

Easter Sunday - April 4, 2010

John 20:1-10

"The Resurrection... Faithfulness Amidst Confusion"

Jn 20:1-10 ...

- Establishing the Fact of the Resurrection

“ He was seen at least eleven times after He rose again, at different times of day, in different ways, and by different witnesses. He was seen first by one woman alone, then by several women together, then by one man, then by two men, and each time in the open air. Then He was seen by ten disciples in the evening in a room, then by eleven disciples again in a room, and afterwards on five different occasions, at one of which no less than five hundred people was present. Those to whom He appeared, touched Him, talked with Him, and saw Him eat and drink. ... If there is any fact in Christianity that is well supported by evidence, it is the fact of Christ rising again from the dead. ...One thing at any rate is most undeniably certain... The Apostles, a few weeks after our Lord's crucifixion, were utterly and entirely different men in every way from what they were before the crucifixion. ...Even such men as German Rationalists, Paulus and Strauss are obliged to make the curious admission— 'Something extraordinary must have occurred!' J.C. Ryle, "Expository Thoughts on John", vol 3, p. 395

EVIDENCE & BELIEF

... Is there enough evidence to remove all doubt about the resurrection?

... Is there enough evidence in order to have faith in the resurrection?

Jn 20:21

- **Thomas** (Jn 20) vs the **Rich Man/Lazarus** (Lk 16) vs **Saul of Tarsus** (Acts 9)

Acts 2:22-32 ...37-41 ... 3,000 heard enough evidence to Believe

WHY IS THE RESURRECTION SO IMPORTANT? ...

(1) Because it Validates the Unique Claims of Christianity;

Rom 1:1-5 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

(2) It Answers and Solves the most basic dysfunction to human existence (death);

(3) It imports into this life POWER for Living this Life and HOPE for the Next

MAN'S DANCE WITH DEATH

“ My question— that which at the age of fifty brought me to the verge of suicide — was the simplest of questions, lying in the soul of every man ... a question without an answer to which one cannot live. It was: ‘What will come of what I am doing today or tomorrow? What will come of my whole life? Why should I live, why wish for anything, or do anything?’ It can also be expressed thus: Is there any meaning in my life that the inevitable death awaiting me does not destroy?” **Leo Tolstoy**, “A Confession” (quoted in “The Reason for God”, p. 201

Acts 2:24 ... Jesus' Resurrection 'loosened the pangs of death'...

'pangs' (Gk) = Pain, sorrow. ...referring to the travail or pain of childbirth (1 Thess 5:3). ...warning of the sorrows that would follow wars, famines and other catastrophes (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)equivalent to intolerable anguish (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon)

“ Death is such an ugly enemy. It generates endless and incalculable anguish. ...Whether death afflicts us at five or ten or thirty or fifty or seventy or eighty years, it comes and it is implacable. ... Death is an enemy, and it can be a fierce one. Death is not normal when you look at it from the vantage point of what God created in the first place. It is normal this side of the fall, but that is not saying much. It is an enemy. It is ugly. It destroys relationships. It is to be feared. It is repulsive. There is something odious about death. Never ever pretend otherwise. But death does not have the last word. ... Thank God for a Savior who could claim, “I am the resurrection and the life.” **D.A. Carson**, “Scandalous”, p. 132

Heb 2:14-15 ... Our Dance with Death

“ The Bible is, in many ways, a book about death. It begins in Genesis, when Adam and Eve sinned and death entered the world. It ends in Revelation with the judgement of sin and the celebration of the end of death for all believers. The Bible constantly reminds us of the human predicament and of the inevitability of our mortality. So, whenever resurrection is mentioned, it is a shaft of light penetrating our helplessness and hopelessness. Because of the repeated discussion of death, the subject of resurrection assumes a dramatic prominence whenever it appears.” **Adrian Warnock**, “Raised with Christ”, p. 69

NOTE: Hopelessness & Helplessness Reveals a Diminished View of the Resurrection

LET GOD BE FAITHFUL...THOUGH EVERY MAN BE CLUELESS

This Add On Feature Statement (v. 9) ... “for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise from the dead”

.... God still has a Sovereign Plan for our lives & His glory, when we don't understand and when we aren't in step!

One could say that the Entire Event of the Cross/Resurrection was **Not an 'A-Game Day' for the disciples**. The biggest event in Christianity is taking place and the disciples are in a fog ... **NO ONE is Looking for the Resurrection!!**

Mark 16:2-3 And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. 3 And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"

Luke 24:9-11 and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, 11 but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

– Yet Jesus testified repeatedly about the resurrection and the Scriptures point to the resurrection

Matt 12:40

Matt 16:21

Matt 27:62-63

John 2:18-19

How In Step Were the Disciples with Our Sovereign God?

“ We are taught finally in these verses, that there may be much ignorance even in true believers. ... For three long years these two leading Apostles had heard our Lord speak of His own resurrection as a fact, and yet they had not understood Him. Again and again He had staked the truth of His Messiahship on His rising from the dead, and yet they had never taken in His meaning. ... Surely the Christian minister has little right to complain of ignorance among his hearers, when he marks the ignorance of Peter and John, under the teaching of Christ Himself. ... After all we must remember that true grace, and not head knowledge, is the one thing needful. ... In fact, the extent to which one man may have much knowledge, and yet no grace is one of the greatest mysteries in religion, and one which the last day alone will unfold. Let us always seek knowledge, and be ashamed of ignorance. But let us not despair because our knowledge is imperfect, and, above all, let us make sure that, like Peter and John, we have grace and right hearts.” **J.C. Ryle**, “Expository Thoughts on John”, vol 3, p. 393