

“The Grave Robber”

Pastor Ron Salsbury

INTRODUCTION

We have just celebrated the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. But the resurrection isn't just something we commemorate once each year, it is something worth celebrating every day of our lives. When Jesus left the tomb, it wasn't the first time that the power of death had been overturned. In the book of John we find the account of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. As we examine that account, we find that it was only the beginning of the demonstration of Jesus' true power and identity – the Grave Robber. And the truth of His identity as the Resurrection and the Life would be fully revealed on that first Easter morning.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

How did you celebrate Easter this year?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Do you believe this?

Q1. Read John 11:11-15; John 11:20-24, 32-37

John 11:15 makes it clear that Jesus had a purpose in delaying his departure in response to Lazarus' illness. What was it that Jesus wanted his disciples to believe? In John 11:20-24, 32-37 we see the reactions of Mary, Martha and the Jews. What did all of them have enough faith to believe about Jesus? How was Martha's expression of faith different? Have you ever observed Jesus' power in a way that significantly increased your faith?

The Resurrection and the Life

Q2. Read John 11:25-27, Romans 10:9-10

We are more than the body we occupy. Man is both physical (body) and spiritual (soul and spirit). What astounding claim does Jesus make in John 11:25-26? Of course our body is not designed to last eternally. According to John 11:26, what determines your eternal destination, spiritually speaking, after our body ceases to function? When directly questioned on this point, what was Martha's reply? What is the significance of both believing and confessing (Romans 10:9-10)?

Lamb of God

Q3. Read Isaiah 53:4-7, Exodus 12:6-7, 13, Romans 5:9

Not long after Lazarus was raised to life, Jesus would go to the cross. He would shed his blood and die for our sins as “the Lamb of God.” What parts of Isaiah 53:4-7 do you see as prophetic of Jesus death? On the

cross, Jesus became the ultimate and final sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. What is the sign that saved the Jews from destruction on the Passover? What does Romans 5:9 say justifies us and saves us from God's wrath?

The reason he came

Q4. Read Matthew 28:1-10, Luke 19:10, John 10:10-11, 1 Corinthians 15:17-22

Christianity was not built on a philosophy or a moral code of ethics, but on the death and resurrection of Christ. Jesus knew why he had come into the world. What reasons did He give us in Luke 19:10 and John 10:10? What does John 10:11 tell us he must do to care for us his sheep? If the resurrection didn't happen, we're not just wasting our lives worshipping him; we're living a lie! What does Paul tell us would have been our fate if Christ was not raised (1 Corinthians 15:17). But the tomb is empty, Christ is risen! What does His resurrection mean for us (1 Corinthians 15:22.)

WRAP-UP

For the Christian, Easter is the greatest celebration of all. It is a declaration of our faith that Christ conquered sin and its death-grip on all mankind. It is the proof of Jesus' claim to be the Resurrection and the Life, the ultimate Grave Robber. More than the healer of our sickness, Jesus wants to give us eternal life when we believe His claim and confess Him as Lord. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the whole world. This is Good News indeed and worth our celebration and recounting to all who would hear.

Memory Verse

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Romans 8:11 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs: (see back for more space) _____

Challenge: This week spend time in prayer asking God to restore any area of your life that has withered or died; your joy, peace, dreams relationships... remembering that He is the resurrection and the life.

Q1

John 11:11-15 ESV - 11 After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." 12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. 14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, 15 and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to

John 11:20-24, 32-37 ESV - 20 So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house. 21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ... 32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. 34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?" him."

Q2

John 11:25-27 ESV - 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

Romans 10:9-10 ESV - 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Q3

Isaiah 53:4-7 NIV - 4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of

us all. 7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Exodus 12:6-7, 13 ESV - 6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight. 7 "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ... 13 The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

Romans 5:9 ESV - 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Q4

Read Matthew 28:1-10 in your Bible

Luke 19:10 NIV - 10 For the Son of Man [Jesus] came to seek and to save the lost."

John 10:10-11 NIV - 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. 11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

1 Corinthians 15:17-22 ESV - 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. 20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Prayer requests con't _____
