

RENEWED HOPE

Mark 16:1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, had bought sweet spices so that they might come and anoint Him. 2 And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came upon the tomb, the sun having risen. 3 And they said among themselves, Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us? 4 And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back, for it was very great. 5 And entering into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right, clothed in a long white garment. And they were frightened. 6 And he said to them, Do not be frightened. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen, He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him.

Today, we have an opportunity to think about when our Lord Jesus rose from the dead. What a moment this was, it was a turning moment in the whole of humanity.

Sometimes we don't realize the gravity and the far-reaching implications of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

When the ladies were walking towards the tomb, they were walking as dejected, defeated, and hopeless people, with shuttered dreams.

All they could think of was to go and apply some preservative spices on the dead body of Jesus and nothing else. The possibility of a resurrection was too detached from their reality. Life has a way of throwing at us hopelessness, despair and agony and it can become impossible.

Thanks be to God; their hopelessness was turned around by these few words **“He is risen!”** – this was beyond what their faith could take and there are times when God comes into a situation and does the impossible for us. This is what I want to talk to you about, **RENEWED HOPE**.

- The death of Jesus had killed everyone's dreams and aspirations. His disciples had built their lives and their future around Jesus.
- They were looking forward to a new kingdom, a kingdom that would conquer Rome and bring them political freedom.
- All that came to a crushing stop when Jesus died – what has died in your life right now, what hopes have been dashed away recently.
- A person without hope cannot be helped, that type of person cannot fight another day.

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- Had Jesus not risen from the dead, we would have been a hopeless case today – we would have been without hope and to be greatly pitted.
- In the church of Corinth, Paul had to deal with a false teaching that was saying there was no resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:17 And if Christ is not raised, your faith is foolish; you are yet in your sins. 18 Then also those that fell asleep in Christ were lost. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. 20 But now Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruit of those who slept.

- The resurrection is what made a way for you and me, without which we would have been destined for God's wrath.
- Without the resurrection, there is no life – in other words our hope was not in the death of Jesus only but in His resurrection.
- Everyone dies but only Jesus has risen from the dead – that is why He is called the first fruit of those who are sleeping.
- The resurrection opened a doorway to eternal life, a life that will be spent in the presence of God our Father.
- Through Jesus, we have the hope to live in victory in this life and in glory in the after life.

1 Peter 1:3: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

- Peter talks about a living hope – this speaks of something alive and well, a hope that is vibrant and full of expectations.
- The hope we get from the resurrection of Christ makes us expectant about tomorrow and makes us joyful.
 - *1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*
 - *Romans 8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us*
 - *1 John 5:4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith*

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- How does a person with a renewed hope live like?
- A person with renewed hope conducts himself totally differently from a person who has given up.
- The big picture about the renewed hope is being aware that there is life after death. It is being aware that whatever one does in this short life will determine one's eternity.
- A person living with renewed hope looks at life with a perspective of eternity.

1. A person with renewed hope lives to fight another day.

Hebrews 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward. 36 For you have need of patience, so that after you have done the will of God you might receive the promise. 37 For "yet a little while, and He who shall come will come and will not delay." 38 Now, "the Just shall live by faith. But if he draws back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those withdrawing to destruction, but of those who believe to the preserving of the soul.

- The resurrection gives you hope to fight another day because you know that Jesus is coming back for you.
- We do not give up in the face of challenges because Jesus overcame the grave for us.
- We do not throw off our confidence because the battle was already won when He rose from the death.
- We wait patiently in the days of adversity because the one who promised to come back will surely come back.

2. A person with renewed hope avoids distractions.

- Yes, the Lord has made a way for us into victory and into eternity but we must avoid distractions, we must avoid side shows that will cause us to lose track.

2 Timothy 2:3 Therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No one who wars tangles with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who chose him to be a soldier. 5 And also if anyone competes, he is not crowned unless he competes lawfully.

- When you gave your life to Jesus, you were enrolled into the army of the Lord, with Jesus as the great captain.
- Just like in any warfare, you will face hardships and afflictions as you serve on your post.

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- Here Paul is exhorting Timothy and by extension us to get rid of distractions – when you face persecutions of all sorts, you have need to endure them as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
- Many things will call for your attention, many other vocations will look better than serving Jesus. It is in that moment that we need to be reminded of what Jesus the great captain obtained for you.
- You will be tempted to cut corners during the fight but your reward will be determined by whether you fought the right way or not.
- Christ set an example and when you do not know what to do, lift your eyes and look at Jesus.
- An athlete dresses down to the bare minimum in order to reduce weight and drag, this is to ensure that he runs as fast and as efficient as possible.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore since we also are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

3. A person with renewed hope prepares for tomorrow.

- A person with renewed hope knows that what he is doing today will define tomorrow. The short life you have determines the type of reward you will get in the afterlife.
- One of the things that Jesus told John the revelator was that He was coming back for His church, His people.

Revelation 22:12 And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each according as his work is.

- This is a sobering thought because what you do now matters a lot in shaping your eternity.
- Every well-meaning child of God must live in the light of eternity because you shall give account for the way you lived your life here on earth.

1 Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given to me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let every man be careful how he builds on it. 11 For any other foundation can no one lay than the one being laid, who is Jesus Christ. 12 And if anyone builds on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, 13 each one's work shall be revealed. For the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try each one's work as

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to what kind it is. 14 If anyone's work which he built remains, he shall receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work shall be burned up, he shall suffer loss. But he shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

- Because of the resurrection, there is no room for recklessness because each one of us shall give account.
- Each of you are busy building on top of the foundation that has been laid and the way you build and what you are building matters.
- When we serve God at our convenience, it is like building with hay and the fire shall reveal it.
- When you serve God grudgingly, it is like building with wood and the fire shall reveal it.
- When you serve God sacrificially with a willing heart, it will be like building with gold and silver and the fire shall make it shine even more.

4. A person with renewed hope is purposeful.

- The hope we have compels us to be purposeful in what we do. In other words, you must ask yourself this question before you embark on anything “what does this have to do with eternity”.
- If you can be disciplined enough to ask and answer this question, your life will become the most productive life among your friends.
- Jesus was serious about purpose and this is reflected in His last command He gave to the 500 disciples who last saw Him.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

- The renewed hope must make us jealous about how you spend your time – your time must be spent on things that have an impact on eternity – for you and for others.

2 Timothy 4:5 But you watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fully carry out your ministry.

- Paul was challenging Timothy not to lose focus in the midst of people turning away from sound teaching. Timothy needed to remain purpose driven.

- Talking to Archippus, who was station at the Colossians, Paul had the same words.

Colossians 4:17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it.

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- I can hear Paul, challenging us regarding our purpose – you need to pay heed to your calling and pursue it whole heartedly.
- Many things will clamor for your time but guard your time with everything you have in order to focus on your purpose.

Ephesians 5:14 Therefore he says, "Awake, sleeping ones! And arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.