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## CONVERSATION STARTER

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- What are some ways people talk about encountering Jesus? What are some positive and negative encounters you have heard of? What are some ways you have encountered Jesus? Have you encountered Him in any unexpected ways?
- Read Isaiah 52:12-53:13. What do you find surprising about the servant described in these verses? How does this description of the servant show his ultimate exaltation? How do you understand the words of v. 10, "He will see his offspring and prolong his days?"
- Read Mark 16:1-8. How do you think you would have responded if you had been at the tomb that morning? Why do you think the women went away trembling and bewildered? Why do you think the women were told to go to the disciples and Peter?
- Read the excerpt below. Do you agree with Wright that the greatest claim of Christianity is that of new creation? Why or why not? Why is it important to see Jesus' resurrection as the symbol and starting point of the new world? In what ways does the resurrection bolster a worldview that includes a God of creation and justice?
- How has Christ's death brought wholeness to our lives? How has Christ's resurrection brought hope to our lives? In what ways can we bring Christ's death and resurrection to bear in our jobs? Relationships? Communities? Marriages?

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**EXCERPT FROM:** *Surprised By Hope*

**BY:** N. T. Wright

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The challenge is in fact the challenge of new creation. To put it as its most basic: the resurrection of Jesus offers itself, to the student of history or science no less than the Christian or the theologian, not as an odd event within the world as it is but as the utterly characteristic, prototypical, and foundational event within the world as it has begun to be. It is not an absurd event within the old world but the symbol and starting point of the new world. The claim advanced in Christianity is of that magnitude: Jesus of Nazareth ushers in not simply a new religious possibility, not simply a new ethic or a new way of salvation, but a new creation. It is...wrong to imply that the choice is between an ancient worldview and a modern (or even a postmodern) one. The ancient worldview of Homer, Plato, Cicero, and the rest had no room for resurrection either. What is at stake is the clash between a worldview that allows for a God of creation and justice and worldviews that don't.