

# Resurrection Sunday

April 24, 2011

## Memory Verse

*But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners  
Christ died for us!* Romans 5:8 HCSB

## Focal Passage

*“Why are you looking for the living among the dead?” asked the men.  
“He is not here, but has been resurrected!”* Luke 24: 5b -6a HCSB

## What’s The Big Deal?

Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday are the most important days of the year for Christians. Christmas is also very important. Jesus is born. It celebrates the Incarnation, God the Son becoming flesh, entering the world to become the sacrifice for the sins of the world. Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday are important because they are the fulfillment of the sacrificial moment that was put into motion at Christmas. Your personal hope, your eternal future, your peace and joy in the midst of life in a messed up world, all hinges on the truths and the victory of Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday.

## Good Friday

Good Friday is very important because it marks the moment in human history when (and where) God intervenes with a sufficient sacrifice, ransom, and payment for our sins. Jesus’ death on the cross was not a universal sacrifice for the corporate sins of humanity. Jesus’ death on the cross was the atonement for sin. The forgiveness of the cross is personal. It confronts us as individuals as God offers each of us forgiveness, love, joy and peace.

To gain a good understanding of the cross, read the following Bible passages:

- Romans 3: 9- 26
- Romans 5: 6-12
- Romans 6: 1-11, 22-23
- Colossians 1: 13- 22
- 1 Timothy 2:6

After reading these passages you will eventually come to the conclusion that it is all summed up in the memory verse for this week ... Romans 5:8:

*But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners  
Christ died for us! Romans 5:8 HCSB*

Without Good Friday we would be doomed in our sin. With the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the cross, we have life – an abundant life and an eternal life.

When we trust in faith that Jesus' death on the cross was in our place and that His blood shed on the cross covered our own individual sins ... we are humbled by this gift of love.

Because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we are offered what the Bible calls grace (God's unequalled, unmerited love). When we trust (put our faith in) this amazing and sacrificial grace we know His love and we know that we are forgiven.

A brief summary of some of the words Jesus spoke while He was on the cross gives us an understanding on the benefits we receive from the cross.

- *Father forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.* (Luke 23: 34) – Jesus understood that the world, represented by the Romans and the Jewish religious leaders, did not understand what they were doing. None the less, Jesus prays for their forgiveness and, in turn, He is praying for you and me as well.
- *My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?* (Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34) – Jesus, as a perfect and sinless sacrifice became the penalty and ransom for your sin. The individual sins of humanity were placed on Jesus and He felt the separation with God that comes from sin.
- *Into your hands I entrust my spirit* (Luke 23:46) – Jesus trusted the Father so much that He was faithful in making the sacrifice needed for sin. Jesus was born for this purpose. It was His mission. God the Son – God in the flesh – came to die for the sins of the world.
- *It is finished!* (John 19: 30) – Jesus knew the moment the sacrifice was made good and your sins and mine were forgiven on the cross. The penalty was fulfilled, the ransom was paid, the blood sacrifice was fulfilled and He died.

In Romans 3: 25 it reads:

*God presented Him as a propitiation through faith in His blood, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His restraint God passed over the sins previously committed.* Romans 3:25 HCSB

What in the world is “propitiation?” Propitiation means that the party who has been wrong is able to forgive the wrong that has been done to them. When we sin, we are at war with God, we disobey God, we are offensive to God, and it separates us from God. The blood of Jesus on the cross allows the party, God, who is wronged by our sins, to extend forgiveness to us..

If you were tragically mugged by some hoodlums on your way home one afternoon and sadly ended up in the hospital you would be sitting there hurting physically and emotionally over the episode. How you feel if the pastor, or a staff member, came and

visited you in the hospital and told you, “Hey, don’t worry, I caught those guys who mugged you and I forgave them.” How would you feel? You would be incensed. You would be thinking, how dare they be told that they were forgiven!” Why? Because you were the one wronged and you are the only one who can truly forgive then for harming you. Propitiation is God saying, “I forgive you.” While the motivation of the cross is based on God’s love, the action of the cross is a legal decision God makes to say, “no matter what you have done, I forgive you and you are no longer guilty of the sins you have committed.” The cross leads us to the amazing truth of the resurrected Jesus.

