

## **ALIVE FOREVERMORE**

### **John 20.1-18**

INTRODUCTION: sometimes world events happen and we miss the impact of the meaning. • •

- When the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II, it signaled our entrance into the nuclear age.
- When the Vietnam War began to be broadcast in living color in our living rooms in the 1960s it signaled a shift in mindset of the American people towards war.
- When man landed on the moon in 1969 it signaled a new era of space exploration.
- When the twin towers of the World Trade Center came down on Sep. 11, 2001 we entered a new age of terrorism that had come to the United States.

Sometimes world events happen and we don't fully grasp the impact.

When Jesus was crucified the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities thought He had been taken care of. They had grown tired of His preaching, they had grown tired of His popularity. The Jewish religious leaders did not know how to explain the miracles, did not understand His popularity, they just wanted to get rid of Him. So, they had him arrested, falsely accused and convicted, and then crucified. He was buried in a new tomb, a stone was placed over the entrance and a seal was placed on the stone to make sure no one messed with it. When the tomb was discovered to be empty on the first day of the week, the disciples of Jesus failed to understand the importance of the empty tomb until the Holy Spirit brought back to remembrance the words of Jesus concerning His death, burial, and resurrection.

So far in the lessons of VBS we have seen snap-shots of Jesus at different points in His life:

- We have seen Jesus as the student as He sat with the religious leaders in the temple asking questions of them and being taught by them;

- Jesus as the Son of God at His baptism, when the heavens opened up and God pronounced Jesus as His Son in whom He was well pleased;
- And Jesus proving He was the Son of God when He walked on the water in a storm and had Peter get out of the boat and walk towards Him.

Tonight we will see a snap-shop of Jesus as the risen Lord. Here is what we will discover tonight:

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR FAITH.

[SCRIPTURE]

We're studying what the Bible teaches us about the resurrection of Jesus and why that one event is the foundation of our faith.

For VBS teachers, the main point of this day's lesson is this:

JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

Now here is the question we are going to answer and what you need to think on and maybe even ask your VBS class;

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW THAT JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD?

Of all the lessons in VBS and of all that we can learn about the life of Christ, this is probably the most fundamentally important lesson we can learn and must understand about our faith.

## **I. The resurrection proves the truth of God's Word (v. 9)**

At least three times in the earthly ministry of Jesus, He had told His disciples He would be arrested, crucified, and raised from the dead. (Matt. 14.22; 16.21; Mark 10.33-34; John 2.20-22).

But notice what we read in v. 9:

*For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.*

I am sure we would probably be in their shoes as well. Although in the ministry of Jesus they had witnessed at least three people being raised from the dead (the widow of Nain's son, Jairus' daughter, and Lazarus) as recorded in the gospels (and possibly more unrecorded), Jesus himself being resurrected was something else. It was Jesus who raised the three previously, so who would raise Jesus from the dead? Someone rising from the dead was not a normal occurrence so they may have had a hard time wrapping their heads around it. But the fact is, they had been told and yet they did not understand.

***Before we give the disciples a hard time, think about their walk with Christ as new disciples first, and then think about your own walk with the Lord.***

***Jesus took 12 ordinary men, some of them were fishermen, one was a tax collector, other had various occupations – but He took 12 men that God directed Him to take, by name, and taught them for three years how to be fishers of men. They learned from Jesus how to minister, how to serve; Jesus gave them power to heal; they saw miracle after miracle. They were being trained as disciples but there was much for them to learn. And we read in the gospels that at times Jesus would admonish them for their lack of faith.***

***For instance, when Jesus stilled the storm on the sea, He asked the disciples,***

*“Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?” (Matt. 8.26)*

*When Jesus drove the demon from the boy after the disciples failed to do so, listen to what Jesus said,*

*“You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?” (Matt. 17.17)*

*When Jesus walked on the water and called for Peter to come to him on the water, after Jesus and Peter got into the boat, Jesus asked them,*

*“You of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matt. 14.31)*

*The disciples had been told by Jesus Himself that He would be raised on the third day, but that did not register with them.*

*The same is true of us. Jesus takes us one step at a time as we learn what it means to be a disciple of Christ. The only way we will understand what God wants to do is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. That means we have to rely on the presence of the Spirit of God if we are going to effectively grow and serve the Lord.*

**THE RESURRECTION PROVES THE TRUTH OF GOD’S WORD.**

## **2. The resurrection of Jesus demonstrated a power greater than this world (v. 11-13)**

Now here is what is interesting. When Peter and John went into the empty tomb, they saw only the discarded burial cloths, nothing else. But when Mary stooped to look into the tomb

after John and Peter had left she saw two angels in white sitting by the ledge where Jesus had been placed; one at the head and the other at the foot.

Matthew records that an angel with the appearance of lightening and clothing as white as snow was standing at the entrance of the tomb.

