why?
- This message presents Christianity as something we could call a "rational faith." As a group define the difference between "rational faith" and "blind faith." Then answer how the rational nature of Christianity makes it unique. Tip for GC leaders: have your own definition prepared for your group that establishes rational faith as having evidence and logical reasons to believe and where blind faith is established on a "just believe" type of foundation.
- What does the rational nature of Christian faith tell you about God's character?
 - Tip for GC Leaders: He's personal and wants to help us believe. In Christianity God came to us and every other faith we must find our way to God.

Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Share your salvation story! How did you come to know Christ and what do you see Him doing in your life now?
 - Tip for GC Leaders: consider messaging your group ahead of time so they can think about this ahead of time. Let them know you won't make everyone share, but that you wanted to give them time to think about what parts of their story to share ahead of time.
 - If you feel God leading, feel free to make this group a testimony night.
- What makes it difficult trust God's love for you? How can some of the six reasons to believe from this message help you overcome this difficulty?
- How would you respond to friends or family who believe there are multiple ways to God?

Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Who do you know well, but don't know what they believe? Pray for them with your group, **AND** plan your first steps to reach out to them this week.

I BELIEVE...

BECAUSE OF JESUS' SUBTLE HINTS

John 2:19 (ESV): 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

John 12:23-24 (ESV): 23 And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

BECAUSE OF JESUS' BLUNT PREDICTIONS

First Prediction: Matthew 16:21-22, Mark 8:31-32, and Luke 9:21-22
Second Prediction: Matthew 16:21-22, Mark 9:30-32, and Luke 9:43-45
Third Prediction: Matthew 16:21-22, Mark 10:32-34, and Luke 18:31-34)

BECAUSE ALL THE PROPHECIES !

Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Zechariah 12:10, Psalm 34:20, Psalm 69:21
The above are just some of the more prominent crucifixion prophecies. During His life and ministry, Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies, many of which were written hundreds of years prior!

Notes: _____

BECAUSE JESUS' ENEMIES PLANS BACKFIRED

Matthew 27:62-66 (NLT): 62 The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. 63 They told him, "Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise from the dead.' 64 So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent his disciples from coming and stealing his body and then telling everyone he was raised from the dead! If that happens, we'll be worse off than we were at first."

65 Pilate replied, "Take guards and secure it the best you can." 66 So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it.

BECAUSE THE DISCIPLES WOULD HAVE WRITTEN A BETTER STORY ABOUT THEMSELVES

Mark 16:9-10 (ESV) ² [[Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept....this is after John 20.

Mark 16:11(ESV) ¹¹ But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

John 20:19 (NLT) 19 That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders.

BECAUSE I'VE EXPERIENCED THE RESULTS OF HIS RESURRECTION IN MY OWN LIFE!

Notes: _____

