

8-30-2020 Keep Looking at the Empty Tomb

Luke 24:1-8

Have you ever lost something and looked in all the wrong places for it? Followed the wrong example?

Could it be stated that mankind spends a lot of their life looking for something? (love, forgiveness, worth, acceptance, wanted, needed, happiness, success, riches, fame,)

Would it be safe to say that many spent too much time searching for, whatever it is, in all the wrong places?

It reminds me of the song, "Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places" by Johnny Lee

We have been walking through the book of Luke since the beginning of 2019. We are in Luke 24, the last chapter. We are approaching the finish line.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had placed the body of Jesus in Joseph's tomb. They had prepared his body with over 100 pounds of spices and they got it all done in 3 hours!

In **Luke 24**, its early in the morning on a Sunday. Followers of Jesus were coming back to the tomb to refresh the spices. In their hearts and minds Jesus was dead and gone, all that was left was his body. The disciples were so distraught that they were hiding behind locked doors.

Verse 5, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!" Those nine words, **"Why do you seek the living among the dead?"** It made me think of that Johnny Lee song, "Looking for Love in all the wrong places."

We look for in people, things, places, hobbies, extra circular things for happiness, make us feel whole, give us meaning, make us feel better and it is bankrupt. It is a creation looking into other created things to supply only what the creator can.

It made me think, Cecil, where in your life are you seeking the living among the dead? When I look to things of this world to try and satisfy my flesh, it is like seeking the living among the dead. My flesh is never satisfied! It only wants more and more.

Anyone watch "Little shop of horrors?" Cult classic! I haven't watched it in a long while, so I am not endorsing it. But the premise was:

The answer to counteract the flesh is found in the very next statement. **"He is not here, but is risen!"** I must remind myself that I cannot find fulfillment, acceptance, worth in anyone or anything, but the one who gave his all in my place and is risen in victory for me.

Colossians 2:10, "and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."

I need to remember and rely on the Resurrection! (DAILY!!)

In the words **"He is risen"** lies the difference between Christianity and every other religion in the world. The followers of Confucius can go to his tomb and he is still there. The tomb of Buddha is likewise occupied. One can make a pilgrimage to Mecca to the tomb of Mohammed, and he is there.

But the tomb of Jesus is empty!

“A follower of Mohammed and a Christian were discussing their religions and had agreed that both Mohammed and Christ were prophets. Where then, lay the difference? The Christian illustrated it this way: ‘I came to a crossroads and I saw a dead man and a living man. Which one did I ask for directions?’ The response came quickly, ‘The living one, of course.’ ‘Why, then,’ asked the Christian, ‘do you send me to Mohammed who is dead, instead of Christ who is alive?’ This is the basic difference between Christ and all every other religious leader. All the others came into the world, lived, died – but none of the them lived again.” [Spiros Zodhiates. Illustrations of Bible Truths “The Living One” #617 (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1995) p. 200]

Living daily remembering the resurrection reminds my flesh and my spirit that the victory is won. It also reminds me that I am to renew my mind, adjust where my focus and priorities should be.

Romans 12:1-2, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

The resurrection changes everything, Luke wants us to ponder the “so what” of the Jesus’ resurrection. What is it that the resurrection teaches us even today? What does it remind us that believe in it?

I. The Resurrection Assures Us That We Are Following the Right Person.

- There are so many voices clamoring that they hold the truth about the existence of life. There are so many that we could follow. How can we be sure that Jesus is the right way to go? We live in an age that says that it is just not, politically correct to say that your religion is better than someone else’s. If you’re sincere it doesn’t matter what you believe, right? Well, of course not. You can be sincere and still be sincerely wrong. Some things are just too important not to be sure of.
- **Read Romans 1:4, “and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”**
- Did you catch that? I want you to underline two phrases in that verse. Underline where Paul says the Jesus was **“declared to be the Son of God”**...and then in the later part of the verse underline how he says that he is declared to be the Son of God...**“by the resurrection.”**
- The resurrection proves that Jesus was who he said he is. He claimed to be God; he proved his claim by coming out of the grave. The Resurrection was not only proof of who Jesus is but of what he had done.
- Have you ever followed someone and gotten lost? Maybe followed a recipe and the food tasted horrible.
- Or loved someone you thought loved you, to only find out they didn’t.
- The Resurrection Assures Us That We Are Following the Right Person.

II. The Resurrection Assures Us That We Are Truly Forgiven.

- **1 Corinthians 15:17, “And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!”**
- Our greatest need as humans is what to do with our sins. If we are honest, we must admit that we have them, (sins) the question is what can we do with them?
- All the other “religions” in the world either ignore the sin problem or try to solve it through self-effort.
- There is no other religion that tells you that that leader has taken your sin upon himself and has died in your place except for Christianity. Jesus is the only hope of the world for forgiveness of sins, for he is the only one who has risen from the dead.

III. The Resurrection Assures Us That There is Life Beyond the Grave.

- **1 Corinthians 15:18-20, “Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. 20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”**
- Paul’s point is that because Jesus did indeed rise from the grave, he has shown that he has power over our worst and most feared of enemies’ death and the grave.
- By saying that Jesus was the “**first fruit of those who have died**” he is saying that his resurrection is the proof that we too will live beyond the grave.
- Remember the profound statement Jesus made about belief? **John 11:25, “Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”**
- Eternity is far too important an issue not to be sure of what you’re trusting in, so Jesus proved himself.

Conclusion

Song, “Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling” Page 347