



## ENCOUNTER

The Moment

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Discussion Notes

The Crossing Church

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## OPENING

We are concluding our series titled Encounter this week. Jesus has fulfilled His ultimate purpose to give His life on the cross and now it is Easter! The Resurrected Christ has overcome death and our sins are forgiven. This is the most meaningful event on the Christian calendar and we are humbled by Jesus' sacrifice and love for us. God has provided the path for reconciliation to Him and along with it He is offering us hope, change and life. As we conclude the Encounter series, remember, the closer we get to Him, and the more we worship Him, the more our lives will change.

## SCRIPTURE<sup>1</sup>

**Mark 15:42-47** It was Preparation Day, (that is the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph. So Joseph brought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

**Mark 16:1-7** When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. But when they looked up they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' "

**Romans 8:28** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

**Jeremiah 29:11** "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

## OBSERVATION

All people have crucible moments in their lives – moments that change directions, define them and follow them. Jesus' moment is His resurrection and it defined all of our lives. The resurrection is the moment that closes the gap between where we are and where we want to be. It is the greatest rescue story of all time.

**Question:** What is your crucible moment?

**Question:** How does Troy Dandrea's story of courage and God's deliverance build your faith and will to do the same through your situation?

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<sup>1</sup> All scripture is NIV unless otherwise noted.



## APPLICATION

The disciples didn't understand Jesus when He said He would be arrested, scourged and crucified, but would be resurrected in three days. They had been with Him for three years of ministry, but hadn't been able to comprehend the enormity of His purpose. When He died, they were bereft with no hope and they suffered greatly at His loss. Only the Apostle John was at the cross as the others had run away in fear and grief.

**Question:** Do you ever wonder whether you would have stood with John and Mary at the foot of the cross? What do you think you would have done? How do you feel about your answer?

So the question becomes, "Why three days?" What can be accomplished by the three days? Jesus shows us that these are steps in a spiritual journey that is repeated over and over again in scripture and that they have a purpose. Hosea speaks of this repeated pattern as God deals with us: "Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces...After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence." **Hosea 6:1-2** This process does something for us spiritually as we go through pain and suffering, seeking God and being delivered. It gives us hope that God has a plan for us even when we are in pain.

Friday is the day of pain. It is the day of Christ's crucifixion, but in our lives it is the day of the event which caused us anguish. Sometimes our pain is physical such as caused by an accident. Sometimes it is emotional as caused by a relational breakup or a betrayal of some kind. Jesus understands both. But God brings purpose to our pain because He works it for our good. He can redeem any situation and be a companion for us through it.

**Question:** Tell us about a time when you suffered emotional pain. How did God bring about good from that circumstance?

Saturday is the day of no answers, no details, and no words from God. It is the day of silence and no hope. It is the day our faith MUST kick in so we need to get close to God in prayer and worship!

**Question:** When has God been silent in spite of all of your prayers for relief from a situation? How did that feel?

Sunday is the day of deliverance and dead things are resurrected. There is joy in the morning! This day proves God's love for us.

**Question:** Tell us about a circumstance in which you experienced the third day of God's deliverance.

In summary, Friday is the day of pain. Saturday is the day of silence. And Sunday is the day of deliverance. Hallelujah! This is a recurring theme in the Bible: Think of Abraham and Isaac and the sacrifice they faced; Joseph's brothers were in prison in Egypt; Rahab and the Israelite spies were hiding from their enemies; Esther was fearing that her people would be killed; Jonah was languishing in the belly of a whale. All were delivered on the third day of their ordeal.

**Question:** When you realize that God delivers people in time from their crucible moments, what does this do for your perseverance in difficult times?

St. Paul in **Philippians 3:10-11** says, I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings (Friday), becoming like him in his death (Saturday), and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead (Sunday).

**PRAYER** Heavenly Father, we celebrate Easter as our day of joy and victory and the proof of Jesus' Messiahship. Only your great love for us could have provided our forgiveness and caused Jesus to go to the cross to pay our price. We are thankful and turn our lives over to You in service as our humble offering in gratitude. In Jesus' name. Amen.