

140406 Resurrection Key to Our Faith

Introduction:

- ABC has a new prime-time drama which debuted March 9th, 2014. It's called ... RESURRECTION. The premise for the series is based on the novel of the same name by Jason Mott. Before you go thinking that ABC has decided to chronicle the life of Christ, let me read a clip from ABC's website introducing the show: *The people of Arcadia, Missouri are forever changed when their deceased loved ones suddenly start to reappear. An 8-year-old American boy ... wakes up alone in a rice paddy in a rural Chinese province with no idea how he got there. Details start to emerge when the boy, who calls himself Jacob, recalls that his hometown is Arcadia, and an Immigration agent ... takes him there. The home he claims as his own is occupied by a 60-year-old couple, Henry and Lucille Langston, who lost their son, Jacob, more than 30 years ago. While they look different, young Jacob recognizes them as his parents.* From the jacket of the novel we read: *All over the world people's loved ones are returning from beyond. No one knows how or why this is happening, whether it's a miracle or a sign of the end. Not even Harold and Lucille can agree on whether the boy is real or a wondrous imitation, but one thing they know for sure: he's their son. As chaos erupts around the globe, the newly reunited Hargrave family ... [is] forced to navigate a mysterious new reality and a conflict that threatens to unravel the very meaning of what it is to be human ... [exploring] timeless questions of faith and morality, love and responsibility.* **Application:** We are all born with an innate curiosity of "the very meaning of what it is to be human." Likewise, we all must wrestle with the "timeless questions of faith and morality, love and responsibility." Most significantly, we all wish and hope and dream of the possibility of resurrection and reunion with our long, lost loved ones. The answers are out there, but they won't be found in a best-selling novel or on prime-time television. If you want to be truly gripped by real-life drama that promises real-life answers to the timeless questions of life, and offers the real-life promise and hope of resurrection, you'll have to read a different book. Open the pages of Scripture and allow the drama to become your reality! "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die" (John 11:25). "And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day" (John 6:39). "I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hell" (Revelation 1:18).
- It is my desire once again to take a difficult subject, the resurrection, and break it down for us so that it is simple to understand, applicable to our lives, and message of hope for us to embrace.
- Let this truth grow in our hearts as we celebrate Jesus death and resurrection. **It is God's faithfulness to His covenant that God will resurrect the dead.**
- Mt 22:23-33

1. What is the Resurrection of the Dead?

- a. In a simple sentence it means to be raised up to live again. The body that dies, is to be raised up to live once again.
- b. It comes from anastasis a Gr. word meaning to raise up, to awaken, to repair or to recover.
- c. The OT give several instances of the dead being raised.
 - i. 1 Kings 17:17-ff. The widow of Nain, her son is raised from dead by Elijah. It was the power of God that did that. That was a precursor pointing to the Christ of the NT.
 - ii. Ie. 2 Kings 13:21 is a shocker. A dead man is being buried. A raiding band from Moab comes and those who are burying the man put him into a grave where Elisha's bones are and he came back to life! Again, this points to the power of God in the ability to raise men from the dead. The bad news is that that man had to die again.
 - iii. Ezk 37 - the valley of dry bones. This is all about resurrection of the dead. Ezk Prophecy's to the bones and he sees flesh form on them and they stand as an army.
 - iv. (Daniel 12:2, NLT) "*Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting disgrace.*" Note: resurrection of the living and the dead. The living to life in Christ. The dead are raised to eternal separation from God.
 - v. In the NT raisings of the dead.
 1. We read of Jesus raising several people from the dead, including Lazarus.
 2. At the crucifixion, (1 Cor 15:6, Mt 27:53), over 500 people came out of the grave alive and seen by others.

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3. We read in Acts 9:40 that Peter raised a woman, Tabitha, from the dead.
4. All of these were raised from the dead only to have to die again.
5. Jesus is the first to be raised and given a resurrected body!

