

The Resurrection: The Greatest Day in History

Lesson for Sunday, May 7, 2023

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Ice breaker: What do you consider to be the best day of your life? *Discuss...*
- ⇒ What would you say is the best day in history? *Discuss...* Many Christians might say the birth of Jesus. Others may say it was His death on the Cross. But if the Resurrection never took place, those other days would be meaningless. Read Paul's observation in 1 Corinthians 15:13-14.
- ⇒ Last week we studied the darkest day in history – the day Jesus was crucified.
- ⇒ Today we look at the Resurrection – the greatest day in history!

BIBLE STUDY:

1. He's Alive (Matthew 28:1-10) IDEA: *Have the class read and tell you the story! Or, with their Bible closed, ask the following questions to see how many they get correct.*
 - a. Read the text and then allow the class members to answer these questions:
 - i. The women went to the tomb at dawn on the first day of the week, Sunday. Who were the women? *Mary Magdalene and another Mary – likely the mother of James mentioned in Matthew 27:56 and 61.*
 - ii. What did they see as they arrived at the tomb? *There had been an earthquake and an angel had descended from heaven.*
 - iii. What do we notice about the angel? *His face was radiant and brilliant – like lightning – and his clothes were white as snow. He moved the stone from the cave and sat on it.*
 - iv. How did the guards respond to these events? *Shook in fear – fell as dead men.*
 - v. Why were there guards at the tomb? *Jews asked Pilate to guard the tomb so the disciples could not steal the body and say Jesus had risen.*
 - vi. What did the angel communicate with the women? *Told them not to be afraid, that Jesus had risen as He said He would, invited them to see the empty tomb, and told them to quickly tell the disciples.*
 - vii. What happened as the women left? *They left quickly with fear and great joy, but ran into Jesus!*
 - viii. How did they respond to seeing Jesus? *Fell at his feet and worshipped Him. Jesus received this worship, confirming His claim to be deity.*
 - ix. What does the fact “they held Him by the feet” tell us about Jesus after the Resurrection? *He had a physical body.*
 - b. You know all this! Consider: How important is the Resurrection to the Gospel? How does the fact of the Resurrection impact your daily life?
2. The Significance of the Resurrection (1 Peter 1:3-4)
 - a. Context: 1 Peter is an epistle; a letter written to give instruction, correction, and encouragement. Peter wrote it, and he addressed it to all believers who had been scattered due to persecution. These verses summarize the importance of the Resurrection for believers.
 - b. Point out these observations:
 - i. “According to His abundant mercy” – Peter is about to tell us what God has done for us. This is “why” God did it – His abundant mercy.
 - ii. “Hath begotten us again” – Reference to our salvation, being born again.

- iii. What has God begotten us to? A living hope. What is hope?
 - 1. Hope is a confident expectation...
 - 2. Christianity is the only view that provides hope.
 - 3. The world is spinning into chaos but we have hope!
- iv. How did He accomplish this hope? *By the Resurrection of Christ from the dead.*
- v. What words does vs. 4 use to describe our hope? *It is an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, and reserved in heaven.*
- vi. Summary: Christ's physical resurrection makes our spiritual resurrection possible.
- c. Insert verses from 1 Corinthians 15:13ff
- d. POINT: The Resurrection is the sure sign that God has conquered sin and death in Christ, and that we have a sure hope of eternal life with Him.
 - i. Discuss how this ought to impact our daily lives...
 - ii. As we face tests and trials in life, we have hope...

APPLICATION/DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ Lesslie Newbigin was a British theologian, missionary and author. He was asked once if he considered himself an optimist or a pessimist. He replied, "Neither. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead."
 - Living in light of the resurrection, Newbigin knew he couldn't be optimistic about the immediate future of mankind. The world will continue to get worse and worse.
 - But he couldn't be a pessimist either, because Christ is risen! In that fact we have a blessed hope, salvation from our sins, and everything we need to endure time until we see Him again.
 - *How should this thought separate how we think as believers from the rest of the world?*
- ⇒ Peter, in his message at Pentecost, proclaimed to the multitudes, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses (vs. 32)...and God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ."
 - Peter understood as a fact that Jesus was alive again. The obvious implication is that if you rise from the dead – you are LORD!
 - What difference would it make in your daily life if you lived with this truth in mind?
- ⇒ The bodily Resurrection of Jesus is a central component of our faith. It demonstrates God's ultimate power over death and validates the finished work of Jesus on the Cross. "If Christ be not risen, then our faith is in vain, and we are yet in our sins."

REVIEW:

Genesis 1:31 – God created it all

Genesis 1:27 – We are all created in God's image

Genesis 3:6 – The Fall changed it all

Genesis 3:15 – God's promise of redemption

Genesis 12:2-3 – The Seed of Abraham

Genesis 49:10 – Judah's Royal Seed

Exodus 12:23 – The Passover Lamb

2 Samuel 7:13 – The Line of David

Isaiah 53:5 – The Suffering Servant

Deuteronomy 7:9 – God is true to His Word

Matthew 1:16 – The time is fulfilled

John 19:30 – The Cross

Matthew 28:5-6 – The Resurrection