Mark records that Mary and the other women saw an angel in white clothing sitting in the tomb;

Luke records that as the women were in the tomb two men suddenly appeared to them in dazzling clothing.

So regardless of which account of the resurrection you read, here is what you and in need to understand: the resurrection of Jesus was because of a power that is not of this world, it is greater than this world. This is the power that created the universe, the power that created this planet and everything in it. This is the power that not only made us, but saved us when we cried out to God and this is the power that enables us to serve the Lord through His church. The disciples did not understand what Jesus said about the resurrection probably because they did not understand the power that it took to raise Jesus, or anyone, from the dead. Although they had witnessed Jesus raising people from the dead does not mean they fully understand the raising.

*When I was stationed onboard my first ship, the USS FIFE, a Spruance-class destroyer, I went through the qualifications to earn my enlisted surface warfare designation. This qualification process meant I had to learn about every system on the ship – the weapons systems, engines, air conditioning, electronics – every system on the ship. I had a book I had to work through about every system and each system had to be signed off by someone who worked on the system indicating I knew the system. Once that book was completed I had to sit before an oral review board and they could ask me any question they wanted to*

*about any system on the ship, and I had to know the answer. I passed my qualifications and was awarded the enlisted surface warfare specialist qualification which also entitled me to wear the pin on my uniform. The point is, I had to learn and understand all the systems onboard that particular ship.*

*But when it came to the resurrection, that was a power not of this world and the disciples did not understand it. I'm not sure we even understand it today. The resurrection not only proved the truth of God's word but it also demonstrated a power that is greater than this world.*

### **3. The resurrection of Jesus is a physical reality (vv. 14-17)**

Listen to how Paul recorded the physical reality of the resurrection of Jesus:

#### **1 Cor. 15.3-8 [read]**

Not only did He appear to the 12 apostles, but He also appeared to over 500 people. The resurrection of Jesus is a physical reality.

When Mary saw Jesus at the tomb she did not immediately recognize Him. Was it because His appearance was different? Was it because it was not quite light enough yet to recognize Him? We don't know, all we know is that when Mary saw Jesus she did not recognize Him. Even when Jesus asked her who she was looking for, Mary did not recognize the voice. But when Jesus called her name, then she knew!

#### **v. 17**

an interesting verse of Scripture that some commentators struggle with. The basic meaning of this verse is simply that Jesus was teaching Mary, as He tried to teach the disciples in the

upper room and would teach them again, that they had to stop thinking of their relationship with Him in purely physical terms; their relationship with Him had just entered a whole new realm of understanding. Jesus would still be their savior, Jesus was still God in the flesh, but their understanding of Him and their relationship with Him would be build on faith and not sight. They would see Him go back up into heaven. He had already told them He would come back one day and take them with Him so they knew He would return one day. But in the mean time, their relationship with Him would be build on faith, faith in His word, faith in His promise, faith in His person as Lord and Savior of the world.

***The physical reality of the resurrection of Jesus is the basis for our faith. Listen to what the apostle Paul wrote about the physical resurrection of Jesus:***

**1 COR. 15.12-19 [READ]**

***The resurrection of Jesus is the key, the basis, the foundation of our faith. Without the resurrection of Jesus we have believed in a religious leader that lived and died like every other religious leader in the world. But Jesus was not a religious leader, He is the Savior of the world, He is God in the flesh. Yes Jesus was physically crucified, He physically died, He was physically buried, and He was physically raised from the dead on the third day.***

***And he is alive right now, seated at the right hand of God the Father.***

***One day He will return in power and great glory!***

***THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS PROVES THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD;***

***IS A POWER THAT IS NOT OF THIS WORLD;***

***IS A PHYSICAL REALITY***

#### **4. The resurrection of Jesus is our testimony (v. 18)**

Mary's statement to the disciples was a powerful one: "I have seen the Lord." She also reported what the Lord had said to her at the tomb.

And in reality this is our testimony as well, "I have seen the Lord."

What does it mean to, "see the Lord?" What did it mean for Mary?

- 1, She physically saw the empty tomb and the resurrected Lord.
2. Jesus called her by name.
3. Seeing the resurrected Jesus changed her life forever.
4. She became a powerful witness to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

The same is true of us today:

- 1, When Jesus saves us He calls us by name.
2. Through Jesus we are made new creatures in Christ.
3. When Jesus saves us, we are eternally saved.
4. What Jesus has done for us is our story to share with the world about the transforming power of God in Jesus Christ.

SO WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW AND BELIEVE THAT JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD?

1. The resurrection proves that Jesus won the victory over sin, death, and the grave.
2. The resurrection proves that through faith in Jesus we need not fear death.
3. The resurrection proves that Jesus is the living savior and not a dead religious leader.
4. The resurrection is the foundation of our faith; if Jesus was not resurrected then our faith has no foundation, it is worthless.



5. Belief in the resurrection is part of coming to faith in Christ

**ROM. 10.9, 13**: *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved . . . for whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.*