

Surprised by Grace!

Easter 2011

Ice Breaker: What's the best surprise you ever experienced – either that you received or that you gave to somebody else? What made it so wonderful?

Big Idea: The surprise of Easter is that God actually wants to be in relationship with sinners like you and me, who have messed up over and over again. In fact, Jesus says that when one sinner turns to God – the angels of Heaven rejoice and throw a party!

Digging Deeper:

- 1) Read Luke 22:31-34. Based on Peter's spiritual evaluation of himself, what do you make of his actions in Luke 22:54-60? Has there ever been a time when you thought you were more spiritually mature than you actually were? Share about it.
- 2) Read Luke 22:61-62. How does Peter respond when the rooster crows and Jesus looks straight at him? Describe what you think it would feel like to have Jesus Himself look straight at you in the midst of denying Him.
- 3) Pastor Joshua stated that Peter's weeping is the turning point in his spiritual journey. How do you think this moment of self-awareness prepared Peter for Easter morning and the re-commissioning of Jesus that followed? What role has sorrow and repentance played in your spiritual journey?
- 4) Read Luke 24:1-12. How is Peter's response to the resurrection report different from the other apostles? If you were Peter, do you think you would have run to the tomb – after having just denied Jesus 3 days earlier? If not, what is that would have held you back? Are these things that hold you back (today) from running back to Jesus after you sin?
- 5) Read John 21:1-19. Describe the way that Jesus restores Peter in this story – not only to a right relationship with Himself, but to the ministry assignment He was calling him to? What does this tell us about Jesus' willingness to use people who mess up big-time?
- 6) Spend time praying for each other that you would be quick to repent, quick to run back to Jesus, and quick to trust that God's grace will be waiting for you when you get there.