

Dare To Believe

The Path to Restored Faith & Belief

I. Introductory Remarks.

Luke 24:1-6 *Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? "He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee....*

- Easter is the day we as Christians celebrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- This is the most significant event that ever took place in the history of our faith.
- It is an event that has given to us the measurement of time as we know it.
- Time as we know it was divided by this great and momentous event.
- So let us celebrate this day and give glory to the one who has conquered death for every man, because it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ that our faith is based on.

In this message, I want you to see the hope that we as Christians have in Jesus Christ. The message of the resurrection of Christ has something for everyone, believer and unbeliever alike.

The resurrection of Jesus...

- is a message of salvation to all of those who are lost and without hope in this life.
- is a message of hope to all who have failed God in one way or another.
- is a message of restored faith and belief to those who have given up.
- is a message of joy and peace to those who are sinking in the mire of self pity and despair.
- is a message of purpose and destiny to those who are without direction and meaning in this life.
- is a message of Christ's compassion and mercy in His dealings with mankind.
- is a message of who Christ is. As the disciples failed to perceive the true nature of Christ prior to His resurrection, He uses the power of His resurrection to reveal His full nature.

The disciples and followers of Jesus who had been with Him prior to His crucifixion experienced all of these feelings and emotions that were just mentioned because of His death and the events leading up to it.

These are also common emotions that each one of us deals with from time to time.

Interactive Question

What kind of extreme emotions have you experienced?

- A. Total despair and bitterness from a sense of loss or failure.
- B. A sense of hopelessness and loss of faith
- C. Depression and despair due to loss of purpose & destiny
- D. All of the above

My desire is that you would allow the message of Christ's resurrection minister and heal the area in your life that is in need of attention.

Through the power of His resurrection He is able to touch you today because He is alive forevermore!

My prayer is that through this message, you will be able to grasp the significance of what took place on this momentous day in the history of our planet – so momentous that time as we know it has been divided by this historical event.

- The week of Christ's death, burial and resurrection was a week that began with tremendous excitement and great expectations for these early followers of Christ.
- The followers of Jesus were ready to crown Him as their King, only to have all of their hopes and expectations crushed because of His death.
- They were unable to grasp the significance of what was taking place. Their belief in Christ was so shattered that even after His resurrection they were slow to believe.

All of Jesus' disciples and other followers forsook Him, one betrayed Him and one denied Him. *Matthew 26:56 says they all forsook Him.*

They had lost hope in the One who came to redeem them from the curse of the law.

Peter was mired in self-pity and despair. *Matthew 26:75 says he went out and*

wept bitterly.

They had given up all to follow Christ and now they were filled with bitterness and total disillusionment.

They no longer had the direction or meaning to life that they had experienced during the 3 1/2 years they had been with Jesus.

They were now lost and without hope. They were in need of a Savior.

But all of this was about to change because of the resurrection of Christ – **if only they would dare to believe once again.**

The Title of this message is Dare to Believe, The Path to Restored Faith and Belief.

The beautiful thing about the resurrection of Christ is that Jesus understood and sympathized with their weakened condition. **His immediate purpose following His resurrection was to restore their belief in Him.**

II. The Path to Restored Faith and Belief.

As we begin to look at how Jesus went about restoring their faith and trust in Him I want you to see the compassion and understanding that Christ exercised in mending their fragile souls.

1. He began to plant and replant the seeds of truth.

The empty tomb speaks and plants the seeds of faith and belief. *They are reminded of what Jesus had told them concerning rising from the dead.*

Luke 24:5-8 *Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? "He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, "saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "And they remembered His words.*

Mark 16:7 *"But go and tell His disciples – and Peter that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you."*

The women go on to share with the disciples, but their words seemed like idle tales.

They still did not believe, but enough of a seed was planted for them to begin to investigate the truth concerning the resurrection of Jesus.

Luke 24:9-11 *Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.*

Luke 24:12 *But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.*

Whenever the truth of God's Word comes into our hearing, whether it is for the first time or for a particular situation in our life, we have the choice of listening to the voice of doubt and unbelief or beginning an investigation of looking into the source of what we have heard. Peter could have listened to his doubts, but he chose to investigate further. eg. the Bereans.

- **We must dare to believe even in the midst of the most intense and severe circumstances and bitter disillusionment.**

What would have happened to Peter if he dared not to believe? His life would have ended in intense bitterness and resentment. But he resisted his doubts and dared to believe just as you and I must do at times.

When we do, God is faithful to reward us by opening the scriptures once again to our understanding so that we can see through the eyes of faith where we are going.

- **Jesus began to open their Understanding to the Scriptures.**

We see this with the two men on the road to Emmaus who have the scriptures opened to them by Jesus – Luke 24:13-27.

Luke 24:27 *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

These men were with the disciples when the women came to them with the report that Jesus had risen from the dead. The seeds of restored belief and faith had been planted in their hearts and now Jesus is opening their understanding to the word.

When we have an openness in our heart that puts us on an investigative course,

God is faithful to open our understanding to His Word.

In order to see and believe in Jesus or in a fuller revelation of Him and His will for our lives, we must first have our understanding opened to it in the Word. This is what sustains our faith more than any personal experience. Experiences have a way of fading, but the word of God never fades or dims in our understanding.

3. Jesus Becomes Real - We See Him as the Living Resurrected Christ.

The more we experience the reality of Jesus Christ through His written Word the more we experience His manifested presence in our lives through the Holy Spirit.

Luke 24:36 *Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."*

4. We Receive the Complete Picture and Revelation of Who Christ Is.

Luke 24:45-46 *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day..."*

God's desire is to open our understanding so that we can see and experience His fullness, so that we will be fully equipped with every good thing to fulfill all that He has called us to in this life.

When we are able to see the full revelation of all God's attributes, we are not only healed from the despair and hopelessness, we are now able to fulfill the divine purpose and destiny He has laid out for our lives.

There is nothing more fulfilling than this! The disciples went forth in the power of the Holy Spirit in a conquering attitude after their belief was restored. We can do the same.

Ephesians 1:17-23 *...eyes of our understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling...the exceeding greatness of His power...and the fullness of His body.*

III. Concluding Remarks.

In conclusion, I want to encourage you to dare to believe God for what is needed the most in your life. It doesn't matter how much you have sinned, how many times you

have failed God or how many times you have closed your heart to Him. Open your heart to Him today and dare to believe, because He has risen from the dead and is alive forevermore.