

Session 5

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

Luke 24:1-12

Memory Verse

Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. When he stooped to look in, he saw only the linen cloths. So he went away, amazed at what had happened.

– LUKE 24:12, CSB



Resurrection Sunday

THEOLOGICAL THEME: The good news of the forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of Christ hinges upon the resurrection of Christ.

 Have you ever heard of “Good Samaritan” laws? What do you know about them?

 Why would it be wrong to withhold reasonable help to someone in need when it is within your power to help?

Many states have laws that are a part of a particular category of legislation known as “Good Samaritan” laws. In a nutshell, these laws compel citizens to not only avoid doing harm to another person but also to not withhold reasonable help to someone in need. In the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the priest and the Levite didn’t harm the man who was left for dead on the side of the road. They didn’t throw punches, take his possessions, or throw him to the ground. So, they were innocent, right? Wrong. It was within their power to help and they did not. Jesus condemned their inaction, and now many states condemn that sort of inaction as well.

Good Samaritan laws codify the biblical principle that right behavior isn’t only avoiding wrong action, but it is also doing what is right. Good behavior, biblically speaking, is a two-sided coin. It is both avoiding sin and doing good works. The gospel of Jesus Christ compels us to be faithful in completing both sides of the coin.

In our study of the Scriptures today, we will consider how the resurrection of Jesus Christ compels followers of Christ to live distinct lives. Holy living, good works, and the proclamation of the gospel of the risen Savior should mark the lives of those who claim the name of Christ.

Session Summary

Paul wrote to the Corinthians that Jesus “was buried” (1 Cor. 15:4). Most, if not all, of the Christians at Corinth did not have any interaction with Jesus Christ before His ascension into heaven. Paul emphasized that the testimony they had heard and read concerning the spilled blood, skin-slicing whips, piercing thorns, and vitriolic mocking were, in fact, true. Jesus was buried because His physical life truly expired due to the physical torture and trauma that He had endured on the Roman cross. Matthew reported that after the burial of Christ the Romans made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard (Matt. 27:66).

But that’s not the end. Paul went on to say, “that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” Jesus was raised for our justification (Rom. 4:25)! In His resurrection, He is “the powerful Son of God” (Rom. 1:4). Jesus now has the exclusive right to say to us, “Don’t be afraid. I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades” (Rev. 1:17-18).

Of all people on the face of the earth, Christians have a store of hope, joy, and motivation that is unequalled. If they truly believe what the Bible says, then there is no rival to their hope-filled reality and bright future, no matter what their temporary circumstances might be. This ought to lead them to a certain kind of living that is altogether distinct from those who view the world devoid of the hope of Christ.

1. Compelled to Holy Living (Luke 24:1-12)

When Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James heard the news of Christ’s resurrection it had a profound impact on them. It changed the way they saw the world and it changed their plans. This was also true for Peter, who got up and ran to the tomb.

A fundamental truth that we must keep in view is that Jesus' resurrection has implications in our lives today, right now. His death and resurrection not only deal with our broken pasts and assures our future, but it also transforms our lives now. First Peter 2:21 says, "For you were called to this, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."



How would you describe Jesus' life? How was Jesus' life connected to the reality of the resurrection?

There are many adjectives we could use to describe Jesus' life, but it is best to start with this one: holy. Jesus lived a holy life. In other words, Jesus lived a life that was set apart for sacred purposes, not profane. To say it clearly, Jesus did not sin. Peter went on to say, "He did not commit sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2:22). Jesus lived a sinless life. This matters for several reasons. If Jesus sinned, He wasn't God. And if Jesus sinned, He was unable to offer Himself as a substitutionary sacrifice on our behalf to pay for our sin.



What does it mean for them to live holy lives if they have already been made holy by Christ's death on their behalf?

Christians are holy in a positional sense. When they are justified upon responding to the gospel with faith and repentance, they are made to be holy and righteous in God's sight because Jesus' righteousness is credited to their account (2 Cor. 5:21). But they are not altogether holy in a practical sense. They still battle against sin and sometimes lose the battle. They succumb to the old man and disobey God's will for their lives. Christians continue to be weak even after they are saved. The Bible says, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

It may be helpful to consider the terminology "active holiness" and "passive holiness." Passive holiness is what happens to Christians. They are holy because of what Christ

did on their behalf. Active holiness, however, is the war in which Christians engage in the lifelong process of sanctification.

This passage from 1 Peter 1:14-19 is helpful:

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance. But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; for it is written, Be holy, because I am holy. If you appeal to the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, you are to conduct yourselves in reverence during your time living as strangers. For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb.

God, in His Word, calls Christians to actively battle against sin, to “not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance.” The motivating factor for this holy living is found in verse 18. Peter wrote that Christians were “redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ.”

Right facts lead to right feelings. As Christians remember those right facts, then right feelings will greatly aid them in their battle against sin.

 **Application:** What sort of feelings does the fact that you were “ransomed . . . with the precious blood of Christ” produce in you? How might that help you flee from sin?

