

Reflection Questions: Luke 23:50-24:12

For the message, "The Resurrection & the Fear of Death" given by Pastor John Ferguson at New City Church of Calgary on October 2, 2016

These discussion questions are designed primarily to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the sermon, go to NewCityChurch.ca/sermons

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Luke 23:50-24:12

A summary of the sermon: The reality of death is a certainty that everyone must face. For some, it is very unnerving to contemplate one's mortality. And yet, the Christian message intrudes into our lives with the radical thought: the resurrection teaches us that death does not have the final say. Indeed, because of the resurrection of Jesus, death has now been transformed, and so can we.

Key Points:

- In the gospel accounts, we are told that women were the first eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Jesus as the angels say, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, he has risen." This is significant because if you were making this story up, you would not have said the first witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus were women because in that day, the testimony of women was considered worthless. There is no conceivable advantage to including this detail, unless it was true.
- Acts 2:24, "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.... God raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it."

Key Quotes:

- Tim Keller, *The Reason for God*, "Each gospel states that the first eyewitnesses to the resurrection were women. Women's low social status meant that their testimony was not admissible evidence in court. There was no possible advantage to the church to recount that all the first witnesses were women. It could only have undermined the credibility of the testimony. The only possible explanation for why women were depicted as meeting Jesus first is if they really had.... There must have been enormous pressure on the early proclaimers of the Christian message to remove the women from the accounts. They felt they could not do so—the records were too well known."
- 2 Timothy 2:8-9, "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead...as preached in my gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."
- Romans 10:9, "...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Bottom Line:

- Because of the resurrection of Jesus, death has been transformed, and so can we.

QUESTIONS

Describe a time when you were first brought to an awareness of your own mortality.

1. How does this text apply to your life?

- Consider the message the women heard at the tomb, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." How should this message transform the way we think about life and death?

- Peter, who had been hiding out with the other disciples in fear, ran to the tomb and marvelled at the fact that Jesus was not there. He later met the resurrected Jesus (cf. John 21:1-19), and was transformed into a fearless proclaimer of the resurrection of his Lord. On the day of Pentecost, he fearlessly preached the first “Christian” sermon, saying, “God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, and we are all eyewitnesses of it” (Acts 2:24).
- How does the transformation of the disciples illustrate for you the way they grasped the significance of what happened Easter morning?
- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, “We do not want you to be uninformed brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. for since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, god will bring those with him who have fallen asleep.”
- How should this this transform your own view of death?

2. How does this text apply to us as a church community?

- How do the Gospel accounts of the resurrection of Jesus serve as an invitation for us to join God’s mission?
- Read 2 Timothy 2:8-9 (under Key Quotes above). How does Paul’s charge to “remember Jesus, risen from the dead” inform the way we understand the message entrusted to us?
 - What kind of community is this text calling us to become for the sake of the world? In other words, how does this text form our missional identity to live out and proclaim the gospel of Jesus?
- What happens if the church loses this central aspect of the Good News?

3. How does this text apply to our city?

- How do the resurrection accounts in the Gospels and the transformed lives of the first followers of Jesus challenge the thinking of our city?
- How does the Resurrection serve as Good News for those outside the faith? How does it serve as Bad News?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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- _____
- _____