LIFE GROUP LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

Responding to the Risen Jesus

Mark 16:9–20 • Dec 13, 2026 • 35 minutes

Aim Consider the responses to the risen Jesus in this passage and reflect on belief, witness, and dependence on him.

Before you lead

Read Mark 16:9-20 and the manuscript note printed in the ESV. Some early manuscripts lack these verses; discuss that openly and follow the church's teaching guidance. Do not build a disputed doctrine on this passage alone or treat its descriptions of signs as instructions to seek danger.

Ask the main questions first. Use the follow-ups when the group needs help going deeper; the leader notes are for your preparation. Give people time to answer, and ask them to point to the verses behind their observations.

Suggested timing Welcome, prayer, and reading 4 min • Head 7 min • Heart 12 min • Hands 9 min • Closing prayer 3 min

HEAD

Understand the passage

Read Mark 16:9–20 aloud from the ESV. Keep the passage open throughout the discussion.

1. How do people respond to the reports about Jesus in verses 9-13?

Follow-up: What repeated difficulty do you notice?

Leader note: Follow the sequence of reports and disbelief. Keep the manuscript note visible rather than presenting this ending without qualification.

2. In verses 14-18, what response does Jesus call for, and what task does he give the disciples?

Follow-up: How does the passage move from people not believing to people sharing the good news?

Leader note: Distinguish its commission from descriptions of accompanying signs. Read alongside Matthew 28:18-20; do not make dangerous acts a test of faith.

3. What does the end of the passage tell us about Jesus and the disciples in verses 19-20?

Follow-up: Who is helping them as they do this work?

Leader note: The ending describes Jesus' exaltation and his continuing help as the disciples proclaim the message.

HEART

Examine our motives

Choose a follow-up when it helps someone explain an answer. Allow people to share honestly without pressing them to disclose more than they are ready to share.

4. What makes it hard for you to take seriously what others say about Jesus?

Follow-up: What would help you examine your questions honestly?

Leader note: Make room for sincere questions, including questions about manuscripts. Confidence need not depend on hiding difficult information.

5. When do you look for something spectacular before you are willing to trust God?

Follow-up: What might you be overlooking in the ordinary ways he teaches and helps you?

Leader note: Avoid treating unusual experiences as proof of spiritual maturity or their absence as a lack of faith.

6. What are you afraid of when you think about talking about Jesus?

Follow-up: How does relying on Jesus change the way you face that fear?

Leader note: Move from the need to produce a response toward responsibility to speak truthfully and care for people.

HANDS

Put the passage into practice

7. What is one question about this passage you should study with a trusted teacher?

Follow-up: What other clear passages could help you think through that question carefully?

Leader note: Keep Scripture in context. Do not use snake handling, poison, or withheld medical care to demonstrate belief.

8. Who could you listen to and share the good news of Jesus with this week?

Follow-up: What is a thoughtful first step?

Leader note: Choose a personal conversation or invitation and pray for the person without trying to control the outcome.

Close in prayer

Thank Jesus for the hope of his resurrection and his care for those who follow him. Ask for humility in studying Scripture, growing trust, and courage to bear witness with love.