

Brand New Pt 1: Unafraid

Hijacked Emphasis:

-have you ever heard someone say *-you got the emPHAsis on the wrong syLLABle*

-it is just a funny way of saying that you are focusing on the wrong part of the word

-What if I told you that the modern American Church has put the emPHAsis on the wrong syLLABle of the Jesus message?

-If you ask 100 American Christians what the central teaching of Christianity is, most would say "Jesus died for you sins".

-that is a crucial point

-But for the earliest Jesus followers The Resurrection was the Emphasis.

-The apostle Paul wrote about this and he actually said it was the most important thing

-1 Corinthians 15:3-6 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep

-the climax of the story for Paul was the resurrection

-he offers evidence (eyewitnesses) for is the Resurrection.

-verses 20-22 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

-this resurrection has implications for ALL who are in Christ

-verses 51-54 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will **all be changed**— 52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory.

-Paul thought that us understanding that Jesus rose and understanding all of the implications was OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

-He then goes on to say that what was modeled in Jesus' resurrection will repeated in our resurrection.

-finally Paul clarifies that in this Resurrection Life we will be flesh and blood and still human,,,,, but we will be different

-we will be immortal (undying). -we will be eternal. -we will be imperishable

-The promise of Easter is not just that we will go to heaven some day.

-you will experience physical resurrection

-and you will be raised immortal and incorruptible

-all that has gone wrong will be nullified

-The Resurrection Changes us.

-When we experience our own resurrection we will be permanently changed.

-In that chapter Paul uses the Illustration of a seed going in the ground and germinating and turning into a whole other thing

-Illustration: Apple Seed

-once this seed passes through the germination process it become so much more

-When we think of going to heaven we sometimes think of a Ghostly less than real existence.

-what scripture teaches is that in comparison to Resurrection Reality, this world and this life seem ghostly and less than real.

-scriptures says that this life is like a Vapor or a Puff of Smoke in comparison to Resurrection Reality and Eternity

-The Great Divorce, C.S. Lewis

-he wrote a fictional account of people dying and entering Eternity,,, when humans find themselves on the shores of the Eternal world they had a choice to make,,, to go up the mountain or to go back down into the purely physical life they were used to be (ending eventually in hell)

-on the shores of the eternal world these people who were once considered real and solid,,, now appeared ghostlike in comparison to their surrounding. Even the blades of grass hurt their feet when they walked on them (they were less real than this resurrection world,,, like smoke or a vapor)

-they couldn't even break the surface tension of water when they stepped on it,,, they were thrown by the movement and current but stayed on top,,, like stepping onto a moving treadmill....

-light and sound hurt them

-everything was more substantial than they could bear...

-On the other side of Death or Jesus' Return, we are looking forward to a physical world that is more real than anything we have yet experienced.

-It is not only more real, but it is WHOLE and REDEEMED.

-Revelation 21:1-5 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

—We know that Someday we will Experience Resurrection Life, but what impact does that future reality have on life Today?

-this is the question we will focus on these next few weeks leading into Easter.

-Matt. 28:1-10 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

2 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. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, “**Do not be afraid**, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, **afraid yet filled with joy**, and ran to tell his disciples.

9 Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.

10 Then Jesus said to them, “**Do not be afraid**. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Up until now the Jesus followers had been afraid.

-When Jesus was arrested most all of them ran for their lives:

-one ran away naked.....

-after the crucifixion they were locked in a room together in hiding

-They had always feared the Religious leaders and the Romans, but now they had a very vivid personal picture of what those forces were capable of...

-Fear is something all of us deal with.

-We are afraid of a lot of different things. But, I think that most of our fear can be traced to a few Root Fears:

-We Fear Humiliation

-our egos self image are so central to how we interact with life

-we fear anything that might tell us or the watching world that WE ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH

-we put on masks and pretend to be better than we are,,, we often even fool ourselves

-then we fear being found out,,, and we fear our own discovery of what we really are

-Closely related to Humiliation, We Fear Judgment

-if we believe in God we live with an uneasiness about what God thinks and feels toward us

-because we know that we are not what we should be

-we fear that at any moment God's justice will catch up with us,,,, God will “get us”

-even those who don't believe in God ,, fear the judgment of people

-whatever the source or the one measuring or counting,,,, we fear that we will be measured and found to come up short.

-We fear Loss: personal loss, loss of health, financial loss, loss of ability, loss of relevance, loss of loved ones, loss of life itself

-Sometimes those fears are more acute and attached to real situations

-but all of us to some degree struggle with the fear that Life or the things of life will be **Taken AWAY From Us.**

-sometimes those fears are realized and sometimes they are just worry...

-The fear of loss can be Consuming.

-That fear of loss was punishing those 2 Marys that day.

-Jesus was the hinge-pin of everything in their life,,, everything depended on Jesus

-with Jesus having been killed, it was like they were in the basement of their life with a **tornado ripping through** everything overhead,, they were just waiting to see HOW MUCH WAS LOST

-would they be outcasts now. -would they lose all their friends.

-would they be imprisoned -would they be killed also

-life was nothing but uncertainty now

-The Shadow cast by fear is almost always larger and more chilling than the actual event casting the shadow.

-when someone says “we need to talk”,,, the fear you live with until you have the conversion is usually 10 times worse than the conversation itself

-Consistent fear can be absolute torture.

-what will the diagnosis be

-will we get Layed off?

-will they leave me when they find out what I have done?

-will I completely lose my health,,, will I be in a wheelchair

-will I have enough to live on,,, retire with,,,,, will the economy crash

-will I ever find someone to love me,,, or will I always be alone?

-Good News: The Resurrection had a measurable impact on Fear.

-back to story

-The 2 Marys head to the tomb to wrap the body of Jesus for burial

-They arrive at the Tomb and the body is gone!!!! They felt fear.

-The Angel explains the situation and tells them **“do not be afraid”**.

-Then the Angel told them that Jesus rose from the dead,, and it says that the Marys left there **AFRAID** but filled with **JOY**.

Second Hand knowledge of the Resurrection brought Mixed Emotions.

-This was progress because it had been pure fear. But now they have Joy mixed with fear.

-Joy mixed with fear is lightyears better than despair.

-Put yourself in the place of these two women in this moment.

-you saw all that happened to Jesus

-*you always knew that bad stuff could happen*

-but seeing it,,,,, experiencing it,,, that changed your fear level

-but now the tomb is empty and this angel tells you Jesus has risen from the dead JUST AS HE PREDICTED

-now you begin to remember the times Jesus said he would die

-you also remember how he said he would raise again on the 3rd day

-you remember all the times Jesus opened blind eyes, called storms, fed multitudes,,,,, and RAISED LAZARUS

-you begin to think, Maybe Nothing is Impossible for Jesus!

-So there is joy mixed with your fear.

-But even with all of that, you are still afraid.

-you cant unsee what you saw

-the memory of what has happened informs what you know could happen

-Even as believers in Jesus and the Resurrection we still face life with mixed emotions.

-there is still fear at what could happen

-there is still sadness and shock at what did happen

-but there is Joy in seeing the beginnings of Hope and wondering what God might do with this situation.

A firsthand experience of the Resurrection Filled them with Joy.

-verse 9 says this: Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.

-After having seen him die, the moment they saw Jesus face to face, Hope and Joy overwhelmed their fear.

-this was not Theoretical anymore,,,,, resurrection wasn't just a belief

-it wasn't just comforting words or hope for Someday

-it was real

-What they had lost was now right back in front of their face.

-they could touch him. -hear him. -see him.

-his death was not just a bad dream that never happened, it was still a reality
-but the reality of his Resurrection Power was bigger and more real

-This reality is better than the one they had before because this one has no borders.

-They knew now that Jesus was bigger than anything they had feared.

-his redemptive power is bigger than anything they could ever lose

-There was nothing that could be done to them, taken from them, or imposed on them that Jesus was not bigger than.

-There was nothing left to be afraid of.

Sadly, we have to walk through the bitterness and loss before our hope and joy become loss proof.

-It was the presence of Jesus on the other side of loss and death that made their hope and joy so real and potent.

-but they had to endure a very dark night in order to see that Sunrise

-Because they lost everything and were then given it back in Jesus' resurrection, they feared nothing.

-many people face hurt and loss in this life and learn this lesson firsthand

-have you ever met someone who has walked through great loss, but they were firmly rooted in the hope of Jesus,,, and after coming through it they possessed a peace that you could not even comprehend?

-that kind of peace and hope is a great gift that comes at a terrible price.

-so those who have moved from Fear mixed with Joy into that kind of Peace possess something that others of us will not know on this side of eternity

-Sometimes Resurrection Hope is something that we put our hands on in this life and sometimes we hold onto the promise that Jesus' resurrection makes us.

-Jesus' resurrection was the deposit or the down payment we get to hold onto, to assure us of what is coming.

-The day is coming when Jesus will make All Things New!

-“Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their

eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

-We don't have to fear because he doesn't just give back what was lost. He makes Everything NEW.

-you -all those situations. -all those people -the earth itself. -every broken relationship

-As the Resurrection becomes more real in our hearts and minds we make the Journey from Fearful to Unafraid.

-we start off afraid just like other people
-then as our hearts incorporate the Reality of Resurrection our Fear Mixes with Joy.
-Then a day comes when we have tasted enough loss and Resurrection has become real enough to us that our Hope and Joy is Unshakeable.

-Closing: Lewis and the Plains of the Mountain:

-in that story C.S. Lewis told the people continued the journey across the plain and up the mountain slowly became more and more real

-After a while the light and sound didn't hurt and eventually became beautiful

-after a while the grass didn't hurt their feet and eventually even smushed beneath their steps as they became REAL, SUBSTANTIAL, ETERNAL BEINGS themselves

-the painful, fearful, but temporary things that hurt and scare us now will eventually provide no resistance and will become like soft foliage under our Eternal Feet.

-That is a process that starts now and progresses to varying degrees in this life, but a moment will come when that process is perfected and we will Eternally be Unafraid.