

The World-Changing Resurrection

John 21

(preached Pine Grove 4/16/17; Easter Sunday AM)

Introduction

The latest study information tells us that 95% of Americans own a mobile phone...

OF that 95%, 77% of those phones are smart phones...

Smartphones are simply mobile phones that are actually tiny computers...

And though they are tiny, they are very powerful machines..

In fact, the average smartphone in 2017 is more powerful than all the computers used to put the first men on the surface of the earth...

Just think about all you can do with a phone...

You have an answering machine, a calendar, a rolodex, a to-do list, a weather report, a camera, a video recorder, a scanner, word processor, and on and on and on...

And even with all of that in one device that fits in the palm of your hand, most people only know and use the basic functions of that phone every day...

According to a recent article in the Washington Post, only 5% of smartphone owners use their phone to its fullest potential...

And why is that?

Well, most are too lazy to read the instruction...

Others weren't paying attention to the people who sold them the phone...

Others don't really care about all the features...

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is something that everyone knows about, but very few understand everything about it..

Most of the time, this is a result of preaching about the resurrection, but failing to teach why it is so important...

Now, Easter morning is not the time to give a lecture on everything the Bible says about the resurrection..

But it is also not a time to repeat the facts of the resurrection that you have probably heard preached about the resurrection since you were a kid in Sunday School..

Look, Jesus was laid in a tomb. He was raised from the dead. The rock was rolled away and 500 people can testify about seeing the resurrected Christ...

He is alive today at the right hand of his father in heaven and is waiting word from the Father to meet the church in the air and rapture them to heaven in preparation for the Second Coming..

Those are biblical facts, and those are glorious truths..

And in this area of world, everyone knows that, but very few have let the reality of the resurrection change anything about their lives...

In fact, millions will pour into churches for their once a year visit, they will hear those same facts and they will depart and never let the resurrection of Christ change anything about how they live..

They will take pictures today...

Eat big dinners and tomorrow head back to work the same people they were on Friday...

Some of that blame falls on the people who hear about the resurrection and continue to harden their hearts...

Some of that blame falls on the preachers who get up and tell the same Easter stories or worse yet, take a morning off from their duties to preach the gospel and have Easter singings that last all of service...

Can you a store on Black Friday that has people lined up at their door but they have nothing for sale?

We would call them crazy...

Yet, 1000s of people will pout into churches today and never hear the gospel preached....

Well, that won't happen today at Pine Grove...

This Easter we don't have something to sell, but do have a Savior to offer...

And that Savior rose from the dead not so that we could dress in our best clothes and have a great dinner...

The Savior rose from the dead to change the world but also to change each of us...

The resurrection is not only something we look at and admire, the resurrection of Jesus Christ changes the way we live...

And this morning is not to convince you of the truth of the resurrection, it is a proven fact and you can reject the truth of it at your own risk...

Instead, my aim this Easter morning is to show you and how the resurrection changes things...

And so, let's turn to the final chapter of the gospel of John...

In John 21, we are past the crucifixion of Christ...

We are past the empty tomb...

We are past the past the first two times that Jesus proved his resurrection by appearing to the disciples..

We are now at the 3rd time that Jesus appeared to the disciples...

The resurrection is now a reality for the disciples and for others who Jesus has shown Himself to...

However, the disciples like many of us had not been too affected by the resurrection so far...

In fact, though the tomb was empty, it was business as usual for the disciples...

But in John 21, we will begin to see that the resurrection changes things...

And the first thing we see the resurrection changing is this...

I. The Resurrection Changes Our Plans (1-8)

*21 After these things Jesus [a]manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. 2 Simon Peter, and Thomas called [b]Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter *said to them, "I am going fishing." They *said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.*

*4 But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 So Jesus *said to them, "Children, you do not have [c]any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." 6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. 7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved *said to Peter, "It is the Lord." So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about [d]one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.*

First, let's set the scene for what we will see in John 21...

We are at the sea of Tiberias, which is another name for the Sea of Galilee...

You can see this body of water on this map here..

And here are a couple modern day pics of the sea of Galilee...

Here's a pic of a Sea of Galilee beach..

This is a similar place where Jesus called some of the disciples who were fisherman that worked on the sea of Galilee as fishermen...

So, 7 of the disciples were together and our friend Peter gathers them together and says the greatest words in the entire Bible in verse 3...

"I am going fishing."

And according to verse 3, the other 6 disciples decide to join Peter on his fishing trip...

Now, think about this...

These men had just spent 3+ years with Christ..

They had witnessed the miracles, heard the teaching...

