

## **Comeback Week One**

**Opening Prayer:** God, thank you for the good news of Easter. Thank you for the unconditional love you give us. Help us to not miss out on all you are inviting us into. Help us to be open to you.

**Talk It Over:** This Easter we kicked off our new series that is all about experiencing hope after the odds seem stacked against us or we feel defeated.

- What is your favorite comeback story? This can be a story from a movie, a book, a game, something you observed in someone else's life, or part of your journey.
- Why do you think comeback stories have a way of tugging at the human heart?

Finding hope in the midst of a comeback can be hard. Here is the key factor we looked at this week to experiencing a comeback: *Don't let your past failures or your current reality define you. Let God define you.* This invitation is represented perfectly in the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. The Easter story is the ultimate comeback story.

- What has Easter meant to you in the past and what does Easter mean to you now? There is no right or wrong answer here. This is chance for you to share your experience with Easter.

### **Read Matthew 19:26 (NLT)**

Sometimes when the odds are against us we can feel like there is no hope or as if our whole life is on pause until the situation turns is resolved.

- Waiting for a situation, outcome, attitude, or story to end is often one of the hardest parts of life. For many of us, waiting for things to change can feel much like defeat. Share about your experience — past or present — with waiting. What is your natural tendency to do in waiting? For your own good, what ways or thinking or being do you need to avoid while waiting? What tips or tools help you in the waiting?
- While every situation doesn't end with the big miracle story, sometimes we are fortunate enough to experience the miracle we hoped for. If you have have witnessed a miracle story, which you are free to define however you'd like, share about the experience.
- While our situation may not turn out the way we first hoped, what are various ways God can do the impossible in our everyday life?

### **Read Matthew 11:28-30 (The Voice)**

Roy's story from this week's talk highlights God's invitation to follow him regardless of how hopeless our circumstance may look or how defeated we may feel. Roy's talked specifically about telling God at one point to take his problem away, and in exchange he'd become a better person, but Roy learned that God was asking for Roy's whole life in the midst of the brokenness and mess. God wasn't looking for Roy to simply get it together or get cleaned up, God wanted to walk Roy through a process of deep healing and restoration from the inside out.

- What does it look like to give our life to God in the midst of difficult times, waiting or defeat?

Sometimes when we feel defeated or hopeless God may be extending an opportunity to find our true hope in him. Consider and discuss the following ideas:

- Have you ever experienced struggle, defeat, loss, a wall or failure that lead to you finding God in new, greater ways? Have you ever been changed for the better by struggle, defeat, loss, a wall or a failure?

Have you ever watched someone else struggle, defeat, loss, hit a wall or failure and come out with a greater sense of love, hope, wisdom or strength?

**Read Romans 8:11 and Romans 8:28 (NLT)**

Easter is not only a reminder of the Jesus story, it's a chance to remember that the same spirit that rose Jesus from the dead is alive inside of us today. In other words, the same spirit that created the ultimate comeback through Jesus is available to each of us, our challenges, our failures, our losses, our defeat and our wall. While we cannot always see or limit what the impossible of a given situation is, we can trust that God can bring good out of any situation.

- Is there any area of life you are currently struggling with that feels in desperate need of a comeback or for some level of good to come your way?
- How could your situation, life, thinking or story change if you lived believing that the power of God is in you?

**Closing Prayer:** God, we believe you are a God of comebacks. Thank you for Jesus and the Easter story. We want to believe the impossible is possible through you. Help us to not miss the power and hope we can find in you.