

Use the following thoughts and questions to have a spiritual conversation as a family. Don't emphasize having the right answer, but focus on spending time discussing the Word as a family.

Scripture

John 20:11-18

Session Summary

Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early Sunday morning, grieving the loss of her Lord. So many hopes and expectations came crashing down in just one weekend, and as she approached the tomb to honor Jesus, she was faced with an unexpected scene: an empty tomb. Her encounter with the risen Savior turned her sorrow into joy.

When the storms of life come and we go through times of trial, God is able to use them to refine our faith. He is able to take what was meant for evil and turn it for good (Gen. 50:20). But if we are not anchored in the truth, if our hope is not firmly set in Jesus, then the sorrows of life steal our joy. Tragically, when we are hurting, we often run to destructive habits for comfort and joy. It may be an eating disorder, cutting, drugs, pornography, the mindless absorption of TV or social media, etc. We don't want to feel the pain, so we try to numb it with things that relieve it or distract us in the short term, but compound it in the long run.

Joy is not the absence of pain, but the presence of Jesus. When we encounter Jesus, we will have a joy that cannot be taken. Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice. You will become sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy ... So you also have sorrow now. But I will see you again. Your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy from you" (John 16:20, 22).

- What is a painful experience in our lives that has threatened our joy?
- What are some unhealthy things we turn to when we are hurting?
- How can we experience joy even when we go through hard times?
- How can we share the joy of Christ with others who are hurting?

As individuals or in teams of two, challenge your family to find video clips of people moving from sorrow to joy. It could be a movie with a sad beginning and happy ending, or a sporting event where one team had lost all hope only to turn things around and win. Watch the clips together and discuss how the resurrection overcomes sorrow with joy.