### Resurrection Sunday

Over and over again in the Old Testament and throughout the New Testament we read prophecies and statements about the impending death of Jesus and the miracle of the resurrection that followed.

The resurrection of Jesus means that He is a living savior and a living Lord. The resurrection of Jesus mark’s His victory over death, hell and the grave. It also means that trough our faith in Jesus, as the resurrected Lord, we inherit His victory and are adopted into God’s forever family. In Romans 6:5 it reads:

*For if we have been joined with Him in the likeness of His death,  
we will certainly also be in the likeness of His resurrection. Romans 6:5*

It is the same power that brought Jesus from the grave that we are able to claim a new life in Him. Temptations are overcome, pasts are left behind, addictions and habits are broken and shame and guilt are replaced with the experience and knowledge of God’s amazing grace!

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new  
creation; old things have passed away, and look,  
new things have come. 2 Corinthians 5:17 HCSB*

### Making It Personal

On the morning of the resurrection, the Bible tells us that Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary, Peter and John saw that the tomb was empty. Later on hundreds of people witnessed the risen Jesus in various places. In fact, the Apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:7, that 500 people witness the resurrected Jesus at one time! The resurrection offers hope and life in the darkness of a world enslaved in sin.

One of the most incredible resurrection narratives takes place on the actual day of the resurrection, but it does not take place at the empty tomb. It takes place on a walk from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. Luke is the only gospel writer who shares the events that transpired when two followers of Jesus encounter Him on a dusty road.

In Luke 24: 13-35, two men, who have followed Jesus, have left the city of Jerusalem. We do not know if they are on business, or returning home from the Passover, or getting out of town before Jesus' followers are arrested. We do not know their motive, but they are discussing all the things that have transpired back in Jerusalem over the Passover weekend. They are talking about the crucifixion and the resurrection when Jesus joins them on their journey. Interestingly, they do not recognize Jesus.

Eventually they reach their destination. They invite Jesus to eat with them. At dinner they recognize it is Jesus when He blessed and broke the bread. Upon recognizing the risen Lord, Luke says that, "their eyes were open." At this point in the story Jesus disappears. He vanishes. Luke continues by saying, "Weren't our hearts ablaze within us while He was talking with us on the road and explaining the scriptures to us?"

The risen Jesus seeks us out. He finds us on the dusty roads of life. In the midst of grief and fear, wonderment and doubt, He opens our eyes and reveals himself to us. As we encounter the risen Jesus our hearts grow warm with the resonation of the truth ... the risen Jesus is the answer for all our needs.

An interesting fact is the two returned to Jerusalem and told how they experienced Jesus. Today is Resurrection Sunday and it is a good time to share our stories with Jesus with the people in our lives. Take some time today to share with others how Jesus has made a difference in your life.

## **Trusting Jesus**

The whole reason why Good Friday and Resurrection Day took place is personal. The need of every human being on this planet ultimately comes down to the spiritual need we all have. Our need is caused by sin. Jesus is the only remedy for our sin. If you would like to trust Jesus Christ today, for Him to bring you forgiveness and peace, a new beginning and a new life here are some easy steps to take:

A – Admit your need. Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23.

B – Believe that Jesus Christ is God's provision to forgive your sins and to give you a new life. John 3:16 and John 14:6

C – Confess that Jesus is Lord and that you are trusting Him today. Romans 10: 9-10

Pray this Prayer:

Dear God, I confess that I have sinned. I ask you to save me. Lord, Jesus come into my life and become my Lord and Savior. Today I commit to live only for you the rest of my life. Thank you Jesus for saving me and giving me a new life.