

Meditations on the Message

Sunday: March 27, 2016. *Resurrection Reality*

Text: **1 Corinthians 15**

Re-read the above text and consider the following thoughts and questions:

1. Paul speaks of the resurrection of Jesus as a historical reality - there where first-person witnesses, written historical accounts, and numerous changed lives that were the result of Jesus' bodily resurrection.
What are the dangers of "spiritualizing" the resurrection as opposed to grounding it in real and recorded history? (How does referring to the resurrection of Jesus as a real historical event differ from talking about your personal "thoughts" and "feelings" concerning the resurrection?)
2. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, Christianity is empty; the message is meaningless, the messengers are liars, and faith in Jesus is without foundation.
If Jesus rose from the dead, Christianity is relevant, significant and full of meaning. If Jesus rose from the dead, then God is restoring all that was lost in the fall. Adam's sin brought death. Jesus' death and resurrection brought salvation from sin, restored life with God, and the defeat of evil, death and the creation's bondage to decay.
How is the resurrection of Jesus a bigger story than God providing personal salvation experiences to sinful people? How does understanding the resurrection as a genuine defeat of evil and the beginning (*firstfruits*) of genuine cosmic renewal broaden your understanding and appreciation of all that God is doing for us through Jesus?
3. Is the gospel the minimal doctrine you need to know in order to be saved, or is the gospel the whole of all that God has communicated to us through His Word (Jesus)?
What might be a disadvantage to taking a minimalist approach to the good news?
4. You know you believe the resurrection when living for Jesus, and anticipating His return, is the only life that makes sense.
In what ways is the return of Jesus (and the resurrection/transformation that will take place at His return) influencing your present thoughts, attitudes and activities?

Points from Sunday's message:

- Jesus rose from the dead.
- If He didn't – Christianity is empty.
- If He did – God is fulfilling His promise of crushing Satan's head through the promised Deliverer and through Him restoring what has been lost.
- The resurrection is like agriculture (planting seeds and receiving flourishing plants)
- Living for Jesus, in faithful anticipation of His return and the resurrection, is the only meaningful life.

A quote from Sunday: *"If Jesus rose from the dead, then you have to accept all he said; if he didn't rise from the dead, then why worry about any of what He said? The issue on which everything hangs is not whether or not you like His teaching but whether or not he rose from the dead...In other words, the resurrection is a first-importance issue."* Tim Keller