

Small Group Discussion Guide — April 11, 2021

- Series: if/then
 - Sermon: Blessed Assurance
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FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK:

Share any moments you were more aware of a false identity trying to creep in this week and steal your joy. How did reminders of your real identity (clean, forgiven, accepted) help you reject the false one and live full and free in Christ?

CONNECT:

1. What stood out to you from this past week's service, and why?
2. What's a new habit you have developed over the past several months?

ENGAGE:

Read Ephesians 1: 15-23, in which the Apostle Paul is praying for the Church at Ephesus.

1. What, specifically, does Paul pray for these believers (v. 17-19)? Which of these things that Paul prayed for do *you* need most right now?
2. What do you notice about how Paul describes the power that raised Jesus from the dead? How is it directly related to us, as followers of Christ?
3. What do we learn about Jesus in verses 20-23? What do you think it means that Jesus "fills everything in every way"?

APPLY:

1. In verse 18, Paul prays that we may know the hope to which He has called us. In a world without hope, how can we carry this message, that there is hope available in Christ, for eternity and for the here and now? How should having this hope make us look different from the rest of the world?
2. How much of God's resources and energy are you using at the moment? God has given us resurrection power, the same that raised Jesus from the dead! What's keeping you from living in that amazing reality?

PRAYER

Father, You have given us everything we need to live a life of victory and assurance that we are yours. May the power of Christ's resurrection fill us every day, enabling us to walk with you and to share this hope with others - a hope not just for eternity, but for right now, as well. In Jesus name, Amen.

GOING DEEPER

1. Consider praying verses 17-19 every day this week for each other. What are some ways you can help each other to really know God better, and live in the power of Jesus' resurrection?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 15: 14-19. In your own words, say what Paul is communicating here. What's the bottom line truth?

QUOTATIONS

"But I know that, somehow, the resurrection of Christ is at the bottom of me. Of all of us. It's our only hope. The older I get, the more I believe that the old apostle (Paul) knew in his bones what he was writing about when he claimed that if Christ isn't raised from the dead, everything else falls apart."

Craig Barnes