

POWER TO FLOURISH IN THIS HOUSE

RHYTHM OF THE RESURRECTION (Week 4)

WORSHIP: Sing, **BECAUSE HE LIVES (AMEN)** (Matt Maher)

WORD: A wise old pastor once said, “Christianity stands or falls on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” The Resurrection is the most important event in all of time and eternity, and should be more celebrated by Christians. Why is the resurrection the foundation of the Christian faith? Anyone can answer. Read 1 Corinthians 15:14-19.

Read **MATTHEW 28:1-20**

THE STORY BEGINS WITH AN EARTHQUAKE. Verses 1-2

Have you ever experienced a violent earthquake? Can you share your experience briefly?

In a rush, Jesus was buried in a borrowed tomb because it was almost Sabbath (the day of rest)! Mary and the other Mary, went to the tomb right after Sabbath (on Sunday morning) to continue the process of anointing the dead body of Jesus, but on their way to the tomb, the earth shook violently!

The resurrection of Jesus shook the very foundation of their personal beliefs.

The earthquake was a sign that God was shaking the very foundation of what they believed to be true. They believed that Jesus was dead. They saw him die on the cross on Friday afternoon; knowing that he was buried in that tomb just before sunset; and being sure that they would find a dead body in that tomb that morning, they went early to anoint the dead body of Jesus on Sunday morning.

The resurrection of Jesus still shakes our personal beliefs. The resurrection is God’s way telling us, it’s not what it looks like and it’s not what it seems! Just when all hope seems lost, God sometimes shakes us up and reminds you, “It’s not over yet!” I believe that today, God is shaking hearts and reminding us—our life is not over; He can breathe life back into dead dreams; He can still move mountains of despair and depression; He can calm the storms of your life; He can still change your destiny. Death is not the end of it all. The earthquake was merely a sign of the presence of something more powerful than our own beliefs and realities.

THE RESURRECTION WAS ANNOUNCED BY AN ANGEL. Verses 2b-4.

God always uses angels to send His messages. When Jesus was born, angels announced it! When He rose from the grave, an angel announced it! That just means Jesus is no ordinary man! To this day, God uses messengers in various forms to send His message about His Son Jesus. Every person who brings the message of the Gospel is a messenger (angel) of God and therefore, we must receive the message openly and willingly. The appearance of the angel is described as like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. It was so unusual that the guards trembled and fainted in fear. Have you ever been so scared that your knees give out, and you just collapse to the ground? That’s what happened to these fearless men!

THE RESURRECTION MESSAGE IS SIMPLE YET SPLENDID. Verses 5-7.

Verse 6 contains the full message of the resurrection: “*He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.*” Read Mark 8:31. Jesus Himself declared that He will suffer, die and rise again, but none of the disciples truly understood it until it actually happened. The resurrection message is accompanied by three commands:

1. “Do not be afraid.” Can you imagine what the women were thinking when they were walking toward the tomb of Jesus? In Mark 16:2-3 we see that their concern was about how to remove the heavy stone that sealed the tomb. They arrived and saw the massive stone had been already been moved, an angels sat on it, and Jesus was no longer in the tomb.

The resurrection is God’s way of telling us, that no fear is unconquerable. What are your greatest fears?

There are good and bad kinds of fear! But the kind of fear that holds us back from experiencing what God has for us is what He wants us to conquer. The angel said, “Do not be afraid!” It was an invitation not only to conquer fear but also to come closer! Maybe God is calling you out of the familiar and the usual into the supernatural. It could be baptism (following Jesus); it may be forgiving someone from your past; it

could be starting a DGroup; it may be sharing the Gospel and inviting more people to Jesus; it could be tithing. Whatever it is that you are afraid of doing; or getting closer to; or accomplishing; or knowing deeper—God is telling us today to conquer that fear and experience the power of the resurrection in your life. Pastor challenged us to make a godly resolution to no longer give our fears greater authority than the Spirit of God and the Word of God over our life. When we allow fear to reign, it robs us of a chance to shape our future; or someone else's life; and we forfeit the opportunity to be blessed and be a blessing.

The resurrection is God's way of destroying the power of death over us.

Did you know that one of mankind's greatest fears stem out from one great fear? The fear of death! By rising from the grave, Jesus destroyed death, man's greatest fear (1 Corinthians 15:26). In Christ, death is no longer a scary thought. It becomes a doorway to eternity in heaven! Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-56. The resurrection of Jesus Christ makes us secure of the future and gives us hope beyond the grave! Pastor said, "Because of the resurrection, the closer we get to our own grave, the more excited we become!" We become bold.

2. "Come and see!" The angel invites the women to see the empty tomb for themselves! The resurrection reminds us that Jesus is personal; that faith is personal and it's not enough to just be an observer, God invites us to participate! If we really want to get the most out of Easter, we've got to experience Jesus for our self (Read John 17:3).

The resurrection is experiential truth. The resurrection reminds us about the necessity of experiencing God's grace for our self. It also reminds us of the need to be personally born again in the spirit (John 3:3-5), by repenting our sin and believing in Christ alone for salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). We should never presume that just because someone attends church they are born again. That is why we are commanded to share the Gospel not just invite or bring people. The angel both declared the message of the resurrection to the women and invited them to experience the resurrection for themselves.

3. "Go and tell!" The resurrection story demands to be shared! It's not something you keep to yourself! It's something that's meant to be told! When you hear of an awesome story, you would want to share it with someone!

The resurrection story must be told urgently. The women who saw the empty tomb for themselves, deep in wonder and full of joy, lost no time in leaving the tomb. They ran to tell the disciples, but Jesus met them, stopping them in their tracks. They fell to their knees, embraced his feet, and worshiped him. Jesus had the message for them in verse 10...*"Do not be afraid. Go and tell..."* Pastor reminded us that we must be serious about sharing the Gospel with a sense of urgency because we don't know what might happen to our friends. Matthew 28 ends with Jesus repeating this command to share the Gospel in Matthew 28:18-20. His disciples took that command to heart! After Jesus returned to heaven, they scattered all over telling that same good news! Authorities tried and failed to stop them!

The resurrection story changes lives! This is the news that changes destinies! This is the event that changed history! This news is so good. It goes on and on. The rhythm of the proclamation has echoed through the centuries and all continents! It is shaking philosophies and belief systems; it is changing lives; and God calling out to us this Easter day to keep getting the good news of Jesus to every man, woman or child—as long as we have breath we will proclaim that Jesus is alive and that in there is hope!

The resurrection story started with an earthquake, but it continues with proclamation. It will not end until Jesus comes back.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- How can we rekindle and maintain our first love for Jesus and be bolder to proclaim His gospel to others?
- How can a Christian who feels and behaves defeated learn to flourish through Christ's resurrection?
- Knowing that we victorious in Christ, how should we respond when we suffer and face challenges (see 1 Pet. 5:6-11)?

WORKS

Pray for one another that you DGroup will be challenged to:

-Step out of the familiar and comfortable, and start getting into the supernatural power of the resurrection especially in four rhythms that pastor shared:

1. Boldness to live out the resurrection and gospel rhythm in our lives.
2. Experience the Lord more in our life by deepening our intimacy with Him (worship, studying, serving, giving, living, praising)
3. Proclaim the Gospel to all the people God has placed in our lives.
4. Praise should be our primary rhythm in every circumstance.