

Sermon Notes, April 30, 2017

The Passion of Jesus: Sent into the World, John 20:19-22, Luke 24:36-49

If you believe in the resurrection, so what? What difference does that make?

What should we be doing? Where should we be going? How should we be living?

When Jesus met with his disciples after his resurrection, those were the very questions he addressed. He sat down with his disciples, and he said, “Now that I have been raised from the dead, that means this is how you have to live in the world.” We’re going to learn three things from him.

1. The risen Christ shows us the future

When you look at the risen Christ appearing to the disciples, we’re actually looking at our own future, because the Bible says he is the firstfruits from the dead. There are three characteristics that will help us understand something about where we’re going if we believe in him, and what God has in store for us in our future.

First, *Jesus is physical*. That is contrary to what the Greeks and Romans would have thought. He eats a fish. He shows them his hands and his feet, his scars.

Second, *Jesus is ordinary*. That is contrary to what the Jews might believe. From Daniel 12:1-2, if you were Jewish you would assume a resurrected person would be radiant. But when the disciples on the road to Emmaus meet Jesus, they don’t even recognize him at first.

Third, *Jesus is spiritual*. Jesus’ body is though it’s a physical body it goes through doors.

Jesus’ body and our future bodies are going to more do what bodies are supposed to do. They’re going to be enduring. They’re going to be more solid. They’re going to be perfect. They’re going to be more beautiful. I love how N.T. Wright put it. He says, “If you’re a Christian you’re just a shadow of your future self.”

2. The risen Christ sends us into the world

We're told what it is in Jn. 20:21. "Jesus said... As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." If you were reading that in the Latin, the word *sending* or *sent* is the word *missio*, or mission. What Jesus is saying is, "I am a missionary, and now all of you are missionaries too." What he is saying is, "I have been sent. I have a mission. Now my mission is the model for your life." Of course, we're sent now, and as Jesus Christ came into the world and died in order to redeem and restore this world, we're ready to sacrifice to bring His redeeming love to our culture as we bring Christ to deal with all the results of sin, spiritual and physical. "If we are truly people who believe in the resurrection, in God making a whole new world in which everything will be set right at last, we are unstoppably motivated to work for that new world in the present." (N. T. Wright).

3. The risen Christ gives us what we need for the mission

Where do we get what we need to do that? The answer is we get a sure and certain hope.

The first words out of the resurrected Jesus' mouth when he shows up are, "Peace be unto you." It's the word *shalom*, and most commentators believe what Jesus Christ is saying is, "The *shalom*, the future well-being of the world is now certain because I'm raised from the dead. It is yours. It is guaranteed."

What Jesus is actually giving us here is what the Bible calls *hope*. Now I know the word *hope* is not in the text, but that's what he is doing. In the Bible, hope is life-changing certainty that something is coming, though you don't have it now. I'm not exactly sure who said this, but I really like it:

"When the Holy Spirit makes Christ's resurrection so present and real to a Christian, then it creates a living hope in God's future..." What you believe about the future completely controls how you experience the present.

When Jesus Christ shows them his hands and his feet, what is he showing them? His scars. The last time the disciples saw Jesus' scars,

they saw him on the cross, they thought those scars were ruining their lives. Jesus Christ is now showing them that in his resurrected body, and his scars are still there. If you had a resurrected body, wouldn't you want to get rid of all the scars? No. Here's why. Now that you understand the scars, now that you understand why he did that, now the memory and the sight of those scars only make the eventual glory and joy of your life greater. For them to see Jesus Christ with his scars reminded them of what he did for them.

On the day of the Lord, the day God makes everything right, the day everything sad comes untrue, on that day, the same thing will happen to your hurts and your sadness. You will find that the worst things that have ever happened to you only will in the end make your eventual glory and joy greater. How can we be really sure our future is redemption and even our past will be redeemed? It's here where it says, "Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets." In that, Jesus is saying, "I'm the ultimate sacrifice. I'm the ultimate priest. I'm the ultimate temple. I'm the ultimate way you are clean before God. I'm the true Prophet, Priest, and King." Every single thing in the Bible is about not what you must do in order to make yourself right with God, but what Jesus has done to make you absolutely right with God. Once you understand salvation by grace, you'll have this sure and certain hope. Once you understand it's all about Jesus Christ, then you can know you have peace. You can know you have this future guarantee, and then you can face anything.