

He Lives Eternally: Carry On
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Luke 24:1-8; 36-40; 44-46; 47-53

Memorial Day weekend. Why do we celebrate Memorial Day? Think about those soldiers who died for our freedom. HOW can we LIVE OUR LIVES to make sure they didn't die in vain? Just as we REMEMBER those who paid the price for our freedom. We REMEMBER the price Jesus paid for our ULTIMATE FREEDOM from sin and hell. Today we REMEMBER that he didn't just die, he was RAISED FROM THE DEAD. How can we HONOR Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection in our day to day lives?

H.A. Ironside:

"We are not preaching the Gospel of a dead Christ, but of a living Christ who sits exalted at the Father's right hand, and is living to save all who put their trust in Him."

1 Corinthians 15:17

17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.

Adrian Rogers:

"The resurrection is not merely important to the historic Christian faith; without it, there would be no Christianity. It is the singular doctrine that elevates Christianity above all other world religions."

The fact that Jesus LIVES is the FUNDAMENTAL CORNERSTONE to Christianity. But, He didn't just ARISE and LEAVE the earth. He left us with a MISSION to carry on.

Luke 24:1-8

The Resurrection

24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5 In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" 8 Then they remembered his words.

- Verse 1: The women came with "spices". What were they going to the tomb to do?
- If they came with "spices" what did they expect to find at the tomb?
- They came "On the first day of the week" - Why did the women wait three days?
- Verse 4: Two men in "clothes that gleamed like lightning". Two ANGELS (per Matthew & John.)
- Do you know what the two angels did? They taught a Bible study right then and there!

- They had an opening discussion question: “Why do you look for the living among the dead? That would have gotten these women thinking! “Living, did he say living?”
- They then declared the essence of the “lesson”: “He is not here, he has risen!”
- Verse 6: What is the very next WORD after “he has risen”? REMEMBER
- Remember what? What He told you while He was walking on earth.
- The two Angel Bible Study teachers did what any good teacher SHOULD DO...they pointed the students back to the WORDS OF CHRIST in verse 7:
- 7 ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’
- Verse 8: What did the women do? They REMEMBERED his words.
- The women came to the tomb expecting a dead Jesus. No doubt they had heard his teaching: “...on the third day [He would] be raised.” But, instead of coming to the tomb expecting THAT. They came to the tomb with their “spices” to do what THEY could do.

How many times do we go through life doing just what WE can do and forget what Jesus promised HE would do?

- The women went back to the disciples and told them what they had seen.
- The disciples didn’t believe them. Verse 12 tells us Peter (and John) ran to the tomb to find what the women said to be true. And Peter left “marveling at what had happened.”
- Meanwhile, in verses 13-35 we read about two disciples (not any of the eleven) who were walking on the road to Emmaus, unpacking all the terrible events of Friday.
- Then we know that a man joined them on the walk; then at home; and verse 31 says: “Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; (Jesus) and He vanished from their sight.”
- These two men rushed back to Jerusalem to find the disciples and tell them about it.

Luke 24:36-40

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

37 They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. 38 He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? 39 Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

40 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

- The two men from Emmaus didn’t need to verify their story; Jesus did it for them!
- Scripture says that in his GLORIFIED BODY he just APPEARED through locked doors.
- Verse 36: The last time Jesus saw the disciples they were running in fear. What is the first thing Jesus says to them? What do we learn about God and our relationship to him from this? When we are at our MOST TERRIFIED by life...Jesus SPEAKS PEACE!
- How did the disciples react? “It’s a GHOST!”

Warren Wiersbe writes:

You would have expected the believers to heave a great sigh of relief and sing a hymn of praise, but instead they became terrified, frightened, and troubled (Luke 24:37–38). They thought a ghost had appeared! It all happened so suddenly that they were totally unprepared, even though several of them had already seen the risen Christ. Mark 16:14 suggests that the condition of their hearts had something to do with the expression of their fears.

Mark 16:14

14 Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

- They had been with Him day in and day out for three years. They had seen the miracles. They had heard what He told them about his death and resurrection.
- But, it was all too much for them to grasp at that point.
- Sometimes, you and I have a hard time not only REMEMBERING but BELIEVING Jesus' words. The writer of Hebrews reminds us:

Hebrews 11:6

6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

It's not enough to come to church and HEAR the Word of God. It's not enough to READ the Word of God. We have to TRUST IT WITH OUR VERY LIVES!

