Connect Study—Easter Sunday

On Easter weekend, we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection is the most stupendous, most supernatural miracle the world has ever seen. Without it, everything else collapses. Without the resurrection, Jesus Christ would just be a good teacher or a miracle worker.

Some people think that the resurrection is a hoax but we know that the resurrection is real because after Jesus resurrected from the dead, he was witnessed by his disciples and over 500 witnesses. Thus, Jesus cannot be relegated to the category of good teachers. He is either a liar, a lunatic or he is Lord.

The biggest effect of the resurrection is that Jesus took our sin as well as our shame.

Jesus suffered the greatest injustice in history on that Good Friday. He attended what would be equivalent to six trials in one day. This would have been a total injustice from a legal point of view as he would have had no time to prepare a defence. He suffered tremendous shame being crucified stark naked and that was probably why God covered the earth with deep darkness at the time of crucifixion.

He also suffered great emotional and relational shame. He was ridiculed and mocked by the chief priests, the Pharisees and the elders. They even insulted his relationship with God the Father saying: “he trusted God, so let God rescue him now” (Matt 27: 43). Even the revolutionaries crucified along with Jesus ridiculed him; and all that time, the disciples remained silent. The excruciating, painful, physical death was compounded with the tremendous shame and rejection he suffered. Jesus could have come down from the cross. It was not the nails that kept him on the cross but the covenantal love he had for the lost children of God that kept Jesus on the cross.

Heb 12:2 says, “Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfect of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” Jesus endured the shame for the joy set before him. The joy set before him was us.

Thank God that he did not stay on the cross but that he rose again on the third day so that we know God is alive and that all his promises are now yea and amen for us.

Discussions:

1. Get the newest Christian in your group to share his/her story of how he/she came to know Christ.
2. What convinced you of the reality of Christ and his resurrection?
3. What are the effects of shame on our Christian walk?
4. How does the knowledge that Christ overcame our sins as well as our shame impact your relationship with God?
5. Think of someone you should share this great news with and one practical thing you can do to build a bridge of friendship with that person.