

## I. Intro

## II. Quick Fun Game

## III. WE

- A. Good to have fun even in the hardest times...
  - 1. **We are all longing for a bit of peace right now.**
  - 2. And we need laughter now more than ever b/c...
  
- B. Have lost so much
  - 1. "Normal" / Routine / stability
  - 2. People used to be friendly now we're afraid they are going to kill us.
  - 3. Control
  - 4. Contacts
  - 5. Income
  - 6. Health
  - 7. Loved ones
  
- C. Not telling you anything you don't already know...
  
- D. And we also know that... No amount of denial, positive thinking, funny memes, is going to make this go away or bring those things back. And, add to that the fact that things will be different after all this has passed, there won't be a way to get back to "the way things were"; there will be a "new normal".
  
- E. Not the first time humanity has dealt with this.
  - 1. **Examples-** invasions, plagues, genocide, wars, social upheaval
  - 2. We now understand our ancestors better... have a taste... share a common experience with the rest of human history
  
- F. Whether JF or not... you have something in common with Jesus' first followers too...
  
- G. Imagine the disciples' world the days after Jesus was executed- (Historical Fact) Put yourself in the story with them if you can.
  - 1. Friend/teacher/leader... dead
  - 2. Hopes for kingdom/positions/wealth... gone
  - 3. Lives in danger
  - 4. Future bleak and unknown
  
- H. Everything ripped away in a few hours.
  - 1. Hopes, dreams, plans, income... gone
  - 2. Feelings- Despair/fear/turmoil/CRISIS
  - 3. No way to go back to your old life exactly as it was; as you were.
  
- I. But then... Everything changed...
  - 1. A few weeks later they are in the open, calmly and bravely defying the same authorities that executed their leader...
  
  - 2. They are leading literally thousands of people to create a new movement.

3. A movement that outlasted the two superpowers of their world... the Jewish temple and the Roman Empire.
4. A movement that has since changed the world...
5. Inspired strangers to care for each other,
6. Inspired the creation of hospitals and was an impetus for our modern scientific methods and medicine
7. A movement that has brought an unstoppable, often inexplicable, peace to people in the worst crises of human history...
8. And it has nothing to do with some religious rituals or experiences or secret knowledge or what they taught...
9. It all has to do with what Jesus said and did **after he died**...

**J. In the darkest times there have always been JF's who have had a strange resilient peace...**

1. Resilient- Strong, tough, flexible, buoyant, able to rebound.
2. A peace that comes back and
3. Stares the reality of fear in the face
4. And says, "Even though this is scary and I have something real to fear... I am not overwhelmed and overcome."

**K. What we all need right now is a resilient peace.**

- L. Why did the 1<sup>st</sup> Jf's have it, how have millions of JF's since experienced it?
  1. All starts on the first Easter.

**IV. GOD**

- A. Crucifixion / buried
- B. Disciples- run away/hiding/women tell them of empty tomb... check it out, some friends say they saw Jesus... but not sure what to believe...
- C. Then... **Luke 24:36**

**And just as they were telling about it, Jesus himself was suddenly standing there among them. "Peace be with you," he said.**

1. Peace be with you...
2. Not a lot of peace in them at that moment... how would you react?
3. Made up story?

**D. V. 37-38**

**But the whole group was startled and frightened, thinking they were seeing a ghost! "Why are you frightened?" he asked. "Why are your hearts filled with doubt?"**

1. So real... isn't that exactly how you'd react?

2. Nobody actually expected Jesus to come back to life.
3. Jesus- what's the problem? Why are you frightened?
4. They could have rattled off a long list...
  - a. Hopes and dreams ripped away / lives in danger / future uncertain but definitely not what they were hoping for...
  - b. And now they are hallucinating!
5. But Jesus then SHOWS them WHY they could have peace... why they didn't need to be frightened...
6. Why they could have a resilient peace in every situation...
7. Has nothing to do with a religious belief system, or positive or wishful thinking, or a set of rules or a holy book to follow, or trying really hard to believe...

### 8. Resilient peace comes from a single historical event....

#### E. V. 39-43

Look at my hands. Look at my feet. You can see that it's really me. Touch me and make sure that I am not a ghost, because ghosts don't have bodies, as you see that I do." As he spoke, he showed them his hands and his feet. Still they stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder. Then he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he ate it as they watched.