They had watched Jesus die on the cross, but they had also seen him raised from the dead...

You would think that their lives would have been changed...

Yet, here they are going to back to what they do best...

They are acting as if the past 3 years had never happened...

They are acting as if the life, death, and resurrection of Christ meant nothing..

They are going back to life as normal, even though they had seen some of the greatest miracles the world has ever seen...

That is why it is impossible to claim to be saved, yet your life is just the same before salvation...

Look, the life, death, and resurrection of Christ should change you...

IT should change how you live and what you say and what you do...

If you say you believe in Christ, then your life cannot remain the same...

But these men head out fishing please note that they caught nothing...

You think God is powerful?

You think God can keep fish away from your nets if he wants to get your attention?

You better believe He can and that is what he does right here...

You want to go back to being a fisherman Peter?

Ok, well I will make sure you starve doing it because I can keep your nets empty for years if necessary to cause you to wake up and get busy serving me...

However, the Lord was gracious and kind and eventually appeared in verse 4...

And he directed 153 fish into the nets of the disciples...

Such a miracle gets the attention of John who tells Peter in verse 7, "it is the Lord."

Well, Peter can't contain himself, so he jumps in the water and swims straight to Christ..

The other disciples come by boat dragging all the fish with them..

Now, there is much we could say here, but for this morning...

Just note that that reality of the resurrection changes our plans...

People who make their living on the sea will dive into the sea to see Christ...

People who wanted to go back to their old way life lay down their nets to come to Christ...

So many people claimed to be saved live like they always have...

Yet the resurrection and the truth of the gospel turns our world upside down...

We do things that aren't normal...

We live lives that don't resemble the lives of those in the world...

The resurrection doesn't mean we have to quit our jobs, but it does mean that we quit living like we used to live...

Peter and these disciples held the greatest truths of all time after the life, death and resurrection of Christ...

Yet, instead of taking this to the world, they wanted to pile in a boat and go fishing...

How can anyone do that?

That is like saying that a doctor discovers a cure for cancer, but instead of helping get the drug to market, he moves to Montana and lives like a hermit...

You take take truth and head to a boat and only share it with the fish...

The disciples didn't need to be fishing, they needed to be taking the gospel into the world...

They needed to be telling their neighbor that Jesus lived a perfect life, was killed in the place of guilty sinners and had risen to prove that God was pleased with his sacrifice for sin...

Look, the resurrection of Christ changed the plans of the disciples to go fishing, and it should change our plans today as well....

#2...

II. The Resurrection Changes Our Life (9-19)

Verse 9....

*9 So when they got out on the land, they *saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread. 10 Jesus *said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught." 11 Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn.*

*12 Jesus *said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus *came and *took the bread and *gave it to them, and the fish likewise. 14 This is now the third time that Jesus [e]was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.*

As the men make their way off the water and onto the beach that morning, they find a breakfast prepared for them by the resurrected Lord.

Can you imagine the faces of these men?

Now, this is the third time that they had seen the resurrected Jesus...

You would think that their amazement would have subsided by now, but most likely they had dismissed the first 2 times as dramas or visions...

This time, it seems that the certainty of Jesus' resurrection finally hits them...

He is not alive as a ghost or a spirit floating around...

He is alive as a man having breakfast on the beach with his friends...

Of all the things to see here, I think we simply need to see the reality of the resurrection of Christ...

He didn't float out of the tomb as a ghost or spirit, but he was raised in the realest sense of the word..

He was raised back to the life he enjoyed before death..

I actually think we get a great insight into what life after death looks like here...

There is fellowship to be enjoyed with others..

There is talking.

I cant help but there was laughter that morning..

There is breakfast.

Clearly, a resurrected body doesn't need food, but Jesus enjoys a meal here..

The resurrection is not being raised a spirit or a ghost, it is being raised to much of what life was like before death except without all the sin and misery of an imperfect body...

That hope should be enough to change your life...

What would a cancer patient pay for a new body free from cancer?

Millions or billions...

Well, the hope of a resurrection body should cause you to give all you can to the Lord now..

Seeing the results of the resurrection should motivate you to do all you can to serve the Lord now...

Well, Jesus didn't appear to the disciples to just give them the warm fuzzies and make them feel good...

He also to them to change the direction of their lives in others ways...

Verse 15..

*15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus *said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you [f]love Me more than these?” He *said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I [g]love You.” He *said to him, “Tend My lambs.” 16 He *said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you [h]love Me?” He *said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I [i]love You.” He *said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.” 17 He *said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you [j]love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you [k]love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I [l]love You.” Jesus *said to him, “Tend My sheep.*

There a lot of things going on in these 3 verses...

