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Happy Resurrection Sunday - He is risen!

Jesus' ministry on earth did not meet the expectations of His family, the Jewish public or the religious leaders of the time. They each opposed His ministry and His message because of their fear, their doubts or their agenda.

Isaiah 53:3-5 (NLT) He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.⁴ Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

We were created for Relationship

- We are created in God's image, God is a God of relationship.
- God walked in loving relationship with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- Out of love, He gave us free will.
- Adam and Eve exercised their free will and sinned. Sin caused separation from God.

Why death on a cross?

1. The Cross demonstrates God's Justice.

- God is HOLY! He cannot be in the presence of sin.
- God Himself provided the only perfect sacrifice (Jesus) who could pay for the sin of the world and satisfy God's justice.

2. The cross demonstrates God's love

John 3:16 (NIV) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

- This offer stands for all who repent of their sins and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

The resurrection changed everything

1. The Resurrection proved God's power to forgive sin through the sacrifice of Jesus!

1 Corinthians 15:17 (NLT) And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.

2. The resurrection declared victory over death and despair!

John 11:25-26 (NIV) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

3. The empty tomb meant we too can have a resurrected life.

1 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV) In his great mercy, he gave us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you.

4. The resurrection changes our perspective.

- After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to ordinary people, His disciples - not the religious leaders.

- Jesus appeared to doubting Thomas.

John 20:24-28 (NIV) Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." ²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though 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; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." ²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

- Jesus comes to minister to those who doubt with love and mercy. Are you doubting, confused and uncertain? If you are willing, Jesus will reveal himself to you.

- Jesus consoled Mary Magdalene, Mary, Jesus' mother, and others in their grief.

Luke 24:1-8 (NIV) On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" ⁶ He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' ⁸ Then they remembered his words.

- Jesus ministers to the hurting and grief stricken. Are you going through grief, the loss of a loved one, a marriage, a job? Jesus wants to comfort you.

- Jesus came to Peter - those who turn their back on the Lord.

John 21:15-17 (NIV) When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

- Have you drifted away from the Lord? Have you denied Jesus for fear of rejection from others?

- Jesus comes and changes our perspective.

John 21:3-6 (NIV) "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴ Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. ⁵ He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. ⁶ He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

- Do you need a new perspective in life - will you fish on the other side of the boat?

The resurrection changes how we are to live.

- See Acts 2:42-47; they were devoted to all they were commanded to do.
 - They became missional people with their lives.
- If you have not asked Jesus into your life as your Lord and Savior, will you do so today?

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