



Life comes with big questions and we hear them over and over again in popular music. Today we will listen to the music and to the Easter story. We want everyone to discover the risen Jesus because he is the hope.

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.⁵ He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷ Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles.⁸ Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.
1 Cor 15:3-8

“I’d like to leave it all behind, but you know it’s not that easy”

– from Consequence Free, Great Big Sea

Q: *Can I be forgiven?*

A: The Easter story tells us that Jesus paid our debt and God said “Yes!”

“What do I stand for? What do I stand for? Most nights, I don’t know anymore...”

– from Some Nights by Fun

Q: *What the meaning of life?*

A: The Easter story tells us that Jesus is the One who gives meaning to Life.

“Fifteen there’s still time for you Time to buy and time to lose.... When you’ve only got hundred years to live”

– from 100 Years by Five for Fighting

Q: *Is there hope in death?*

A: The Easter story tells us that God has won and our future is secure.

THE HOPE - SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever had an experience that was so surprising that it was hard to believe? What convinced you it was real?
2. Consider John the Baptist's words in John 1:29 (NLT) — "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"
 - a. How do these words give you confidence that your sins have been forgiven?
 - b. What is the connection of the "lamb of God" imagery and Jesus' death at Passover?
3. What must a person do in order to receive the benefits of Jesus' Passover sacrifice? (cf., John 3:14-17). How does this give you confidence about your forgiveness?
4. Being raised from the dead singles Jesus out in human history. How does this help us streamline all the different spiritual advice we are regularly bombarded with?
5. Read the following then complete sentences that Paul makes about the resurrection of Jesus: *1 Corinthians 15:14-19 (NLT) — ... if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. 15 And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. 16 And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. 18 In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! 19 And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.*

If Christ has not been raised then:

- a. Our preaching _____, v. 14
 - b. Your faith _____. v. 14
 - c. The apostles would all be _____. v. 15
 - d. Your _____ is useless. v. 17
 - e. You are still _____ of your sins. v. 17
 - f. Those who have died believing in Christ are _____. v. 18
 - g. We are more _____ than anyone in the world. v. 19
6. Go through the above list line by line with the premise that Jesus has risen. (e.g., "Our preaching is powerful/effective... etc.)
 7. According to Romans 6:5-11, how does the resurrection of Jesus affect us in the present? What does this mean personally?
 8. What is one thing you can do this Easter season to make the impact of the resurrection more meaningful in your life and more obvious to those around you?