Primarily, these 3 questions and Peter’s 3 answers serve to restore him after he denied Jesus 3 times leading up to the crucifixion.

In effect, Jesus is coming to Peter, even though Peter ran away from Christ...

But there is also something else happening here..

As Peter affirms his love for Christ, his life changes direction...

When he gets up in the morning, he is no longer concerned about fish but about sheep...

Peter is no longer going to make a living as a fisherman, but a shepherd to God's flock..

You see, the reality of the resurrection causes us to re-orient our lives around Christ...

We are no longer the center of the universe, the Lord Jesus Christ is...

Now let me be clear, this is not a call for everyone to go into full time ministry like Peter...

But it is a call to evaluate everything about your life and make sure it has Christ at the center of everything you do...

The reality of the resurrection doesn't mean you have to quit your job, but it may mean that...

The reality of the resurrection doesn't mean you have to move away, but it may mean that...

So many people orient their lives around 2 things...

Their family and their careers...

Most people decide where they live based upon a job or being near their extended family...

And I am not saying there is anything wrong with that, but why not choose to live in a place where you can serve the Lord in the best way possible...

The church we attended while we were at seminary was in the middle of Los Angeles in the San Fernando valley...

It was not the best part of Los Angeles, yet there were families that moved from all over the country and the world to be at that church...

When you ask people why they moved from places like Michigan or Florida or Nebraska to go to that church, guess what they said?

We don't orient our lives around our jobs or where our extended family is, we orient our lives around the church of Jesus Christ...

We wanted to be in a place where we could do the most ministry for our Lord while we have time left on earth, and this church in LA is that place...

I was shocked the first time I heard someone say that..

You moved your family away from their family and away from their work just so you can go to a certain church??

Yet, the reality of the resurrection changes lives...

Look, when I told people that we were headed to LA to seminary and leaving our family behind and that I didn't have a job lined up before I got there, I got some strange looks...

You don't have a job lined up??!

You don't have any family out there?!

Those always seem to be the thing we put at the center of our lives, yet I knew that the opportunity to go to seminary was there...

And we loaded up the truck and moved to Beverly....

And guess what God provided jobs and he gave us family that loved for us and cared for us...

The reality of the resurrection changes the direction of your life at times, and it should...

But it also can change the end of your life as well....

Look at verse 18....

18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out

*your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.” 19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He *said to him, “Follow Me!*

Not only will Peter’s life change from fisherman to pastor, the end of his life will change as well..

Though we may not understand what Jesus was saying here, he was telling Peter that he would die by crucifixion...

The phrase stretch out your hands was a reference to being hung on a cross, as the executions would stretch out the arms and extend the muscles to weaken them and prevent a person from pulling themselves to breathe...

We have evidence that Peter lived about 30 more years after this breakfast on the beach, but was eventually sentenced to die by crucifixion in 67 AD...

HE was killed along with his wife who was crucified beside him...

Yet, Peter asked to be crucified upside down, which was much more painful, because he felt unworthy to die like Christ died...

Now, think about this...

Jesus has just changed the direction of Peter's life by pointing him to taking care of His sheep..

He has also predicted the end of Peter's life by saying that he will die by crucifixion...

And then he says to him at the end of verse 19...

Follow Me!

This is like telling someone...

Hey, buddy....

I know you aren't a fireman, but this house is on fire, so how about giving up your old job and running into the flames with me...

And oh by the way, we won't make it out alive...

But hey, let's go...

I mean, this isn't the greatest sales pitch ever given...

Peter, let's leave what you love doing which is catching fish for a living...

And let's start taking care of grumpy sheep that won't like you or appreciate you and oh boy the way, let's go

into a profession that will eventually lead to your death on a cross...

How's that sound?

So, follow me..

But guess what?

Peter did exactly as Jesus told him, and do you why he was so eager to do it?

He was talking to someone who had defeated death and was now sitting on a beach eating fish sandwiches with him for breakfast...

What Peter was seeing wasn't normal...

Dead men didn't get up and walk out of tombs...

But Jesus did, and when you see something that isn't normal, you do abnormal things to be like Christ and near Christ...

That is how the reality of the resurrection changes our life...

The resurrection of Christ is more than Easter baskets and bunnies, it is the reality that Christ dies and rose again...

And therefore, I will do whatever is necessary to please Him and follow him because his life, death, and resurrection assures my own resurrection one day as well...

But there is one more thing that the resurrection changes in our passage this morning, and it is found in verses 20-25...

III. The Resurrection Changes Our Focus (20-25)

Verses 20-25...

