

EASTER SUNDAY

The Resurrection and the New Creation

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1.0 INTRODUCTION — RESURRECTION SUNDAY

The most important day of the Christian Calendar—but also the most important day in all of cosmic history. The bodily resurrection of Jesus is why we believe in the authority of Scripture, it's why we worship on Sundays, it's why we have hope, it's why we follow Jesus, it's why we are free from the guilt and power of sin. Most importantly, it is the most important day of the year because it is the day that God restores his plans and purposes for all of the creation to bring him glory.

PREACHING POINT

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE HAS ONE GOAL: TO GLORIFY GOD

Jesus as the Lamb who was slain and the risen one has the authority to open the seven seals in the book of Revelation. He is the fulfillment of God's purposes in history.

2.0 JOHN 20

2.1 UNDERSTANDING JOHN'S GOSPEL

John clearly states why he is writing: so that you may believe. He refers to Jesus's miracles as "signs". Jesus's miracles are signs of his Divine Sonship. The resurrection is the greatest sign to the divine sonship of Jesus.

PREACHING POINT

THE BODILY AND HISTORIC RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS INDISPENSABLE TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

John understands from the teachings of Jesus, and from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that faith (loving trust) is key to salvation.

PREACHING POINT

TRUSTING THE ONE WHO ROSE FROM THE DEAD IS THE KEY TO ETERNAL LIFE.

2.2 ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

This is the first day of the new creation. Jesus puts to death the old creation and in his resurrection launches a new creation under a new covenant. In him all things were created, including you and me. When Jesus dies, he puts to death the old age of the flesh. He puts to death the race of the first, rebellious Adam. In him, you and our sinful condition is put to death. Likewise, when Jesus raises from the dead, he launches the new Jesus creation.

PREACHING POINT

JESUS'S DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION IS THE LAUNCHING OF THE NEW HUMAN RACE; THE NEW CREATION. WE CAN BE FREE FROM THE POWER OF SIN IN BEING UNITED WITH CHRIST.

2.3 MARY MAGDALENE CAME TO THE TOMB EARLY, WHILE IT WAS STILL DARK, AND SAW THAT THE STONE HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM THE TOMB.

Mary becomes a central character in this climatic event of the resurrection. Not John, not Peter, but Mary. It is because her devotion compels her to be close to Jesus no matter what. The disciples are probably still reeling, shocked, discouraged, ashamed, and afraid of the authorities coming for them.

PREACHING POINT

WE ARE TO BE DEVOTED TO
JESUS LIKE MARY

Mary is also being presented to us as the bride of Christ. She represents the Church. Just as Jesus is the new Adam of the new creation in his resurrection, so Mary is the new Eve. This graveyard has become a garden because of the resurrection of Jesus.

PREACHING POINT

JESUS MAKES THE WORST PLACES
IN OUR LIVES THE BEST PLACES.
HE TURNS OUR GRAVEYARDS
INTO GARDENS.

BIG PREACHING POINT: RECAPITULATION & NEW CREATION

Jesus didn't come simply to improve the quality of life by healing people, or through good teaching and social justice programs. Jesus came to put sin to death. He came to usher in a new creation. He came to bring us home. Better yet, he came do the work required (atonement) for God to make the human heart his home.

He came to give us a start-over. He came to do a reboot.

We were created in him and by him. In all our rebellion and sinfulness, when Jesus dies, he reconciles that to God, it is forgiven, and we get a fresh start at the new creation. We are buried with Christ and risen with Christ and we share in his life in the Spirit. We are no longer a part of the Adam-race, but not a part of the Jesus race.

Jesus comes to not only lift our guilt, but free us from the chains of sin and death. Adam is no longer our dead head. Jesus is now our living head.

What I'm explaining here is what's known as the **recapitulation interpretation of atonement**. That Jesus turns the entire creation project on its head. Everything that Adam did, Jesus undoes.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why does John (the author) point out that it's the "first day of the week?"
2. What elements from the passage indicate that John is presenting this graveyard as the Eden of the new creation?
3. Why is Mary, of all the disciples, presented to us as the ideal disciple?
4. Why does Jesus stay with Mary rather than going to his enemies to be braggadocios about his resurrection?
5. Why is the bodily resurrection of Jesus essential for the Christian faith?