

THE MESSAGE AFTER THE RESURRECTION

Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:1-11

Have you ever asked this question...what happened after Jesus resurrection? Last week we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. What does that mean? It means that getting up from the dead is indeed possible, and Jesus proved it. It also proved that all who believe in Jesus Christ, have resurrection life in them now. If you are a child of God, you are not going to get resurrection life, you now have resurrection life in you because you have Jesus in you as a Christian. But what is happened after the resurrection?

The Bible says that for forty days Jesus appeared to different groups of people giving them proofs that He was alive. He appeared to the apostles, He appeared to the two on the way to Emmaus, He appeared to over 500 at one time giving proof of His resurrection. It was Luke that declares, "Jesus proved in many ways that it was He himself". In other words there could be no doubt. Jesus knew that emotions are such that sometimes you can't trust your eyes, so what does He do, He proves over and over and over again to His disciples. As you listen to Jesus carefully, after the resurrection, here is His message after His resurrection.

1. BE TEACHING THE RIGHT MESSAGE. Luke makes it clear that Jesus spent much time "teaching". Even moments prior to Jesus ascending back into heaven, He was teaching his disciples. Did you know that one thing heavy on the heart of Jesus is teaching? He was teaching the truth of the Kingdom of God. For forty days after His resurrection, Jesus met and taught His disciples. Jesus taught and they listened, interacted and asked questions about where He was going, and when He was coming back. Jesus taught them about the Kingdom, about the ways of God, the will of God!

"Teaching" was and is the very heart of Jesus, and learning is the very heart of true disciples of God. If there is one thing that Jesus made clear, it was the necessity to teach the right message. The message, ways and truth of Jesus, is the only right teaching. For all that were true disciples in Jesus time, they listened and learned what Jesus had to say. Teaching is paramount in the heart of Jesus. If they were a true disciple, they were involved in listening to Jesus teach. That is why we teach today. We have had Bible classes for so long, that we forget often times the reason.

We teach, because teaching the truth is God ordained, and God directed. We can't walk with God, know the ways of God, the will of God, the plan of God, the nature of God, apart from being taught. If you find a church that honoring God, you will find faithful teaching, equipping of the saints of God in small groups, extended groups, and in worship. Why?

Because teaching originates with Jesus.

The message of Jesus after His resurrection is teaching the right message to His disciples. Sadly, there are many that put little emphasis on teaching. But ask this question, How can we follow Jesus right if we are not taught? How can we know what His word says if we are not taught? God's Word says, "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge". Many people experience shipwreck in their lives because they refuse to be "taught". The message after the resurrection is this...teach, teach, teach. The Great Commission ends with "TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS I HAVE COMMANDED YOU!". You don't have a New Testament church apart from great emphasis placed on teaching! Friend, if you put little emphasis on learning and being taught, then you put little emphasis on what Jesus says is important. Think about it, how do you the right job at your place of employment without being taught? How does a doctor learn his trade without being taught? How does a surgeon know how to perform surgery without being taught?

The message after the resurrection is this.... wait for the Holy Spirit, and then be endued with power and then go into all the world, teach and preach the gospel. Sadly, there are so many people who are ignorant of the Word of God. They know little of the Word of God, and they find themselves in all sorts of hellish messes due to their ignorance of the Word of God. I can promise you this, if you become rich in the Word, you will have rich and enriched life. If you become poor in the Word, you will have a poverty ridden life in spirit. Sadly, there are many older people who refuse to learn and be taught, and couldn't even put together five books of the Bible.

Some years ago Time magazine gave 112 test questions to find some amazing responses. Here are some of the answers... "Sodom and Gomorrah were lovers". "Jezebel was Ahab's jackass". "Eve was created from an apple". "Jesus was baptized by Moses". But as funny as that may sound, sadly many churches around this world are suffering for lack of teaching. The message of Jesus before and after the resurrection is this...teach, teach, teach. Sunday School teachers, you may feel like your task is meaningless, but your teaching of the Word of God is a fragrant offering to the Lord Jesus Christ. Preschool teachers, you may think that those ears aren't listening...but I believe we found out a few weeks ago, here in church that you don't have to be looking at the preacher to listen. The message after the resurrection that Jesus gives...is "teach them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you". (Mt. 28:20) God's church that God honors is that church that preaches the truth, exalts the truth, regardless of the culture and the times. We may have a shifting society, but we don't have a shifting Truth. Our truth is the Lord Jesus Christ who never changes.

