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JOHN 19:28-20:9

Today is Easter...Resurrection Day...the day we celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ indeed rose from the grave. This one event in history is what gives Christians hope. It's what sets Christianity apart from all other faiths.

And I wonder if we take this day for granted. If you'll remember I made a suggestion that we take time this week to think about what the resurrection means to us. And as we look at the lesson today, we're going to see what it meant to some of the folks who were closest to the Lord Jesus Christ.

But before we key in on the Resurrection, let's look at the Crucifixion.

As we pick up in **John 19:28**, the Lord Jesus Christ has been
betrayed by Judas,
arrested by His enemies,
denied by Peter,
found guilty by Pilate,
and nailed to the Cross by Roman soldiers.

John 19:28-30...

The events of the Cross fulfilled Scripture...and as He said, "I am thirsty," this fulfilled **Psalm 69:21**.

When vinegar was given to the Lord Jesus, He said "it is finished" and He died. Tetelestai... "**it is finished!**"

Everything...all that God had called the Lord Jesus to do,
He had done. No man took His life from Him. He laid it
down Himself.

"It is finished...the debt is paid!" And that should give you and me great comfort...great assurance. The work that saves is finished! No one can add to a finished work. We can add nothing to it! We can take nothing from it! The saving work of the Cross of Calvary is finished!

Verses 31-37...

Here we see Scripture fulfilled again. The Jewish religious leaders wanted the legs of the men being crucified to be broken. WHY?

Because the breaking of their legs hastened their death.
When the legs were broken the man being crucified was
no longer able to push himself up by his feet to get a
breath and he was soon asphyxiated.

But, Jesus was already dead. And I believe this tells us that Jesus never lost control of His life. He chose to give up His life for you and me. And He also chose the moment He would die.

I read this week...(Bro. Herb Hodges)

**"It is a marvel that Christ *could* die;
it is a greater marvel that He *would* die;
it is a greater marvel yet that He *should* die;**

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it is the greatest marvel of all that he *did* die.”

And I might add...it is the greatest, greatest marvel ever that He died for me!

Look back up at **verse 30** again. He gave up His spirit at the very moment He determined!

So, not one bone of Jesus was broken, and this fulfilled what was prophesied in **Exodus**, in **Numbers** and also in the book of **Psalms**.

Yet, they pierced His side and this fulfilled what was prophesied in **Zechariah**.

Verses 38-42...

Jesus had been **scourged** and **whipped** and **beaten** and His beard had been plucked from His face. He had been ridiculed and made to carry the crossbeam of His Cross up Mt. Calvary. He had been nailed to the Cross. His hands and His feet had had spikes driven into them. He had been pierced through with a spear.

But, from then on, only loving hands would touch His body. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus came and got the body of Jesus. They lovingly prepared it for burial and they buried it in a tomb that had never before been used. And they did this with great care and love.

Let me read you Dr. Phillips' comments...

“So in a clean new tomb, untainted by a previous occupant, dressed in linen and surrounded by perfume, in the cool dark interior, shut off from the din and noise of the world that had so shamefully used Him, the Savior's body rested. The world went about its business.

We can imagine how things probably went. Pilate went home to supper and to make a report to his wife of the day's events. Annas and Caiaphas presided at their respective Passover feasts. Peter wept alone. The body of Judas lay forgotten. John sought to comfort his new mother. The other disciples hid themselves from public eye. Did Mary of Bethany have a sense of expectation in her heart? Did a Roman soldier try on his new robe, and another try to wash the blood of the Son of God off his spear?

The world spun 'round. Angels watched as some of their number went down to earth to prepare for the dawn of a new day.”

And it's that dawn that we celebrate today!

In **chapter 20**, we're told that Mary Magdalene came before daylight to the tomb and when she saw the stone had been taken away, she ran and told Peter and John. Then, we're told that Mary Magdalene came back to the tomb a second time.

What did the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ mean to **Mary Magdalene**? What did it mean to **Peter and John**? That's what I want us to think about for the next few minutes...what the resurrection of Jesus meant to these folks and to a **couple of others** as well.

