

# The Power of the Resurrection

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*John 20:1-8*

## Pre-Perspectives: Reconciling What You See

Sunday morning following a turbulent couple of days. The disciples one week earlier had been in the throes of seeing their hopes realized, or so they thought. Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem to the throngs of jubilant people. They anticipated Jesus taking down the Romans and setting up Israel in their rightful place once again. Even the activity of the week showed a determined Jesus: overturning the tables in the temple, driving out the moneychangers... Jesus was clearly on a mission. How quickly things changed...

## Occupy Jerusalem

While Jesus was the rage, the crowd followed him. However, when Jesus was arrested, the groundswell turned against him. The pressure was so great that even the disciples fled for fear of their lives. Hopes were reduced to next to nothing. A “settledness” came over the followers of Jesus, because as much as he tried to set the expectation, it wasn’t anything that they could grasp

*They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead – John 20:9*

Mary and the other women went to the tomb on Sunday morning, not with the expectation of a miracle, but of the expectation that they could finally bury their hopes. It was over. It was a nice thought, but now, they needed to complete the ceremony, let go of their dreams and go on with life. We often approach life the same way, when what we see in front of us doesn’t reconcile with what we believe or hope.

*Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said “Does this offend you?”... From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him – John 6:61, 67*

What His followers didn’t know is that while they were preparing to bury their hopes, Resurrection was already in process.

## I Don’t Feel Anything...

While the Resurrection was in process – Jesus had risen, the stone had been rolled away – His followers were still sad, broken, hurting and afraid. The power of the resurrection was available to them, but they didn’t realize it, so they remained trapped, chained to their hurt, unable to break away from the powers that held them in bondage. In this state, we are often even unable to search for the freedom that the Resurrection brings. In the history of *Juneteenth*, or Emancipation Day, the declaration that slaves were free was made and enforced 2.5 years after the Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Technically and legally, the slaves had been free for that entire 2.5 year period, but in their daily life

there was no difference. They lived as if they were still legally in bondage because they didn't know any better. Similarly with us, we have been set free from the power of sin through the resurrection of Jesus, but we are still in bondage to the degree that we don't understand the power of His resurrection in our lives.

In order for us to really experience the power of the Resurrection, we have to allow ourselves to be taken back to the source of the Resurrection. As easy as this sounds, it is often the hardest for us to do, for **the source of the Resurrection is also the source of our hurt.**

*Now the same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked... Jesus himself came up and walked along with them but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast... "we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel... in addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive – Luke 24:13-24*

### Looking Through the Tomb

Upon hearing the news, Peter and John ran, hoping what they were prompted to see would not be true. They had been holed up in a locked room out of fear, also resigned to the death of their friend and their hope. As they approached the tomb, initially their fears were realized. Jesus was gone. John reached the tomb first, looked in, but didn't enter. Peter barged in and the two of them saw the evidence in front of them. Somewhere in the process John "got it". John saw something that Peter didn't – maybe it was the face cloth neatly folded, or the arrangement of the strips of cloth that covered his body. Maybe it was something he remembered Jesus say. In any case, John was able to look past the reality of the tomb and see the possibility of the Resurrection.

Part of the power of the Resurrection is the ability to look past the inevitability of our circumstance. To see that even in the darkest of times, God reveals his presence in a way that shows He still has control, and that He wants to show His purpose.

### Resurrection's Power

What happens when we really "get" that Jesus got up on Sunday?

<b>Acts 2:24</b>	<b>But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him</b>
<b>Luke 24:32-34</b>	They asked each other, <b>"were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road"...</b> <b>They found the eleven and saying "It is true! The Lord has risen..."</b>
<b>Romans 8:31</b>	What then shall we say in response to this? <b>If God is for us, who can be against us?</b>

The Resurrection does 2 things for us:

- 1) Tells us **“this” is not the end** – The followers of Jesus had seen the end of all their hopes and dreams overturned. Not only could they go back to their dreams, but they could have real hope that doesn't change based on the circumstance
  - *Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be” – Romans 4:18*
- 2) Tells us **“this” does not define us** – Jesus demonstrated over and over that the judgments and labels people place on us, or those we place on ourselves don't have to be who we continue to be. The “label of death”, as real as it was, was not possible to hold Him. The label of sin, the power of its grip in our lives was destroyed by the Resurrection
  - *The Samaritan woman said to him “you are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” Jesus answered her “if you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink you would have asked him and he would have given you living water – John 4:9-10*

The power of the Resurrection redefines our life, our reality, our future. It declares who we are, and who we can be, and it is offered to all.