*20 Peter, turning around, *saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" 21 So Peter seeing him *said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?"*

*22 Jesus *said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!"*

23 Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"

24 This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

*25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they *were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself *would not contain the books that *would be written.*

I guess another reason I am drawn to Peter among all the disciples is his competitiveness...

Peter is the one who raced John to the tomb on Easter morning and lost...

Peter is the one who told Jesus, “If everyone else falls away, I won’t Jesus because I am the strongest...”

And we see the ugliness of Peter’s competitiveness here again in verses 20-25...

Because as Peter is talking with Jesus, he looks over his shoulder and sees John...

His big rival...

And Peter is feeling good about getting a position of preacher and he is even feeling good about being told that he will die by crucifixion...

So as he walks with Jesus, he asks him....

“Hey, what about John? How is he going to die?”

I mean it is pretty hard to top dying by crucifixion, right Jesus?

I must be a pretty special guy, so what is going to happen to him?

And you see Jesus’ stern reply...

What is that to you, Peter?

If I want John to live until the Second Coming, that's none of your business...

You just make sure you are following me...

Now, like most of us, the disciples just hear a part of this reply to Peter and start a rumor that John won't die, but Jesus only said "if" he wanted John to stay alive until the end, it wasn't any of Peter's concern...

Now, we know that John did die, but he did live the longest of any of the disciples...

And the reason for that is that John had more of the Bible to write....

HE had to write 3 more letters to the church in 1, 2, and 3 John...

But he also had to write the book of Revelation...

John even says here that he could have filled up all the books of the world with things that Jesus did if he had been given the time....

But the point here is this...

Peter was given a role and John was given a role, and it wasn't either of their concerns what the other was doing....

You see, the world works in competition...

I want what you have, and you want what I have...

Now competition is fine as long as it seeks to glorify the Lord...

Paul even writes that we are to run to race to win...

In other words, live in a way that seeks to finish this life in a way that is better than those around you...

Yet, not for the sake of pride but for the sake of honoring Christ in the best way possible in how you live...

You see, the reality of the resurrection changes our focus..

We stop looking around us and living, and we start looking above us and living...

So many Christians fall into the competition game...

Here is what I have and I am going to post it on Facebook....

And in doing so, you cause your brother or sister to fall into the sin of jealousy...

But then you have so many Christians like Peter on Facebook as a way to look over their shoulder and be filled with jealousy toward others...

The focus of this life is not a game to see who collects the most toys...

The focus of this life is see who can serve the Lord in the best way by giving all they got to Him all the way to the finish line of life...

As we live as believers, we live with tunnel vision...

Race horses have blinders on their eyes to keep them looking forward to the finish line and not being distracted by the other horses around them....

Our focus is not on what is going on around us and staying up with them...

Our focus is on finishing well for the Lord by looking to the finish line...

The reality of the resurrection doesn't cause us to keep us with the Joneses...

It cause us to give it our all for Jesus, regardless of what goes on around us....

When you stand before the Lord, he won't ask if you have more than your neighbor...

He will ask if did all all you could with all he provided...

As Peter walked down the beach that morning, he had to stop looking over his shoulder, and get his focus on the only One beside him...

And many of you need to do that this morning...

Easter Sunday is not a day to see how cute you dressed yourself of your kids in comparison to the other people this morning...

Easter Sunday is see how well-dressed your heart is this morning, and you and the Lord know the answer to that...

Conclusion

As I close, let me remind you that the life of Jesus was real and witnessed by 1000s of people..

His death on the cross was real and witnessed by 100s of others...

His resurrection was also a fact and witnessed by 500 others...

This Easter morning is a not a time to hear the facts of the resurrection again, it is a time to see how the truth of how the life, death, and resurrection of Christ has impacted your life...

Jesus was not resurrected only so that he could head back to heaven...

Now, he was resurrected to prove God's acceptance of his sacrifice....

And he was resurrected to demonstrate what the reality of resurrection is like...

To rise from the dead is not poetry that sounds good on Easter Sunday...

To rise from the dead is to experience what life was like before death with the great exception of a new body...

The resurrection of Christ is written about in the Scriptures to cause us to be resurrected to eternal life ourselves...

The reality of the resurrection of the resurrections changes our plans, our lives, and our focus...

But more than that, it should cause our hearts to want to resurrected like Christ...

If that is your desire, turn from your sins today, and trust in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ...

And then do what Jesus said today, Follow Him!

Follow him with your plans, your life, and your focus...

And when you follow Him in life, you will follow him in death, but then you will follow in resurrection as well...

Let us pray...