

01/04/2018

JOHN 21:4-14 = RESURRECTION (The best evidence that He is risen...)

#SERMON=BEFOREHAND: Dear Passover followers, what were your wounds during this week for Christ Jesus?..

#SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 28:1-15, John 21:4-14 (12b) (See Matthew 5:43-48)

#SERMON=INTRODUCTION: We are busy celebrating Passover weekend - in my humble opinion "The Feast of all feasts"! But many of us (especially as parents) have a small (yet challenging) problem: How do we convince our little ones that Jesus Christ was *indééd* risen from the dead = that His resurrection is a physical reality?.. What can serve as "proof" to a sceptical, post-modern world that our Saviour/Bridegroom "...is risen, is risen *indééd*"?..

+**TRANSITION:** The 2 women in our Scripture reading were faced with the same challenge.

+**EXEGESIS&APPLICATION:** The followers of Christ Jesus had a dramatic Friday behind them. The same applies to Mary Magdalene and "...the other Mary" (28:1). Now these two ladies are on their way to the grave. There they have this dramatic encounter with the angel, followed by their Face-to-face "worship meeting" (28:9b) with their risen Lord. He commands them to go and convey the message to "My bretheren..."

*But they have a predicement - who's going to believe them? I mean, (1) The 1st question will be: "Who rolled the huge, sealed stone away?.." (2) There is *the guards' version* that *Jesus' body was stolen*. (3) The disciples could also downplay their story as *hallucinations = an emotional over-reaction in the light of their Saviour's brutal/sudden death!*..

*Beloved in JC, we live in a strong rational world - people look for logical answers/explanations; they question the principle of "believing unconditionally". Therefore there has been *numerous efforts to "proof" God's existence:* (1) The Apollo space program (1963): The computers wouldn't "run", till a Christian engineer remembered *the solstice* while Joshua/Israel fought the 5 Amorite kings (the son stood still for nearly a full day = JOS 10:13b). *When this guy calculated that into the equation, the computers "ran again"*. (2) Incredible books like "The Case for Christ" by Lee Stroebel (forensic, judicial reporter). He researched the historical facts *re* Christianity & found everything to be a 100% correct! (More detail later). And "The new evidence that demands a verdict" by Josh McDowell.

*How do we convince our little ones/children that "this church thing & Jesus' resurrection" is not a fairy tale but a tangible reality? We as adults/parents should be the living proof to them that Jesus "...is risen *indééd*", and not only "thén/toeka-se-dae nie" in Jerusalem/Israel - but also today here in RSA/Winterton, even on "Greenpastures". In fact - on a daily basis they must see Christ living in/operating through me = us as parents... How will they see it? By us living a Kingdom lifestyle=un upside-down lifestyle (according to worldly standards): -
~ Practising unconditional love - especially towards their "mom/dad" & towards them - see MATT 18:21-35. The NB of *forgiveness*.
~ Not repaying anyone evil with evil = turning the other cheek - ROM 12:14,17/1 PET 3:9
~ To take up the cudgels for the innocent/the hungry/those rejected - PS 68:5 / JAM 1:27.
~ Re the material = *tithings&offerings, payment of accounts, honouring of contracts, lending out money without interest* - MAL 3:10 / PS 37:26 / LUKE 6:32-36.

want to interrupt by saying: "Good guys come second!.." Yebo, that's true according to worldly standards. **But that is the core of the Gospel - carrying your cross...** 2 Days ago at the table of the Lord - handed out the symbols reminding us of Jesus' body = the price He paid for our salvation. B/S, *sometimes our wounds contribute to the healing/"salvation" of others* (ages/familiar spirits/addictions). **We become the "gracious symbols" He hands out to us - to remind them of His forgiveness/deliverance** (PHIL 2:17 / 2 TIM 4:6)

are we still prepared to take up our crosses and follow Jesus? (MARK 8:34-38)... Do you recall my initial question: **What were your wounds during this week for Christ Jesus?** This is the question that a large part of the powerful Chinese underground house-church movement asks each other weekly when they meet. Bottomline: In China, with anti-religion, communication restrictions/laws in place - *there's always "a price tag" attached to uncompromising obedience. They know that it is impossible to try and separate the Gospel from the cross. They know that committed obedience to the voice of God, necessarily leads to suffering.* (2 TIM 4:6 / 2 COR 11:23)

O Bride of Christ Jesus, *please remember: *That in our marriage to the Lamb a half a loaf is not better than no bread = don't compromise; *that there is no crownbearer in heaven who hadn't been a crossbearer on earth; *that JC didn't only die/was resurrected FOR us but also IN us!.. Please remember the witnessing/testimony principle that we have taught in the past few years: The only "language" in which True Love/the Gospel can be communicated to a sceptical/post-modern world, is sacrificial language. Don't even try to achieve it on your own = out of your own strength - you won't achieve it. Be filled with the indwelling Holy Spirit - remember PHIL 4:13 = "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me."*

Whether I've had a "face to face meeting" with the resurrected Christ (like the 2 Marys) - I point to this: -

Maandri's tragic remark: **"I like what I see when I look at your Jesus. But if I look at His works - I prefer to remain a Hindu..."**

the grave of an unknown shipwreck survivor/missionary on an island: When missionaries arrived on this island (years later) and started preaching the Gospel, the residents got excited and explained that *they personally met/knew this Jesus*. It was only then that *they lead missionaries to this grave and they heard the story about this committed child of God.*

CONCLUSION: Church/Body of Christ Jesus, may we be so Spirit-filled and (therefore) so obedient, that when people interact with us on a daily basis they would want to repeat what someone once said to a committed child of the Lord: **"Sir/Mam, while you were talking/teaching - not even noticing that I'm watching you - I (for a moment) thought I was looking at Jesus Himself!.."** George/Sharlene: (1) What were your wounds during this week for JC? (2) Be/Become the best, living proof to your children that JC "...is risen, is risen, indéed!"

amen!