Mary Magdalene...

Verses 1-2...and 11-18...

Mary Magdalene was **courageous** enough to go to that tomb before daybreak.

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She was **committed** enough to go and tell Peter and John that the stone had been rolled away.

She was **distraught** enough to come back a second time and weep at the tomb.

She **loved Jesus enough** to tell the angels at the tomb that if they would just tell her where the body of Jesus was she would go get him.

And when she saw the resurrected Jesus her first thought was to cling to Him, but when Jesus told her to go to His brethren, she did.

Remember that Mary Magdalene had been demon-possessed before Jesus found her and cast out the seven demons that possessed her. Can you imagine how grateful she was to Jesus for the liberty He had granted. No longer was she bound to Satan and his demons. Jesus had saved her and set her free, and her heart was grieved when Her Lord was crucified.

For Mary Magdalene, the impact of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was **a matter of the heart**. Mark tells us that Mary had arrived along with two other women prepared to anoint the body of Jesus with spices. She loved the Lord with all her heart, and she was fearlessly committed to minister to Him in death as He had ministered to her in life.

Now, the resurrection had made her heart glad and she did what Jesus asked her to do. We're not told anything else about Mary Magdalene, are we? But, I can't help but imagine her telling her children and her grandchildren in years to come

...of the years she spent following the Lord Jesus Christ while He walked the earth,

...and how He had died at Calvary to save folks from their sins,

...and how she had seen the risen Lord after His death.

John...

Verses 3-10...

We wonder if and/or when John and Peter would have come to the tomb had it not been for Mary Magdalene. When she came and told them however, they ran to the tomb. In fact John outran Peter.

As we read the book of **John** we see that many times John doesn't identify himself by name. He identifies himself as "the other disciple" as he does here, or "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

John got to the tomb first, but he hesitated to go in. Peter went in first, and then John followed him. But what John saw when he looked in convinced him that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead.

The linen wrappings lying there and the face-cloth which had been around Jesus' head was lying there. He could see everything as it had been on the body of Jesus except the body of Jesus wasn't there!

And verse 8 says when John entered the tomb he saw and he believed!!

For John it was a matter of being fully convinced by what he saw. When he saw the graveclothes, he believed. And John knew because of what he saw that this was different from anything he had ever seen before.

I mean, John had no doubt been there when Jesus raised people from the dead. Remember Lazarus? Lazarus came forth wearing his graveclothes, didn't he? But, Jesus just raised up out of His! And John knew from this that indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ was

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alive...He knew this wasn't a resuscitation of His body or a restoration of His body...it was a Resurrection of His body.

And Jesus would never die again as those who had been brought back to life before...

Revelation 1:18, "Jesus said, 'I am He that lives, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore.'"

The late Peter Marshall said, "The grave clothes lay like the shell of a cocoon left behind when the moth has emerged and hoisted her bright sails in the sunshine. Or, more accurately, like a glove from which the hand has been removed, the fingers of which still retain the shape of the hand."

And because John's mind was convinced by what he saw that day, the Holy Spirit used him mightily and John became a great apostle!

Think about it...

John didn't write his gospel until the end of the First Century. By then the church was three generations old, and the church was under attack from without and within.

It is said that in the first generation of a movement, **conviction rules**. In the second generation, **belief rules**, and in the third generation, **opinion rules**.

What that means to me is that conviction is stronger than mere belief and belief is stronger than mere opinion and conviction has grown weaker and weaker as the generations have come and gone since the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And if conviction slipped to opinion in just three generations...can you imagine what it has slipped to after 2,000 years?

I read this from Bro. Herb's same message this week...

A certain family lost three children in one week to diphtheria, and there was only one child left, three year old daughter.

The very next Sunday after the three children died, the mother and father were in their places in church...the mother teaching and the father at his superintendent's desk...both carrying on in a wonderful way.

After the service was over the people were saying, "How on earth did they do it?" And going home one twelve year old boy said to his father, "They really **believe** it, don't they, Dad?"

The father casually asked, "Believe **what**, son?"

