

# WONDER

## Week 5 - Can We Trust Jesus? (Part 2)

*"There is more evidence that Jesus rose from the dead than there is that Julius Caesar ever lived or that Alexander the Great died at the age of thirty-three." -Billy Graham*

### THE MAIN POINT

The death resurrection of Jesus is THE pivotal moment of history. It's also the strongest evidence we have to the truth of Christianity. Jesus is alive. This meeting will primarily focus on Jesus' death and resurrection and will end with an opportunity for students to place their faith in Christ.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- make sure your students pre-download the app "Space Team" before arriving to your group or be in a location where Wi-Fi is available.
- Snacks

### GETTING STARTED

Welcome everyone. Serve your snack and hang out. Before starting, remind them of the rules of small group:

## RULES FOR SMALL GROUP:

**Commitment** - Commit to being at every group meeting (make it a priority!)

**Confidentiality** - What is shared here stays here.

**Be honest or be silent** - don't make up an answer just to have one. Sometimes the most honest answer is no answer, so if you need to, just say pass.

**Respect** - for one another, their thoughts/ideas/opinions (no put downs).

It has been so awesome these last few weeks diving into some crazy difficult topics. It's not every day a high school (or middle school) student is willing to really look deep into these kinds of questions. I would say as we've gone through the last 4 weeks, we've become quite a team...but how good is our team really?

## ACTIVITY

### Space Team

Have your students download the free "Space Team" app. You will all need to be connected to the same Wi-Fi network, or it gives the option to enter a password so that you will join the same round. This game is a cooperative group game in which you are all flying in a spaceship. Each team member has a different set of controls and will receive different computer commands on what buttons to push (for example: "engage the hyperloop!"). The catch is that you will get commands for buttons you don't have. Students will have to shout the commands out loud so that the person with the button will know what to push. Failure to push the buttons in a timely fashion will result in a crashed spaceship. Depending on your time and how good your team is, play a few rounds. (Note this game involves quite a bit of shouting. If you are out at a public place where this would be inappropriate, swap this activity out for something different.)

More info at <https://spaceteam.ca> (watch the trailer and read the FAQs). There is also a card game version of this you can buy online.

## GOING DEEPER

Wow that game was intense! You guys are excellent space cadets. We make a good team.

- What video games do you like to play? Why? *Share your favorite video game you played when you were a kid.*

Video games like Space Team are super fun. The nice thing about video games is that if you get killed or your team's spaceship explodes, you can reset and start over. Your character comes back good as new as if nothing ever happened. It doesn't matter how many times you get whipped in Fortnite. You can always jump back in and try again.

This is super obvious, but life is not like that. As humans, our lives begin and eventually they end. We die. There's no coming back or reversing that reality. It's the reason why we do some super crazy things in the video game world, but in real life we tend to keep things pretty safe. We play it safe because we know that once we're gone it's done. But what if that's not the end of the story?

- What do you think happens when we die? How did you come to that conclusion?

It would be a pretty big deal if someone were to die and come back to life on their own. I'm not talking about the kind of death where someone's heart stops and they get zapped back with a defibrillator, or they drown and get CPR. I'm talking about someone who is completely dead for days and rises again. This would be an earth-shattering miracle wouldn't it? It would be all over the news. What if I told you it happened?

Last week we talked about Jesus and His claims about Himself. Today we're talking about the best piece of evidence we have that Jesus is who He says He is. We're going to talk about the most earth-shattering event in human history. Nothing has ever been the same since. We number our years around the life of Jesus for this reason--we are 2019 years since the time of Jesus. We are talking about the death and resurrection of Jesus.

- What have you heard about the death and resurrection of Jesus? What happened?
- What do you believe about the death and resurrection of Jesus?

Last week we talked about how Jesus claimed to be savior and Lord. He is more than just some good guy or great moral teacher. He claimed to be the Son of God. But when we use the word "savior," what is it that we actually mean?

- What do you think Jesus means when He claims to be Savior? Saving who from what?

The world can be a difficult place. We're going to talk about that a bit next week. However, we know that a lot of the reason the world is so harsh is because of the wrong choices of the people in it. Christians call that sin. Sin is when we "miss the mark" that God has laid out for us in how we can live a life that is good, right, and free. We've all seen sin in the world. We've been the victims of other

people's sin. We've sinned ourselves. The Bible says everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23).

- In what ways have you felt the effects of sin in your own life? *Share your own experiences that are appropriate for this setting. Example: Your parents got a divorce as a result of infidelity and you ended up living in a single parent home.*

The tough thing is that sin has a cost. We know that when a friend betrays you in some way, there's a penalty and most likely a separation occurs in the relationship. There needs to be consequences. We want justice. With God it is no different. It doesn't just hurt others or yourself when you sin. When we sin, there's a consequence and a separation in our relationship with God. "The wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23a)

The central claim of Christianity is that Jesus, when He died on the cross, took the penalty of sin upon Himself so that you and I don't have to. The story didn't end there. If Jesus died on the cross but never rose from the dead, the Bible says that we are all wasting our time and we are still guilty in our sins. It even goes so far as to say that if Jesus hadn't been raised from the dead, people should feel sorry for us and that our faith is useless (See 1 Corinthians 15:12-19).

- Why do you think it was so important that Jesus rose from the dead?

This earth-shattering, world changing event happened. Jesus didn't just die on the cross. Lots of people back then died on crosses. It was the main means of execution in the Roman Empire. It was a brutal death reserved only for criminals and rebels. Jesus took the penalty of sin by dying on that cross even though He never sinned, but then defeated that death by rising again. So how do we know this really happened?

1. There were more than 500 known eyewitnesses to the risen Jesus. They ate with him, listened to Him teach, and more. It has been written about in the four eyewitness accounts in the Bible (the gospels) and written about by sources outside of the Bible.
  2. These witnesses saw Jesus alive and those who opposed Jesus could not disprove their claim of His resurrection because there was no body. The tomb they buried Him in was empty. Nobody was able to definitively refute the claim that Jesus was and is alive.
  3. Because of this crazy miraculous event, the news spread all over the world very quickly. If you look at world history, the sudden and huge rise of faith in Jesus can only mean that *something* must have happened. Guys who were cowards before Jesus rose were suddenly boldly out there telling everyone what they had seen.
- What do you think so far? What questions do you have?
  - Do you think it's possible that Jesus actually rose from the dead? What could that mean for you?

Because of what Jesus did, by dying on the cross and raising again, you can be set free from the consequences of sin. The separation between you and God is no more. And just like Jesus was raised from the dead and had new life, you can have new life too.

We mentioned a quote from the Bible earlier that “the wages of sin is death...” Because of what Jesus did, that quote isn’t over. The rest of it goes “but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23b NLT).

That gift is free and it’s open for anyone and everyone. That means you too. Everyone has messed up. Everyone needs forgiveness. Whether you realize it or not, everyone needs God too. We were made to be in a relationship with Him.

## TAKE AWAY

When you get a gift for Christmas or a birthday, and someone hands it to you, it’s up to you to say “yes” and receive it. In this case, Jesus is offering a free gift of forgiveness of sin, eternal life, and a relationship with Him. In Romans 10, it says “If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” That’s it.

The most important decision you will ever make in your life is what you will do with Jesus. It’s a life or death decision what you will do with His life, death, and resurrection. Will you say yes?

*Note to leaders: Let the Spirit lead you as to how to receive responses in this meeting.*