

SCRIPTURES FOR 4/16/06 LIFEGROUP LESSON

1 Corinthians 15:12-14

But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

1 Corinthians 15:19

If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Romans 6:22-2

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:54-58

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."

"Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Kings 19:11-13

The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

1 Samuel 2:7-9

The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor. "For the foundations of the earth are the LORD's; upon them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his saints, but the wicked will be silenced in darkness. "It is not by strength that one prevails;

NOTE TO LEADER: There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed

NOTE TO LEADERS: All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

INTRODUCTION:

HAPPY EASTER!

This week, Jeff talked about Easter. Imagine that. He shared that at Easter, we celebrate the resurrection. Of all of the events in Christ's life, the resurrection is unique; you can debate the other events, but to debate the resurrection, we discard the very foundation of our faith.

Have someone read 1 Corinthians 15:12-14 & 19.

THE EXPECTATION OF THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection is unique as the central, immutable truth on which all our faith depends. Without it, Christianity is little more than a set of rules to follow. The resurrection provides the authority necessary for all of Jesus' teaching. His death, burial, and resurrection were predicted even as early as the Garden.

Have someone read Genesis 3:15.

Even though the serpent, struck Jesus' heel, through the crucifixion, Jesus ultimately crushed Satan by defeating death. Jesus overcomes death--separation from God--to prove that we can do the same.

If the world had been waiting so long for the Christ, why do you think it was so hesitant to accept Him when He showed up?

Why do you think the world continues to look for other answers when the answer is right in front of them?

THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection is unique in that it opened the door to Heaven, but do we deserve that? Jeff shared an article he read that described Easter as the celebration not of getting what we deserve but of receiving what we do not deserve – grace and mercy. The article described grace as getting what you don't have coming and mercy as not getting what you do.

Have someone read Romans 6:22-23.

Is this just believing or is it more than that?

Jeff said that a poll of non-church-attenders indicated that 84% believe Jesus rose from the dead. I can't imagine that number could be accurate, but even if it is half that, what does that mean?

They believe the central tenet of our faith, but do these "believers" have eternal life? (*If not, what of those who got "saved" listening to a radio broadcast or stumbling into a church when they hit rock bottom?*)

Have someone read 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

THE MESSAGE OF THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection is unique because it gives life, but it gives life by providing authority for the whole body of God's word. As your life spins out of control, you can cling to the word because you know that, even though you do not deserve eternal life or forgiveness from sin, it has been promised you on the authority of a risen Savior, predicted from ancient days and related by eye-witness accounts. Even when He doesn't seem that close, you can stand on that promise. Maybe He's there, but you just aren't listening closely enough.

Have someone read 1 Kings 19:11-13.

What do you think this scripture says about expectations versus the truth?

Have you ever felt so overwhelmed by the "noise" of your life, that you couldn't hear God?

CONCLUSION

Have someone read 1 Samuel 2:7-9.

This is the God we serve. He is in control and we can trust Him. He has the power to help you and He is all that you need.