

Afraid, Yet Filled with Joy!

1 April 2018 AIC Easter message

Matthew 28:1-8; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-10

Introduction

What is your reaction when something happens that is hard to believe?

1. The Resurrection
 - a. Advance warning
 - i. Matthew 16:21 [also Mk 8:31; Lk 9:22]
 - ii. Matthew 17:22-23 [also Mk 9:31; Lk 9:44]
 - iii. Matthew 20:17-19 [also Mk 10:32; Lk 18:31]
 - iv. Old Testament
 - b. Resurrection theories
 - c. Reaction
 - i. Mary Magdalene and the women
 - ii. for the 10 disciples
 - iii. Thomas
 - iv. Peter
2. Why is Easter necessary
 - a. God's priority of love
 - b. Love requires a choice
 - c. Choice has consequences
 - d. Easter satisfies both justice and love
 - e. What is your reaction?
 - i. Unsure, like Peter, but willing to investigate.
 - ii. Ready to receive the Easter message.
 - iii. React against the evidence as religious leaders did. (Acts 4)

THOUGHT/DISCUSSION

1. Read the resurrection account from ***The Gospels Interwoven*** (other side of this page). This collates the account from all four Gospels.
2. What part of the Easter resurrection is new to you?
3. What part is most difficult to understand or believe?
4. We see the disciples (Peter and John) very unsure about the resurrection. Does this surprise you? What did they do to investigate the resurrection more?
5. How can you investigate Easter more?
6. What is your response to Easter?
7. How can you be more prepared to share Easter with others?

The Resurrection

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, the women took the spices they prepared and went to the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

Just after sunrise, the women were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away from the tomb entrance. When they entered the tomb, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them; one, a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side. They were alarmed. In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground.

But the men said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where they laid him. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" Then they remembered his words. "But go quickly, tell his disciples and Peter: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' Now I have told you."

Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid, yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Mary Magdalene came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

When the women came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.

Peter and the other disciple, however, got up and started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. The Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying there by themselves, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. He went away, wondering to himself what had happened. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)