

Remnant Life Church
April 20, 2014
Resurrection Sunday

Luke 24:12; John 20:1-10

“Do I Stand at the Door or Rush In?”

- Sunday morning to the disciples and followers of Jesus was a day of great contrast
 - Saturday the Sabbath has come and gone
 - They are still most likely in shock from what they witnessed on Thursday night into Friday
 - They are not only concerned, perhaps confused but they are also afraid
 - Afraid enough to run away (Matt. 26:56)
 - Afraid enough to have betrayed him (Matt. 26:69-75)
 - But they also could very well be trying to encourage each other with a glimmer of hope
 - He had said many times that He would rise again (Matt. 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 18:31-33...)
 - He had even said that He would appear in the sky (Matt. 24:30-31)

- John 20 gives us the account of that Sunday morning
 - According to John Mary Magdalene had gone early to the tomb while Matthew, Mark and Luke record multiple women going (proper, safety) only to find the stone rolled back (20:1)
 - She rushes to the disciples to tell them what she has seen (20:2) – most likely being greeted with some skepticism
 - But Peter and John immediately run to the tomb (20:3)
 - Running in the same direction but very likely with very different feelings
 - Peter is certainly running with a guilty heart
 - The last contact He had with Jesus was as one who had denied Him (John 18:27)
 - Peter ran but perhaps half-heartedly at first not sure what to expect
 - John (although admittedly younger) was running with an expectant heart
 - He is the only disciple identified in the scripture as having been at the foot of the cross during the crucifixion (John 18:26)
 - John is running with great anticipation

 - When they arrive at the tomb they come to the entrance in very different ways and see very differently – *the Bible uses three distinct Greek words for how they looked in*
 - John arrives first but stops outside and “looks” in (20:5)
 - The word “look” is translated as to clearly see something but not necessarily in its entirety
 - What he saw was the body linen lying in place

- Peter arrives and rushes fully into the tomb (20:6)
 - He “saw”, meaning to closely scrutinize, the clothes and face cloth
 - He could determine that the grave clothes were orderly and neat - an unusual event
 - This would have precluded a hasty robbery that would have thrown off the grave clothes
 - John finally enters (20:8)
 - He “saw”, meaning to comprehend or fully grasp, and believed
 - John now knew and was convinced what had taken place not just through the physical evidence but with belief in his heart
 - John and Peter leave but Mary remains, she looks in, and encounters two angels (20:10-11)
 - Note that she is so overcome with grief that she can have a rather calm conversation with 2 angels
 - It is the same grief that keeps her from recognizing Jesus a moment later
 - One angel sits at the head and the other at the feet where Jesus lay
 - The head to the feet posture is a symbolic notation of totality, of fullness and completion
 - The other gesture is that of the grave clothes
 - In particular the face napkin
 - Wadded vs folded (I’ve left temporarily but I will return) in the far eastern culture (unsubstantiated)
- How did the Priests (the representation of the world) explain what had taken place?
 - The Jewish leaders too had heard these wild predictions of Jesus claiming He would rise from the dead
 - It is why they posted the guards and sealed the great stone – not in belief but in a political move
 - But now they needed to come up with an explanation
 - **Matt.28:11-15** tells us what took place
 - The soldiers reported the empty tomb to the chief priests
 - The priests bribed them and demanded that they lie about what they saw
 - Consider then what the religious leaders did and their efforts to rid themselves of Jesus
 - They used treachery to arrest Him
 - They resorted to illegal tactics to try Him
 - They used slander to accuse Him before Pilate
 - They used bribery to try and silence the truth when Jesus did exactly what He said He would do
 - The enormity and impact of what they had seen (perhaps the actual resurrection?) was so great that the Roman soldiers were willing to agree to say that they had fallen asleep on their watch (if this were true how

would they have known specifically that the disciples stole the body?) – a severely punishable offence even to death.

- Every one of these efforts failed because the truth will ALWAYS win out over lies and deception

- John and Peter both came rushing to the empty grave with very different expectations
 - John stopped
 - Peter rushed in even though the last thing he had done was deny Jesus
 - Both men wanted to know the truth but only one was willing to put himself all the way in to find it
 - **This morning who are you? John or Peter?**
 - Will you be content, like John, to stand at the entrance?
 - Or are you willing, like Peter, to go all the way in to a relationship with Jesus Christ to learn, know and understand the truth of your life?
 - Here is what is true –
 - Jesus loves you
 - He died for you
 - He defeated death and conquered the grave
 - He is coming again

 - How will you greet Him? Will you stand at the door or will you rush in?