"Oh," he said, "the **whole thing**...the whole business about the Resurrection."

The father replied, "**Sure** they believe it son. **All Christians** believe it."

The boy quickly answered, "Not like **that**, they don't, Dad, **not like that!**"

Jesus is alive! He arose from the dead! This is a fact of history. But do we believe it "like that?"

By the time John wrote his gospel, John's brother James was dead. Peter was dead. Paul was dead. In fact, they were all dead except John. He was an old man living in Ephesus. His days of exile on the Isle of Patmos still lay ahead of him.

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John's friend and colleague, Matthew, had written a masterpiece, but he had written it mainly to the Jews. Mark had written for the Romans and Luke had written for the Greeks.

John felt the urgent need to write one more gospel account...for the church! And when he wrote, his thoughts were drawn back to the wonderful years he had spent in the company of the Lord Jesus.

He took his readers back to where it all began. He realized the world itself could not contain the books which he could have written about Jesus, so he concentrated on a few special signs and a few special sayings of Jesus.

He wrote of miracles. He wrote of healings. He wrote of the crucifixion and the burial and the Resurrection. He wrote to bring the conviction of the first generation Christianity to the third generation Christianity.

Many of us would have to say that the first full book of the **New Testament** that we ever read was the **Gospel of John**. What a wealth we have in this book. What a wealth we have in John's three epistles and in the book of the **Revelation**.

And none of this would have been handed down to us if John had not believed in his mind that the Lord Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead.

Peter...

Let's think of John's companion that Easter morning. John outran Peter, but Peter entered the tomb first.

We need to remember Peter's failure. Peter had denied three times that he knew Christ. Peter had boasted that he would never leave Jesus...that he would go with him to prison and even to death.

But Peter **had** failed Jesus. He had **denied Jesus three times!**

And Luke tells us when the third denial came, Jesus turned and looked at Peter and Peter wept bitterly. Later, Luke tells us that Jesus appeared to Peter after His resurrection. And Jesus didn't harp on the past. Jesus never torments us with our failures. He deals with them with conviction and with forgiveness and cleansing, but He doesn't hold it over our heads.

Over in **John 21**, we see the account of a conversation between Jesus and Peter. We're all familiar with the play here on the two words for love.

"Do you *love* Me, Peter?" the Lord said. The word for "love" here is "agape". Jesus was saying, "Do you love Me with the highest, holiest form of love, with the love that is divine and pure?"

"Lord," Peter said, "Lord, You know I love You...Lord, You know I have a deep affection for you...a brotherly love for you."

Peter knew he had failed Jesus and so when Jesus asked him a second and a third time if he loved Him with a pure **agape love**, Peter answered Jesus that he loved Him with a **warm, brotherly, human kind of love**. **I believe Peter knew he could never love Jesus like Jesus loved him.**

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But, Jesus didn't give up on Peter. Jesus had a job for Peter to do. So, Jesus said, "Then feed my lambs...feed My sheep. Feed the flock of God. Peter, I have already given you an evangelistic ministry. I have called you to be a fisher of men. Now I am also going to give you a pastoral ministry...I want you to take care of the flock of God.

John 21:18-19...

"Oh, and by the way, Peter there's something more...one day when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you and bring you where you don't wish to go. One day, when you grow old, Peter, you'll be crucified for My sake."

(By the way, tradition tells us that Peter was crucified, but he asked to be crucified upside down because he said he wasn't worthy to die as his Savior had died. I don't know whether Peter was crucified upside down or rightside up, but he was crucified! And I believe his death brought glory to the Lord Jesus Christ!)

Do you see what Jesus was telling Peter? Jesus was telling Peter that He had a job for him to do and that he would do it. There would never be another time for Peter that he would deny that he knew the Savior. In fact, all we have to do is read the book of **Acts** to see how Peter preached the saving message of Jesus **without fear of the consequences**.

For Mary Magdalene, the impact of the resurrection was a **matter of the heart**.

For John, the impact of the resurrection was a **matter of the mind**.

For Peter, the impact of the resurrection was a **matter of conscience, and forgiveness and restoration**.