2. Compelled to Good Works (Eph. 2:10)

The resurrection of Christ Jesus led not only to rejoicing among His followers, but also obeying. The commands that Christ had given His disciples when He was with them became more than helpful axioms. Now, they understood fully, they had received the word of God from the mouth of God incarnate. They were compelled by Christ’s resurrection to do the good works that He had commanded.

Jesus set this example Himself. He didn't spend His time on this earth simply fleeing from sin, though He certainly did no less. Jesus' life was also characterized by the good works that He did. When Peter called Christians to follow in Jesus' steps in 1 Peter 2:21, this wasn't only avoidance of sin, but also the completion of good works.

? Why did Jesus do good works? How should this motivate us to good works in light of the resurrection?

Jesus was motivated by His love for and submission to the Father. Jesus did good works because it pleased God the Father. At Jesus' baptism, God the Father spoke these words, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased" (Matt. 3:17). That statement was a summary of Jesus' entire life. Jesus was pleasing to God the Father in all respects because He always did good works, at the right time, with the right attitude, and for the right reasons.

This is contrasted to the motivation of many religious people who do good works. While Jesus' motivation was selfless, many people do good works for selfish reasons. A common motivation for doing good works is because a person feels that they must balance out the sins that they commit. In other words, it is a form of penance. Others complete good works thinking that then God will owe them something and bless them in some special way.

? How does the resurrection and the truth of the gospel change the reason why we pursue good works in life?

Muslims believe that at the end of their lives they will go before an eternal judgment and there will be a scale placed before them. All of their good works will be placed on one side and all of their evil deeds will be placed on the other. Whichever side weighs more will determine their eternal destiny. The Christian motivation is different. Christians will also have to face a scale, but for the Christian, the evil deeds have been removed and Jesus' righteousness is placed on their scale. Paul put it this way:

And when you were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive with him and forgave us all our trespasses. He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it away by nailing it to the cross (Col. 2:13-14).

The hope and joy that Christians find in the gospel is the spark for doing good works. Their love and gratitude toward the one true and living God is the seasoned oak that keeps it burning. Paul told the Ephesians that they were created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10).

? Application: What good works in your life are evidence of your belief in the resurrection? How does this challenge you?

3. Compelled to Announce the Gospel (Luke 24:9-10; Matt. 28:18-20)

Followers of Jesus live lives of holiness (avoiding sin) and righteousness (doing good works) because of the fact of the gospel, which produces affections like joy, hope, peace, and gratitude. There is another good work that we ought to give special emphasis to in our study.

? What did the women do after receiving the news that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead?

They went and told the disciples what they had heard. They did this because this news was too amazing not to share! Their teacher and leader turned out to also truly be their Savior and the Son of God come in flesh. He had overcome the grave!



How are all Christians called to respond in the same way as the women who went to the tomb that first Easter Sunday?

The witness of the women to the disciples of the empty tomb was a foreshadowing of what would become the primary mission of the church until today. In Matthew 28 and Acts 1, Jesus gives the explicit command to preach the gospel to all nations.

Followers of Christ ought to be compelled to go and tell the good news of Christ because they know that this is a lost world's only hope of forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with their Creator. They know that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no one can come to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). They also know that Christ has commanded them to be about this work. But Christians aren't compelled only by Christ's command to preach the gospel to every tribe, tongue, and nation. They have internal motivation. They are moved and compelled to preach Christ because of the deep well of joy and contentment that they have found in Christ. They share the gospel with their neighbors because they enjoy a peace that passes understanding and they know that all people are lost in sin and need the peace that only Christ can give.



Application: With whom have you had a gospel conversation over the past month? What prevents you from sharing the gospel with others? How does the joy that you possess in Christ help you overcome those obstacles?

Conclusion

Because of the resurrection, Christians are secure in Christ and live with a joy that only the redeemed can know. They have no fear to repent of sin and walk in holiness. They aren't afraid of doing the good works that the Scriptures command. They do not fear the rejection or opposition that will come if they faithfully witness about the gospel of Jesus Christ. They walk in obedience to and love for the One who holds their soul.

? How has the resurrection impacted your daily life?

? Are there good works that you have neglected? What are they? What can you do to remedy that sin?

? With whom can you share the gospel today? Does your love for Jesus and gratitude for His sacrifice outweigh your anxieties about explaining the gospel to someone? How might you pursue greater boldness in Him?

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus lived a perfectly obedient and sinless life, His death upon the cross was effective for sinners, He was able to bear up under the wrath of God the Father against sin, and the grave could not hold Him. He is risen indeed!

MISSIONAL APPLICATION: The truth of the resurrection compels Christians to live holy lives, do good works, and announce the gospel to all nations on earth.



FOR NEXT WEEK

The Last Place You Look

Main Passages

- Luke 24:13-35

Session Outline

1. Come Near (Luke 24:13-16)
2. Listen (Luke 24:17-24)
3. Speak (Luke 24:25-35)

Memorize

Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. When he stooped to look in, he saw only the linen cloths. So he went away, amazed at what had happened.

- Luke 24:12, CSB

Daily Readings

- Monday - Luke 24:1-8
- Tuesday - Luke 24:9-12
- Wednesday - Matthew 28:1-10
- Thursday - Mark 16:1-8
- Friday - John 20:1-10
- Saturday - Acts 1:1-3