2. Why Would People Not Believe in the Resurrection?

- a. Some people are just ignorant. They do not know or have never been taught.
 - i. In the Bible we find Jesus teaching the people, Paul teaching the people, the apostles teaching the people. If you are not taught you are ignorant. It doesn't mean you are bad it simply means no one has taught you. Ie. If I never learn to read, it doesn't make me a bad person. I would be unlearned. Some people have never been taught about the resurrection. So how can you believe if you have never been taught? *Faith comes by hearing the message and the message by the Word of God.*" Ro 10:17
- b. Some People are filled with doubt and so they cannot believe in the resurrection.
 - i. Thomas was one of those people. Jn 20:25 *The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."* NLT
 - ii. Think about this: Thomas actually walked with Jesus and yet he could not believe when Jesus rose from the dead. The good news for us is Jesus has said, *"Blessed are those who believe and have not seen!"*
- c. People who do not know Jesus and do not want to know Jesus use every argument they can think of to disprove that He exists. *"And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."* (Hebrews 11:6, NLT)
 - i. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection and because Jesus did believe they tried to trick Him with a question so that that He would look foolish. They did not believe in Jesus as the Son of God. So they hated him as much as the Pharisees did.
 - ii. Because they did not know who He was they tried to disprove him with arguments against Him.
- d. Summary:
 - i. Some people have not been taught the resurrection from the dead. But I am teaching you today.
 - ii. Some people have been taught but do not believe. I trust in your heart today that you will believe.
 - iii. Some people are out to destroy Jesus and to destroy our faith. I pray that you turn off that course.

3. Was the Resurrection Important to Jesus?

- a. Everyone say together: "YES! It was very important to Jesus." That was what He was dying for. It was important to the Father. That is why he sent us His Son. He wants us to live!
 - i. Remember, we can't forget this statement during this series: **It is God's faithfulness to His covenant that God will resurrect the dead.** He is all about giving us 'life' and life abundantly.
- b. The Sadducee trap. It seems interesting that the very people who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead would ask Jesus a resurrection question. Why would they do that?
 - i. They knew that Jesus did believe in the resurrection. So they ask what appears to them to be a foolish question. Ie. Story of the woman with 7 husbands.
 - ii. So they ask this question of Jesus, "Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?"
 1. They ask it to make the belief in the resurrection to look foolish.
 2. They ask it for the purpose of making Jesus look foolish in the eyes of the people. But as always Jesus turns the question around and makes them look foolish. He causes their whole scheme to collapse.
- c. Jesus teaches/enlightens the people. He points out the error of the Sadducees in not knowing the scriptures.
 - i. He points out that at the resurrection the ordinary life as we know it does not continue. Two ways it changes.
 1. In eternity there will be no marriage. Since all who enter into eternal life, live forever there is no need for offspring to preserve the race.
 2. In our glorified state we will be like angels. We will not be angels. We will be like angels. Mk 12:25 *In this respect they will be like the angels in heaven.* NLT
 - a. Gal 3:28 *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.* ²⁷ *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* ²⁸ *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave*

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nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. NLT

- ii. The Sadducees had totally misrepresented the life of the resurrection in supposing that that life is a continuation of earthly relationships.
- iii. Secondly, Jesus then brings out the 'big guns' Moses. At the burning bush God says to Moses (Ex 3:6), Mk 12:26-27 "*I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?*" ²⁷ *He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken.*" NLT
 1. If these Patriarchs were not immortal God would have never called Himself their God. (Such a thing would not be worthy of Him). For He is not God of the dead but God of the living.
 - a. God of the dead is a blatant contradiction to who He is! He is not the God of the dead as they are separated from Him because of sin. He is Lord over them but He is not their God.
 - b. What kind God would He be to call them out lead the through hard places, let them experience some of the promises only to die. Whats up with that to live for God in such a short life span to only die. No! God is faithful to his promise and to deliver forever His people. **It is God's faithfulness to His covenant that God will resurrect the dead.**
 2. ***His covenant relationship with these patriarchs is everlasting and personal!*** From this it only, follows that after their death they are still living and will one day share in the resurrection life.
 - a. Our chief aim as people is to love and to glorify God. We cant do this if we are dead. Death was a result of the fall of man. God promises life to those who believe in His name and follow Him.
- d. The second thing Jesus does, beside showing that they did not know the Word, was that they did not know the power of God. **The Resurrection is also important because Jesus, who came from eternity as a man, is the only one on earth who could with authority talk about life, death and the hereafter. And he has given us all kinds of details about it in His word. He has the power to cause the Patriarchs to live. He has the power to raise Jesus from the dead. God's power is revealed in His ability to destroy death and give life.
 - i. He proved what He said, with His own, life, death, resurrection and ascension.
 - ii. Paul referred to Jesus as the 'first fruits' from among the dead. Meaning that anyone who puts their trust in Him will not die a spiritual death but will live forever.

Conclusion:

- "*The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.*" (Romans 8:11, NLT)
- The resurrection is key to our faith because it was message of the apostles. Jesus is alive!
 - Because He lives we to shall also live.
 - Because He is Lord over death, He is also Lord of every other promise given in the Word.
 - Because He lives all things are possible!
- Because He lives having been raise from the dead, you too, can have eternal life today.