1. Resilient peace comes from a single historical event... the resurrection of Jesus.
2. The core of Xian faith is the resurrection of Jesus.
3. If Jesus really is alive he and his love are even stronger than death.
4. If he really is alive we can trust him.
5. Then he explains the whole point of al of this... the plan from the beginning.

#### F. V. 44-48

Then he said, "When I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.' You are witnesses of all these things.

1. God loves you and is for you.
  2. He wants to have a perfect relationship with you now and forever
  3. Sin- law of love
  4. God- loving and just
  5. Jesus-
  6. Faith/Trust- not in a religion but in a person and an event.
- G. When you know God loves you and is for you... that he is stronger than darkness and even death... you can have peace...
1. When you don't have to fear death you can have peace in every situation.

- A. Maybe it's time for you to trust him?
  1. We are all keenly aware of our inability to control much of anything right now.
  2. Our fears come from that loss of control, and the unknown future... the danger to our lives and lifestyle.
  3. But... When you don't have to fear death you don't have to fear anything and you can have peace in every situation... now and in our uncertain future.
  4. You can have peace even in the worst crisis... simply by trusting that God knows you, loves you so much that he died to provide a way to forgive you and be with you.
  5. Trusting that he conquered death and can give you life even after death.
  6. **Invitation-** never been a time in your life...
  7. **Prayer.**
  8. Let us know by going to [www.yourcrosscreek.com/welcome](http://www.yourcrosscreek.com/welcome)
- B. If you prayed that either just now or at some point in your life...
  1. Share it with someone... share why, though there is doubt and fear, you also have peace...
  2. Share this online
  3. Share it with your mouth
  4. Share it with your actions...
    - a. Stay in, check in, give out.
- C. **The first Easter was not the end... it was just the beginning.**
  1. AND we don't have to see this time as the end of something but as the beginning of something better... something more... a life of peace, confidence, and love... through Jesus who died for us. All of us.

## VI. WE

- A. There's no denying this pandemic is a dark point in our lives
- B. Seems like darkness and fear and even annoyance and anger are all around us... trying to overtake us...
- C. But Jesus has overcome the darkness.
- D. Best friend John put it this way...
  1. **John 1:4-5 and 9-14.**

**The Word** [Jesus- God's way of telling us he is real] **gave life to everything that was created** [other translations... In him was life] **and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.** [Think about it.. how much dark does it take to extinguish a flame?]

**He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.** [Not just followers or rule keepers] **They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.**

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

- E. **The Light of the World brings a resilient peace in the darkest days.**
- F. It's available to you right now... you just have to choose to trust the one person who has died and conquered death FOR you.

## VII. Intro Interview

- A. I've asked my favorite person in the world to talk to my favorite mother in law to share how they experienced this peace in one of the hardest times imaginable...

## VIII. Liz and Leigh Interview

- **LIZ:** hi, thank you, privilege to chat today a little bit about your story of experiencing God's peace through a really significantly devastating time when your whole world got turned upside down.  
**Could you describe a little about your life at the time and what happened?**
- **LEIGH:** single mom of 4, living with mom and dad. came home from awanas and mom was standing out front. not typical. at first only knew Jeremy had been in a car accident, later received a phone call that he was deceased
- **LIZ:** I was only 5 so my memory is very vague. But so many times as I was growing up, people would talk to me about how you seemed to have this unexplainable peace during this time. **So what do you remember experiencing in regards to this resilient peace people were telling me about and Jon was talking about?**
- **LEIGH:** once the shock of what was happening started to fade, i had a peace that God was going to get me through it. it caused me to go to him and to trust him. I knew i could not walk through this without God.
- I knew that God was going to be there, he was my refuge and my peace.
- there was still grief and sorrow but without God i believe there would have been a great despair.

## IX. Closing/Giveaway

### Discussion Questions

1. What does "Easter" mean to you?
2. Whether you consider yourself a Jesus-Follower or not, what would it take for you to change your mind about whether or not He is trustworthy?
3. What do you want "resilient peace" to look like for you moving forward?