

Christ's Resurrection and You
Hope Chapel Honolulu
John 20:1-31

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:26-29, ESV)

Introduction

We spent the two Sundays leading up to Passion Week and Easter learning about how the Old Testament and New Testament saints viewed resurrection. We learned that while the OT saints, like Job, didn't have a word in Hebrew for *resurrection*, they still expressed belief in a *redeemer* and that despite just three accounts of resurrection in the OT, the prophets began to see that a general resurrection was coming. We learned that while the OT saints didn't have a word for Hebrew, Job still expressed belief in a *redeemer* that could deliver from death, and that even though there were only three accounts of resurrection in the OT, the prophets began to see that a general resurrection was coming. In the New Testament we learned that the Greek word for resurrection—*anastasis*—was used in reference to several phenomena: a general resurrection of all people, Christ's work of salvation and a specific resurrection of believers at Christ's second coming. Let's see what this fuller understanding of the significance of resurrection teaches us when reading the narrative of eyewitnesses to Christ's resurrection.

1. The disciples were surprised by the resurrection, too. (John 20:1-10)

- a) The words and actions of the disciples reveal their level of disappointment and disbelief.
- b) While some believed, most of Jesus' disciples neither believed nor understood the resurrection.

2. Was the first to see and believe Mary Magdalene or Peter? (Luke 8:1-3, John 20:11-23)

- a) Christ appears at several times and places to Mary, Peter and the disciples.
- b) Christ appears in locked rooms, commissions, promises the Holy Spirit and teaches forgiveness.

3. God ensured that even those who could not see might believe. (John 20:24-31)

- a) The demand for physical evidence of a supernatural occurrence by Thomas.
- b) Our faith is God's purpose for the Gospel accounts of the resurrection and theophanies.

Conclusion

For the disciples, Christ's resurrection convinced them not just of God's power but of Christ's relationship with God the Father, and therefore the certainty of Christ's teaching and promises. Among these promises was that of a general resurrection and judgment of all men, a judgment which penalty could only be avoided through a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. Our annual celebrations of Christmas and Easter, serve to remind us not just of Christ's birth and resurrection, but of God's existence and promise to reward all who earnestly seek God. The resurrection serves to help us identify Christ the Son of God as uniquely qualified to resemble and represent God to us, as well as to deliver us from both sin and death.

For our prayerful study, discussion and application:

- 1) What can we learn from the eyewitness accounts about Christ and His disciples?
- 2) Which of these eyewitnesses can you most easily understand or identify with and why?
- 3) What are the Word and Spirit of God revealing to you about Christ, yourself and the coming resurrection?

042119cdg@hch