

CREW Bible Study

Message - HAPPY EASTER

- **BOTTOM LINE:** Easter means you're never alone.
- **GOAL:** To help students have the confidence to know that they're never alone because the Holy Spirit is with them.
- **SCRIPTURE:** *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere.*
– Acts 1:8

MESSAGE

What's one unpopular opinion you think you might be alone in having?

For me, it's Peeps. You know, those little marshmallow ducks and bunnies. This time of year, they are everywhere. And now, they come not only in every spring color, but new flavors too, like "Fierce Cinnamon" and "Birthday Cake." With this much attention on Peeps, it makes me believe that there are A LOT of people out there who love these things. But me? I don't get it. I think they're awful! Peeps are surely the LAST thing I would choose to eat. But am I all alone thinking this? Maybe I am.

When have you felt this way – all alone in how you felt about something?

Sometimes we feel all alone in our opinion – like me with Peeps. Sometimes we feel all alone in our approach to doing something. And sometimes we feel all alone because we are literally all alone. Right now, social distancing has forced us all into isolation from the people we normally see and do things with. It's a lonely time.

When you feel lonely, do you notice that you start to believe things that generally aren't true, but seem true at the time? You might believe that nobody understands what you're going through. Or that you don't have enough strength to get you through. Or worse, that there will never be an end to this and your situation will never change.

Feeling alone can be overwhelming. Our situations, our circumstances, our feelings, our frustration, our confusion can be too much for us to bear. It just feels bad. And here's what's crazy about that – loneliness feels so bad to us because God wired us that way. Not that God wired us to feel depressed or hopeless, but God wired us to be in close relationships. People need people. We need our peeps! You and I were never meant to carry the weight of what we feel, experience or worry about on our own. And so, it makes sense that when we don't have that close contact with others to share the burden, things just don't feel right to us.

Well, believe it or not, we can look at what happened on the very first Easter and in the days following it, and use it as a game changer for our mindset.

For years, Jesus and his friends were traveling together, doing life together, hanging out together every day. They shared everything. Now suddenly, Jesus died and they were left completely on their own. The future they had imagined – the one they left their jobs and families for – had disappeared. Just like that, everything changed.

So, what did they do? Some of the friends stuck together, but many of them ran for their lives or hid from the people who killed Jesus. They had no clue what was going to happen next. Imagine their surprise and relief on that first Easter when they saw Jesus again, alive. He returned to be with them.

But then a little while later, he left.....again. Only this second time, the disciples had a much different perspective. Why? The Book of Acts tells us more.

Hear these words from Acts chapter 1, verse 8:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere.

Of all the things Jesus could have reminded his disciples of, He chose to remind them that they would never truly be alone. The Holy Spirit was on the way. Jesus reminded them that even though he was leaving, he wasn't leaving them alone. The Holy Spirit would be with them – each one of them.

And guess what? That's exactly what happened. And here's the best part about all of this: the Holy Spirit is with you too. When Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be with "you", He meant it for everyone who would ever believe in Him. That means a few things.....

First, it means that you and I have access to the power, support and guidance of the Holy Spirit. It means you are stronger than you think you are because God is working out the details and He will give you the skill and power through the Holy Spirit.

Second, it means you are never alone. It means God is right there with you and He understands what you are going through. And He wants to hear from you.

Simply trusting that the Holy Spirit is with you can change everything for you.

In what areas of your life do you truly feel alone? Imagine Jesus looking you in the eyes and saying, "You're not on your own, here. We're in this together."

That's what makes Easter happy.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is one unpopular opinion you think you might be alone in having?
2. When is being alone a good thing and when is it a bad thing?
3. Are you happier because of social distancing? Why or why not?

4. In what areas of your life, times of day, or situations and places do you feel most alone?
5. Has loneliness ever felt overwhelming to you? How did you handle it?
6. Read Acts 1:8. The Holy Spirit is "God within us." Knowing that you have the power of God within you through the Holy Spirit, what challenge are you now ready to face?
7. Read Deuteronomy 31:6. What do these Old Testament words tell you about God?
8. Sometimes God puts people in our path to help us through our situations. Talk about a time when God showed up for you through other people. This week, be observant to how God might use you in a similar way.
9. Take a family Easter photo. How can you and your family work together to combat loneliness?