

DARE TO HOPE AGAIN

UNDERSTANDING THE HOPE OF EASTER

1. BE _____ ABOUT JESUS

Curiosity builds

Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Messiah.” (John 1:41)

The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

Then Jesus told her, “I Am the Messiah!” (John 4:25–26)

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16)

Arrival to Jerusalem

“But here he is, speaking in public, and they say nothing to him. Could our leaders possibly believe that he is the Messiah? But how could he be? For we know where this man comes from. When the Messiah comes, he will simply appear; no one will know where he comes from.” (John 7:26–27)

On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, “Anyone who is thirsty may come to me!”

...When the crowds heard him say this, some of them declared, “Surely this man is the Prophet we’ve been expecting.”

Others said, “He is the Messiah.”

Still others said, “But he can’t be! Will the Messiah come from Galilee?” (John 7:37,40-41)

Jesus arrested

Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a crowd of men armed with swords and clubs...Then the others grabbed Jesus and arrested him... At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled. (Matthew 26:47,50,56)

But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

“Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. (Matthew 26:63–64a)

Then they began to spit in Jesus’ face and beat him with their fists. And some slapped him, jeering, “Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?” (Matthew 26:67–68)

The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. “He saved others,” they scoffed, “but he can’t save himself! Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe him!” (Mark 15:31–32a)

Jesus is killed

Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last. (Mark 15:37)

“He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him. We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel.” (Luke 24:19–21)

Easter Sunday

“Dear woman, why are you crying?” the angels asked her.

“Because they have taken away my Lord,” she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” (John 20:13)

That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you,” he said. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!” (John 20:19–20)

2. BE _____ WITH JESUS

One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.” (John 20:24–25)

3. BE _____ TO JESUS

Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!”

“My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed. (John 20:26–28)