



▶ DAILY DEVOTIONAL.

Saturday/Sunday, 3/9-10/19

“Is God to Blame?”

“If”

John 11:17-26 (NIV)

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

The scripture above is just one of many resurrection stories contained in the Bible. The most famous and most important is the resurrection of Jesus. However, what about other resurrection stories in the Bible? What do they have to say about our journey in following Jesus Christ? Join me this week as we look at lesser known stories of resurrection found in the biblical text!

- Pastor Britton

Family Activity:

Play an “If/Then” game with your family by completing the following statements.

1. If you go to bed late you will be _____ (tired).
2. If you jump in a pool you will be _____ (wet).
3. If you have a runny nose you might be _____ (sick).
4. If the light turns red you should _____ (stop).
5. If you make a mistake, God still _____ (loves you).
6. If a bad thing happens to you God is still _____ (with you).
7. Though you may want to give up on something, God will never _____ on you (give up).

Pray for blessings over one another as you finish the game.

Monday, 3/11/19

“The Cynic Within Me”

Luke 8:52-55 (NIV)

Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. “Stop wailing,” Jesus said. “She is not dead but asleep.” They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and said, “My child, get up!” Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat.

- Jesus finds himself in the home of a synagogue leader named Jairus. People told him to leave Jesus alone because Jairus’ daughter was already dead. Jairus persisted and when Jesus arrives, he proclaims the child as not dead but asleep. Then everyone laughed. That word “laughed” stands out to me. What is about to occur is so unbelievable that people found it humorous. We’ve all been there at some point in our lives. We get tired. We get down on ourselves. We lose our hopeful outlook. We laugh at the possibility of a helpful change. How would you describe your outlook today?
- Despite the laughter, Jesus brings the daughter back to life. Though it may seem strange, Jesus can do the same for us. Rather than trotting down the same path believing life can never get better, Jesus can bring us back to life. The power of the gospel message is resurrection or new life. In this case, it might just be a new outlook. Jesus can remove our cynical nature and exchange it for peace, hope and joy. How might a new outlook change your day?

Prayer: God, grant me the peace in times of stress, hope in times of despair, and joy in times of sorrow. Reveal to me the healing power of resurrection. Renew my outlook on life. Amen.

Tuesday, 3/12/19

“Resurrection Visit”

Luke 7:14-16 (ESV)

Then [Jesus] came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you arise.” And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us!” and “God has visited [God’s] people!”

- You may be asking yourself, “What is a bier?” No worries, I had to look it up too. It’s a plank people used to carry a dead body. So, here are these people carrying a young man who has died when they have a special visitor. Jesus visits and breaks through in their life with resurrection. Did you know that we can receive resurrection throughout our lives? God offers us resurrection daily. In fact, you may be visited by the God of resurrection at any moment. Where have you witnessed a resurrection visit recently?
- The people feared Jesus when they saw what transpired. They feared because they were in awe of his power and because they became aware of their own powerlessness. The acknowledgement that God contains more power than we will ever have leads us to a place of celebration and praise. Furthermore, we praise God because God offers the power of resurrection to common people. God visited our world in the form of Jesus to bring about resurrection for all. Take a moment of reflection to recognize the amazing power of God and God’s graciousness to offer resurrection to you, me and so many others.

Prayer: All powerful God, we stand in awe of you because of Your power. You have used Your power to break into our world. You have eliminated the option of death for us. You only leave us with life. What amazing power! You are indeed charitable and loving! Amen.

Wednesday, 3/13/19

“Sudden Endings, New Beginnings”

2 Kings 13:20-21 (CEB)

So Elisha died, and he was buried. Sometimes Moabite raiding parties used to come into the land each spring. Now it happened once that while a man was being buried, the people at the funeral suddenly saw a raiding party. They threw the body into Elisha’s tomb and ran off. When the body touched Elisha’s bones, the man came to life and stood up on his feet!

- This scripture is peculiar because it is so abrupt. There is no warning that the prophet Elisha will die yet verse 20 states quite bluntly he does. What is something you have experienced in life that has taken you by surprise?
- Elisha is a witness to God’s resurrection power by his years of faithful teaching. When a man is thrown into a tomb with Elisha, the man comes back to life. Touching Elisha’s bones is like the teaching of God being infused into our bodies. It’s a story about returning to God. When we come close to God, we are made new. Here’s an important note. This is true for new Christians, but even more true for those of us who have been Christians for a long time! Have you turned from God? Who is someone you can contact about reading, studying and living out God’s word together?

Prayer: Merciful God, you see me and care for me even when I have turned away. Though I think you are far from me, you are quite close. You work miracles by remaking my mind, body and soul. Let me understand your Word in new ways. May the words of Jesus sink deep into my bones and penetrate my soul. Amen.

Thursday, 3/14/19

“Wake Up”

Acts 20:9-11 (CEB)

A young man named Eutychus was sitting in the window. He was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell from the third floor and died. Paul went down, fell on him and embraced him, then said, “Don’t be alarmed. He’s alive!” Then Paul went back upstairs and ate. He talked for a long time — right up until daybreak — then he left.

- As I read this scripture, I wondered how many times I have fallen asleep in church. It’s easy to do, especially after staying the night at a church lock-in! You know what else is easy to do? It’s easy to fall asleep in our faith journeys and simply go through the motions. The result of falling asleep is a spiritual death. Would you say that you are awake or asleep in your faith journey?
- After Eutychus comes back to life, Paul goes back upstairs and eats. This would have been a dinner with everyone including Eutychus. Imagine the excitement in the room to eat and converse with someone who was dead but is now alive. That would be a life-altering moment. This resurrection story may be our fuel to “wake up” from a spiritual slumber. How might God be calling you to wake up and passionately live out your faith?

Prayer: God of life, pour out your Spirit on me so I can live out my faith with excitement. Remove any drowsiness so I can be completely awake. Let me wake each day energized for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Amen.

Friday, 3/15/19

“Know”

Ezekiel 37:4-6, 10 (NIV)

Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.’” So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet – a vast army.

- God is our creator. God is our redeemer. God is the author of life. When it comes down to it, God is the only one who can help us when we have lost all hope. Our bones ache and cry out to God for resurrection. It is by God’s power and God’s power alone that we can live. How are you in need of a resurrection today?
- The bones in this passage are the bones of the people of Israel. Think of the word “Israel” as God’s chosen people. After the life, death and resurrection we are all Israelites because we are all God’s chosen people. The purpose of resurrection is not only to give us life but to glorify and turn us back toward God. Resurrection makes God’s glory known in the world. What is one thing you can do today to help others know God?

Prayer: Gracious God, when I fall apart, you have the power to put me back together. When my world is devastated, you fit the pieces back together. Take my bones that ache for you and inject in them a resurrection spirit. Let me be a renewed creation for the rest of my life. May I be a witness on earth so others may know You! Amen.

***This week’s devotional was written by
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