

## “Fear of the New, the Unknown and the Unexpected”

*A Personal or Small Group Experience*

It is amazing to me how we naturally are afraid of things that are new—that surprise us, that are unexpected, that are different. We do by nature get into ruts of the expected, controlled, planned and unsurprising. It is as if that which we do not expect, can't control and cannot plan for is going to hurt us. I think this is our default as human beings. We have gotten hurt and the unexpected has been bad news so many times. Sometimes we can transfer this same experience to God and put Him in that same box. We rule out the potential good in things, even from God, that are “new, unknown or unexpected”. Put in the mix also that God tends to like surprising us and “Shazam!” - there are fireworks. God moves and we get afraid and resist.

What about if we grew in our trust to the point that we knew we were in God's hands—we would commit and recommit daily (hourly at times) to living in the reality of His truth and then live everyday—even the bad ones) anticipating what kinds of surprises He is going to give us?  
*(That is an amazing run-on sentence.)*

Living by faith and not by fear is the story of humanities quest in following God. The resurrection of Jesus was the ultimate call to trust in this Jesus who was “Risen from the Dead!” That is a step of faith.

As you read through the after Easter accounts of faith, fear and doubting in **John 20:19-31** note all the ways:

- Jesus surprises them! Is it good? What gifts does He bring with His surprises?
- The disciples are controlled by fear and doubt. What is their life like under fear and doubt? What about when they are living by faith and “receiving” all He has for them? What is this saying to you?
- What would it be like to truly believe that Jesus is really alive and every moment of every day is meant for Receiving all He has for us in that moment and Acting accordingly! Those disciples wouldn't have guessed in a million years that Jesus was going to come to them personally those evenings and bless them—fill them with life. But, He did—He surprised them and their lives were never the same! Our lives are meant to be lived with just that expectancy and capacity to Receive a Risen Jesus!

# Easter 2011

## “Connecting With God” Weekly Guide

This booklet is a resource to help you “Connect with God” this week. He deeply desires ongoing personal connection with you. You are that important to Him.

**This Page** has some scripture verses for you to meditate on each day this week. Notice the helpful hints section – these are great things to consider when personally engaging with God through His Word.

**The Center Pages contain** the notes and outline for the message given on Sunday. The message is also available as an audio download from [www.pointofgracechurch.org](http://www.pointofgracechurch.org)

**The Back Page** has a study written specifically for a small group of people (or an individual) to drill down deeper into a particular aspect of the week's theme. Small groups can review memorable points of the week's message and then work through the study concluding with a time of prayer.

## Scripture & Meditation Guide - April 25-30

### Helpful Hints:

- 1) Find a quiet place along with 15-20 minutes!
- 2) Focus on God for a few moments asking His Spirit to speak to your heart!
- 3) Listen to Him by reading a section of scripture then rereading it several times, dwelling on “words and phrases” which grab your heart's attention. Ask God, “What do You want me to hear?” “Why this word at this time?” “How are You inviting me to respond?”
- 4) Pray everything that is on your heart and mind as you are ready!  
*Worship Him, Bless Him, Thank Him, Ask Him, Trust Him*

**Monday:** John 20:19-23

**Tuesday:** John 20:24-31

**Wednesday:** 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

**Thursday:** 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

**Friday:** 1 Peter 1:3-9

**Saturday:** Matthew 28:1-15