What about Thomas? What was the resurrection to him?

Thomas... It was not so much his mind that had to be captured...

And it was not so much his heart...or his conscience...

For Thomas it was a matter of his will. Thomas said, "I will not believe."

Verses 19-29...

The doors were shut, and Jesus had just appeared. He had shown the disciples His hands and His side to the disciples. They had seen Him. How thrilled and happy and amazed they must have been to know that He was alive.

But Thomas hadn't been there. Maybe Thomas had been told of the meeting in the Upper Room, but had thought up a lot of excuses like we do.

Whatever Thomas' excuses, he arrived late and when he finally **did** show up, **it was all over**. He'd missed it! The others tried to tell him that Jesus had been there...but old Thomas dug his heels in and said, *"I want proof...I will not believe unless I have proof. Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe!"*

Well, we know this, Thomas made sure he was there the next Sunday. And it happened again, just as before. **All of a sudden, Jesus was there in the midst.**

And on this occasion, Jesus offered Himself to Thomas on exactly the same conditions that Thomas had specified one week earlier!

And Jesus invited Thomas to put his finger into His hands and put His hand into His side. We're not told that Thomas actually did this. John tells us that Thomas said, "My Lord and

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My God!" Thomas' will was changed. Thomas went from "I will *not* believe" to "I *do* believe."

We don't have an account from Scripture of what type ministry that Thomas had from then on. Tradition tells us that Thomas went into India and took the gospel there. I don't know if he went to India or not...but Thomas believed in the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ that day when he said, "**My Lord and My God!**"

Paul...

We've been in a study of the book of ***Ephesians***. This book was written by the Apostle Paul and the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus certainly impacted his life, didn't it?

One day Paul was busy persecuting the Church. He was doing all he could to bring harm and hurt and hardship to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But, the Lord had a better walk for Paul to walk. He had a better song for Paul to sing. He had a better purpose for Paul to accomplish. He had a better life for Paul to live.

So, one day the risen Savior appeared to Paul as he was traveling down the road to Damascus. And forever Paul's life was changed.

The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus had a profound impact on Paul's life. And it impacted him in the area of **obedience**.

From the time that Paul accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as His Savior...from the time that Paul saw the resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul was obedient to Him. If the Lord said "go" to Paul, he went. If the Lord said "don't go" to Paul, he didn't go.

**Paul told us in 1 Corinthians 15 that if Christ be not raised,
Our preaching is vain
Our faith is worthless
Our witness is false
Our sins are not forgiven
Our hope is null and void
Our lives are to be pitied.**

If Christ be not raised...We have no reason to be here today. This Bible is false. This lesson is a lie. Bro Bob's sermon this morning and every Sunday morning will be empty and vain.

Without the Resurrection, we have no gospel,
We have no hope!
We have no assurance!
We have no salvation!
We have no heaven!

We would be like any other lost person in this world!

Years ago, a German pastor, known for his great faith was mocked by a speaker at a giant rally of the Nazis in Berlin.

The speaker said to the pastor,

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“You, man, are a fool. How foolish to believe in a crucified, dead Jew.”

The courageous pastor jumped to his feet and in resounding tones he said,

“Yes sir, I should indeed be a fool if I believed in a crucified, dead Jew. But, Sir, I believe in the living, risen Son of God!”

Think about it...if Christ had not been raised from the dead, Matthew would have gone back to tax collecting...and Peter and Andrew and James and John would have gone back to fishing...and Paul would have kept on persecuting the church, and the rest of the disciples would have gone about their business.

The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus made a profound impact on the lives of all the disciples. These folks were martyred...would they have died for a lie?

If we are Christians, the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus has had an impact on **our** lives. It has impacted us in the area of our **mind**, in the area of our **conscience**, in the area of our **will**, in the area of our **heart** and in the area of **obedience**...and any other area we could ever think of...

Jesus told Thomas, **“Thomas, because you have seen Me you have believed...but blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.”**

We've not seen with our physical eyes as Mary and John and Peter and Thomas and Paul...but we have seen with our spiritual eyes, haven't we?

CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED! PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME!