

SERMON: FROM A GOOD FRIDAY TO A BETTER SUNDAY

Matthew 28: 5-6

(5) And the angel answered and unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. (6) He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come see the place where the Lord lay.

Introduction

One Friday- we now call it Good Friday, Roman soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, at nine o'clock in the morning. By three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, He was dead. Friends came to take Jesus' body. They wrapped it in burial linens and laid Him in a tomb. There was no time for the usual ritual of burial. The Jewish Sabbath was only a few hours away. No Jew would touch a dead body on the Sabbath day. It would make one ceremonially unclean. Consequently, one who touched a body could not participate in the Sabbath observance.

When the Sabbath was over, devout women took spices and ointment and went to the tomb of Jesus. It was early Sunday morning. Out of respect, love, and honor they wanted to personally perform the formal rites associated with burial. This would give them some sense of closure. When they arrived at the tomb, they found the massive stone had been rolled away. When they entered the tomb, they did not find the body of Jesus. Instead, two angelic messengers informed them that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. They were the first to discover the reality of the resurrection. The women rushed back to the disciples and told them about the reality of the resurrection.

Oh, what irony! What was good for us was very, very bad for Jesus. It was good that Jesus submitted to the will of the Father and drank from the bitter cup. We can only imagine the spiritual, mental, and physical agony He endured. This was a Good Friday, but Easter Sunday was much, much better for everyone. Jesus rose victoriously with all power in His hands and completed the path to salvation for all believers. Let's look again at some of the well-known events of this great day and extract some spiritual truths that will help us on our joyful, yet tedious, Christian journey.

Exposition

1. Anticipated Obstacle Was Removed In Advance Before Encountered.

(The Stone Was Rolled Away Before The Women Arrived.)

(When We Try To Figure It Out, God Has Already Worked It Out.)

(Mark 16:3-4.)

2. Things Thought Necessary Became Unnecessary.

(The Embalming Spices They Brought Became Unnecessary.)

(There Was No Dead Body To Anoint.)

3. Negative Things Quickly Became Positive Realities.

(Mourners Became Missionaries - Matthew 28:7-8.)

(Weepers Became Worshipers - Matthew 28:9.)

(Action Followed Adoration.)

4. Death Was Defeated Because An Evil Plot Failed.

(Jesus Is The Only Exception.)

(All Founders Of Religions, Institutions, And Businesses Eventually

Die, But Not Our Savior-He Is Alive Today.)

Closing Thoughts

The resurrection is one of the high points of Jesus' earthly ministry - if not the highest point. If there were no Easter resurrection, there would be no need to celebrate Christmas. If there were no Easter, then Christ was born, lived, and died in vain. There would be no New Testament, no church, no Christianity, and no hope of eternal life.

I will close with the lyrics of a traditional spiritual:

"Nothin' could hinder my Jesus,

Nothin' could keep Him down.

Nothin' could stop my Jesus,

From rising from the ground,

From rising from the ground."

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

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