And, in fairness to the disciples...they WOULD trust His WORDS with their lives.

Verses 38-40 Jesus speaks:

38 He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?"

39 Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

40 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

- Look at verse 38. Question: How can verse 38 apply to you and me TODAY?
- Can you imagine Jesus saying those words to you? "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your mind(s)?"
- Question: What was Jesus doing in verses 39 and 40? Proving it was Him. Making Himself REAL to them.
- How can THOSE VERSES apply to you and me today?

If we ask Him, Jesus will make himself REAL TO US to ERASE our TROUBLED SPIRIT and the DOUBTS THAT RISE IN OUR MINDS.

- Verse 44...Jesus begins to TEACH.

Luke 24:44-46

44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,

- Verse 45: "Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures."
- You should **UNDERLINE** that verse because it applies to YOU and ME as well.
- Question: What can we do to have Jesus "open our minds" to "understand" scripture?

Psalm 119:18 (NIV) Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

Spurgeon wrote:

"Jesus' College is the only one in which God's truth can be really learned; other schools may teach us what is to be believed, but Christ's alone can show us how to believe it. Let us sit at the feet of Jesus, and by earnest prayer call in His blessed aid that our dull wits may grow brighter, and our feeble understandings may receive heavenly things."

- Verse 46: "Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day". Verse 46 sums up the **NECESSITY** of what Jesus did to **FULFILL** God's plan for our **SALVATION**.
- Jesus didn't just give them **UNDERSTANDING**. He gave them **ORDERS** to carry out.

Luke 24:47-53

47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

The Ascension

50 When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. 51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. 52 Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. 53 And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

- Verse 47: "...repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations," Question: We usually think of Matthew's account of this moment. What do we call what Jesus is talking about? The Great Commission. Every believer has a role to play in the preaching and teaching and witnessing of "repentance and forgiveness."
- Verse 47 also says "beginning at Jerusalem." Question: Jesus just said to preach the Gospel to "all nations", so what is significant about "beginning at Jerusalem." Who lived in Jerusalem? Their families, friends, and neighbors.

- Verse 48: The disciples were “witnesses” of what had happened. You and I are WITNESSES to what Jesus has done in our lives. It’s important to share the EYE WITNESS account of what Jesus has done for me. But just SHARING MY STORY is not enough.
- Verse 49: Jesus said “I’m going to send you what my Father has promised”.
- What is He referring to? Look at the next sentence. “...power from on high”

Acts 1:8

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

As you spread the Gospel: 1. Do it ONLY in the power of the Holy Spirit; 2. Start close to home then move OUTWARD “to the ends of the earth.”

Warren Wiersbe writes:

Witnessing is not something that we do for the Lord; it is something that He does through us, if we are filled with the Holy Spirit. There is a great difference between a “sales talk” and a Spirit-empowered witness. “People do not come to Christ at the end of an argument,” said Vance Havner. “Simon Peter came to Jesus because Andrew went after him with a testimony.” We go forth in the authority of His name, in the power of His spirit, heralding His gospel of His grace.

- Verses 50 and 51 tell us He led them out to Bethany and “While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.”
- Verse 52: How did they react? 52 Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. 53 And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.
- That’s how YOU and I should respond DAILY to the fact that Jesus is ALIVE.
- We should go home WORSHIPPING with GREAT JOY, CONTINUALLY praising God!

So, What’s The Takeaway?

- As Ironside said: “We are not preaching the Gospel of a dead Christ, but of a living Christ...”
- The fact that Jesus LIVES is the FUNDAMENTAL CORNERSTONE to Christianity.
- But, He didn’t just ARISE and LEAVE the earth. He left us with a MISSION to carry on.
- To carry out that mission we have to REMEMBER what Jesus taught us.
- We also have pray for Him to OPEN OUR MINDS so we can UNDERSTAND the scriptures. (v. 45)
- It’s not enough to come to church and HEAR the Word of God. It’s not enough to READ the Word of God. We have to TRUST IT WITH OUR VERY LIVES!
- Then as we share the good news of what Jesus has done for us. We need to not only share OUR STORY but HIS STORY...the GOSPEL.
And share it not in our strength, but ask the Holy Spirit to EMPOWER our witness.
- And BECAUSE HE LIVES, we should go home WORSHIPPING with GREAT JOY, CONTINUALLY praising God!