



Daily Reflections

April 13, 2020

Scripture

Matthew 28:8-15

Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples.

And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage.

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had happened.

They assembled with the elders and took counsel; then they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,

telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole him while we were asleep.' And if this gets to the ears of the governor, we will satisfy [him] and keep you out of trouble."

The soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has circulated among the Jews to the present [day].

Our Scripture Reflection

Bribery, lies...sounds something more in line with the days BEFORE Easter, doesn't it? Jesus' death and resurrection defeated the powers of sin and death but the effects remain to this day. That's the reason He ordered His Apostles to join Him on the mountain in Galilee. There He would appear to them and commission them to go to ALL people and proclaim the Gospel. He would call them and us, today, to witness to the power of Grace over sin; life over death. Are YOU up for the challenge?

Food for your Journey

If it died, can it live again? God says yes. How? By resurrection. Christians see resurrection as a fact. Fact: God raised Jesus from death. Fact: God will raise those in Christ from death. Resurrection is a fact, but it is more than a fact. That fact introduces us to the resurrection principle. The power that raised Jesus' dead body is the power that functions in the resurrection principle. The person who believes the fact of resurrection trusts the resurrection principle. What is the "resurrection principle"? God can bring to life that which has died. For example, a person becomes aware of the evil. He finds it enticing and appealing. He indulges in evil by surrendering to temptation. The result: He spiritually dies. He separates himself from God. He abandons God for a godless life.

Spiritually, can he live again? God says yes. Jesus' blood atoned for all sin. Redemption in Christ is available to anyone. How can he be spiritually alive again? By resurrection. Each person baptized into Christ places his confidence and hope for forgiveness in the resurrection principle. He is given newness of life by being resurrected with Christ (Romans 6:3,4).

Faith, repentance and baptism activate the resurrection principle. Can a mind destroyed by pornography or materialism or selfishness or vanity or resentment come to life again? Yes. Can emotions destroyed by adultery or godless pleasures or rage or exploitation come to life again? Yes. How? By resurrection in Jesus Christ.

Can a ruined life be restored? Is that not evident in Jesus' ministry? Did he forgive prostitutes? Dishonest, abusive tax collectors? People known as "the sinners"?

The resurrection principle is activated when sin is destroyed by forgiveness. The principle continues as God re-creates the person in Christ. Later, after physical death, the fact of resurrection occurs. Just as Jesus was resurrected to live with God, the forgiven person is raised from physical death to live with God.

The fact of resurrection verifies the resurrection principle. The resurrection principle prepares the believer to live with God. Christians allow God to resurrect their minds and hearts now so that he can resurrect their bodies later.

-David Chadwell, "The Resurrection Principle," West-Ark Church of Christ, Fort Smith, Ark., bulletin article, August 23, 1998.

A Prayer from the Heart

Gracious Father, In raising Your beloved Son from the dead, You demonstrated once and for all that love is greater than death and anything that diminishes life in any way. May Your amazing Grace give me the confidence and courage to live as a disciple of Your Son despite the cost. Amen