

C.R.O.S.S.

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Spring Quarter: *The Gift of Faith*

This quarter is an in-depth study of faith, a subject we can never get too much of. Examining what the Bible has to say about faith can be an encouragement for us to hang on to God when times are hard.

March Lessons:

March comprise a series of lessons on tests of faith. In the first lesson a father was tested because of his son's demon possession and the inability of Jesus' disciples to help him. In the next lesson a rich young ruler was tested after he asked Jesus what he needed to do to inherit eternal life. Sadly, he failed his test. The third lesson describes a test for Jesus' disciples and especially for Peter as Jesus warned them about His coming arrest and death. Peter failed his test too and had to be restored later, after Jesus' resurrection. The women who went to Jesus' tomb after His death (lesson 4) had their faith tested in regard to what had happened to Him. They and all the others, however, soon rejoiced over His resurrection.



Now faith (*forsaking all I trust him*) is the substance (*assurance, confidence, confirmation*) of things hoped for (*divinely guaranteed, proof*), the evidence (*reality, certainty*) of things not seen (*not yet appearing*).

Hebrews 11:1

Faith comprehends as fact what cannot be experienced by physical senses. Without it, it is not possible to please God.

Scriptures of the Month

“Through all of this Job did not sin nor did he blame God” - Job 1:22

“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him” - James 1:12



The Good Fight of Faith 1 Timothy 6:12

Put on your armor – guard your heart and mind; fight against these enemies of faith.

Anxiety – Matthew 6:25, Luke 12:22 & 23

Fear – Matthew 8:24 – 26; 1 John 4:18

Doubt – Matthew 14:31-32, Luke 12:29 - 31

Human Reasoning – James 1:6; Proverbs 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:7

Ignorance of the Word – Romans 10:17

God's Word is our defense to the enemies of faith. Seek Him, pray, and walk with the Holy Spirit every day. That's how you fight the good fight of faith!

Faith is like WiFi

It's invisible, but it has the power to connect you to what you need.



Get To The Point!

There's a big difference between question marks and exclamation points. Depending on the punctuation, the exact same words can mean something totally different.

Consider the difference between the child's "No?" question mark and her father's "No!" exclamation point; or the difference between the politician's "No new taxes?" question mark and the voters' "No new taxes!" exclamation point.

Christ's sacrifice raises a question. Why? Why would the Son of God give himself so unselfishly, why would he suffer and die a terrible death on the cross for wayward, imperfect people like you and me?

Here's the great, life-changing exclamation point: Jesus loves us! What joy we feel, knowing that Jesus loves us so much, in spite of our sins, that he died in our place—taking the anguish we deserved—and rose again on the first Easter! Consider the exclamation the angel at Jesus' tomb told the women, the same exclamation we celebrate now: "He has risen, as he said" (Matthew 28:6)!

And there's more. Jesus loves us so much that he will one day come again and take us to live together with him, together with all the holy angels in the family of God forever!

What joy that will be! What bliss! What a blessing! Alleluia! (Now those sentences all rightly deserve to end with exclamation points!)

He is not here; he has risen! Luke 24:6



*Oh, can it be, upon a tree
The Savior died for me?
My soul is thrilled, my heart is filled,
To think He died for me! —Newton*

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Resurrection Quiz

1. Pilate set a watch over the tomb of Jesus at the request of...
2. Why did Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James come to the tomb?
3. Who came with the mother of James and John to the tomb?
4. Who told Mary that Jesus was not in the tomb, but He had risen?
5. To whom did Jesus first appear after His resurrection?
6. As the women went to tell Jesus' disciples that Jesus had risen, who did they meet on the way?
7. What was the disciples' response when they were told that Jesus had risen?
8. Why did the soldiers report that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body?
9. Where did the disciples first see the risen Jesus?
10. Which disciple said he would not believe Jesus had risen unless he could see the nail marks in his hands?



GOT JOKES!

It was Palm Sunday but because of a sore throat, 5-year-old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds. Johnny asked them what they were for.

"People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," his father told him.

"Wouldn't you know it," Johnny fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go and he shows up."



One Easter Sunday morning as the pastor was preaching a children's sermon, he reached into his bag of props and pulled out an egg. He pointed at the egg and asked the children, "What's in here?"

"I know, I know!" a little boy exclaimed, "pantyhose!"

Test Your Knowledge Answers

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| 1. Matthew 27:62-66 | 6. Matthew 28:9 |
| 2. Mark 16:1 | 7. Mark 16:13,14 |
| 3. Mark 16:1 | 8. Matthew 28:11-15 |
| 4. Matthew 28:5,6 | 9. John 20:19 |
| 5. Mark 16:9 | 10. John 20:24-28 |