

Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.

Series: Vice

Talking about sin makes us uncomfortable. We can identify and try to avoid the "bad ones." It's easy to see in the lives of our neighbors. And evil is clearly at work out there in the world beyond us. But what about the sin and evil that arises from our own hearts? What about our own propensity to sin; those bad habits, tendencies, or traits that we would rather *not* be reminded of? Join us this Lent as we reflect on the historic seven vices in order to identify a multitude of mundane, everyday sins that can cling too closely.

Message Description:

John Calvin asked, what can man do? "Man, so far from being just before God, is but rottenness and a worm..." Sometimes in life we feel that way- riddled with suffering, pain, mistakes, filled with shame. But John Calvin was wrong about worms because he forgot what God can do with worms! The resurrection encounter found in John 20 takes place in a garden; Mary confused the resurrected Christ for a gardener; and the Spirit hovered over the dark waters and spoke light into being in creation. The story of redemption is written into creation itself. The action of worms to enrich soil should remind us of this Easter truth: God is in the business of taking what was once dead and decaying and transforming it into new life.

Key Scriptures:

John 20:1-18

Genesis 1:1-2

Questions Related to This Week's Teaching:

1. What image stood out to you from the Easter teaching about the power of our redemption?
2. Had you ever considered the power of the setting of John's resurrection account in a garden before? Where do you see signs of our Easter hope in creation right now?
3. Re-read John 20:1-18. Where do you imagine yourself in the story? [running with the disciples, scared/not understanding with Mary, not recognizing Jesus, or hearing Jesus call you by name]
4. At the end of the resurrection encounter, Mary's proclamation is not, "Jesus is alive!" but "I have seen the Lord!" Why does this matter? Do you think there is a difference between these two statements? How should this inform how we witness to our faith and invite others to come and experience the risen Christ?

Questions to wrap-up the Lenten series, Vice:

1. What did you appreciate about this series on the seven vices?
2. What challenged you?
3. How did you experience the grace of Jesus anew throughout this Lenten and Easter season?
4. Is there anything you will take with you from this series or do differently now?