2. BE BAPTIZED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. Ten days after Jesus ascended or fifty days His resurrection, the Bible records that something mightily came upon those early disciples in a special way, it was a baptism of the Holy Spirit. That was the first coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believers. Never before had they experienced what they experienced that day. From then on the Bible says that God's Holy Spirit lives inside every believer that is saved. If you are a child of God, you received the Holy Spirit that moment that you were saved. That is God's promise, that is God's Word.

The sobering truth is this... God's work, done God's way, cannot be done without the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that leads the church. It is the Holy Spirit that must dictate and dominate everything that we do in this, His church. It is the Holy Spirit that leads, guides, and directs us individually and corporately. The truth is, it is the Holy Spirit that empowers us to witness, to love. It is the Holy Spirit that gives us holy boldness to bear witness to others around us. It is the Holy Spirit that imparts into us a new nature. While there is a one time entrance of the Holy Spirit at salvation, the Bible makes it clear that we are to "be filled" with the Holy Spirit. Meaning that we are to be empty of ourselves, and filled with "Holy Spirit"! Why are there so many church difficulties and problems? People wanting to selfishly do church their way, without sensitivity to the Holy Spirit! Jesus makes it clear that there is no honoring the Lord apart from the Holy Spirit's involvement.

The world doesn't understand that and don't know the Holy Spirit, for only the children of God know that. While we receive the Holy Spirit once at salvation, God commands us to "be filled" with the Holy Spirit. Here is the best way to define "filled". It means that thing or person that fills us, superimposes itself above our emotion, and every other consideration. It means willfully removing yourself from the throne of your heart, and allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your life. A person who is filled with the Holy Spirit, it going to live in a way that emotions don't dictate the actions, because the Holy Spirit is dominating. The message after the resurrection is this... there is no wonderful life apart from being filled with the Holy Spirit. God saved us to be led, directed and guided by His Holy Spirit on a day by day basis. That is His desire and plan.

3. BE TESTIFYING ABOUT JESUS DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION TO THE NATIONS. After the resurrection, Jesus made it clear that the disciples assignment had only just begun. Literally the command and message was to "testify" about Jesus everywhere. You and I are the church, just as the early disciples were the early church. It is the command of Jesus to his church to take the gospel everywhere. Why?

Because souls are lost! Why? Because lost souls apart from a relationship with Jesus are damned! Why? Because there can be no accepting of Jesus Christ apart from the gospel of God. How can they believe unless someone tell them about the gospel? The only reason that we are saved is because someone told us the gospel, the good news of Jesus death, burial and resurrection. But in reality, the first reason we should go into all the world is because that is a direct order from Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God!

When you read and listen to the early disciples and how they lived and died, you realize that they gave their lives for the sake of the gospel of Christ. If you have no heart for the world to hear the gospel, then you don't really love Jesus. Because Jesus said, "*If you love me, you will keep my commands*". (Jn. 14:15) His command is to go, and keep going and keep going. We go through missions. We go through missions offering. We go through mission teams. We go because that is the command of our God and Father. A refusal to go is the same as saying, "Jesus I don't want to follow you!" Imagine the fellowship that we will have with saints from all the ages because people went and told the blessed story, and even died for the cause of Christ.

4. BE FOCUSED ON JESUS. In v.9, the Bible records that Jesus would be soon leaving his disciples. Yet, in Jesus leaving, He reminds us that He is coming back. While the disciples gazed or looked steadfastly, as Jesus slowly and gradually departed from them, they no doubt were heart broken. After all Jesus had now been resurrected. Jesus is now alive! Jesus can now restore the kingdoms, or so they thought. But they watch him go out of their sight...but about that time, they see and hear two angels say these words, "Men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?"

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Not some other Jesus, not a Jesus without a body, but "this same Jesus". Jesus is going to come with exactly and precisely the same body that he had that Thomas touched and many touched while He was on earth. The resurrected body that Jesus had when He ascended will be the same blessed body He returns with. It was impossible to believe that He would return from the dead, but He did, and just as Jesus said He would rise from the dead...so does He promise He will come again. This Jesus who came to die on the cross...is coming back! The same Jesus in attitude, love, character! He will be the same Jesus who promised his believers He would return. Since Jesus died for us, rose for us, and is coming again to receive us, and is coming to set up His kingdom, ours is to focus on Jesus. Focus in loving Him! Focus on serving Him!