



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“A.D. Series: His People, His Concern”

Ps. James Lowe - April 12, 2015

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- Who did you turn to when you were a teenager during times of trouble? Was it a good choice?
- Who do you consider to be an all around wise person when it comes to life in general?
- Who do you know that is exemplary in demonstrating genuine concern and compassion for others?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

God would have been justified to destroy the human race long ago because of our rebellion against him. But God instead wanted to redeem us, and has consistently worked toward this end. The greatest proof of God's desire and commitment to save us from our own destruction is Jesus crucified. God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, taking the punishment we deserve for our sins.

John 20 records the first events of Jesus' resurrection. The account of Jesus' interaction with the various disciples reveals his wonderful heart not only toward them, but toward all who belong to him for he is forever the same in character. Jesus cares about you. He is concerned about you.

Jesus is concerned about you.

After discovering the tomb empty where Jesus' dead body had been placed, Peter and John went home. But Mary stayed and encountered the risen Jesus, believing him to be a carpenter. Mary made the better choice. Jesus revealed himself to her near the tomb. Had the men stayed, they too would have encountered the risen Christ. Jesus was concerned about Mary and spoke to her, assuring her of his resurrection and honoring her as the first person to encounter him alive after death. This is especially significant given the historical-cultural attitudes toward women at the time. Jesus clearly valued Mary and demonstrated great concern for her.

Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” (John 20:15-17 ESV)

Jesus is concerned with what you do.

When the disciples were gathered together in a locked room hiding in fear from the authorities, Jesus suddenly appeared in the room with them. As he assured them that he had risen from the dead, he also spoke to them about what they were called to do. He spoke peace to them, and gave them a fresh charge to action. He did not want them paralyzed by fear, kept from their God-given calling.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." (John 20:21-23 ESV)

Jesus is concerned with how you feel.

Thomas had not been in the room when Jesus appeared on the first day of the resurrection. In spite of the witness of the others, Thomas did not believe Jesus was truly raised from the dead. He continued to be conflicted by doubts. Jesus was concerned about him, and specifically took time to talk to him. Jesus went to even greater lengths than with the other disciples to assure Thomas that he was indeed alive.

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:27-29 ESV)

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- How has Jesus demonstrated concern for you in your own life?
- Have there ever been times when you felt Jesus did not show concern for your life? If so, how do you now think and feel about those times?
- How can you practically demonstrate God's love and concern for people around you? Who is someone in your life that could especially benefit from you showing them God's love?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray that God will help us be more reflective and more aware of how he shows love and concern for us in our lives.
- Pray that God will give us divine wisdom and perspective about the tough times in our lives when God may have seemed far away.
- Pray that God will guide us in expressing his love and concern for others in ways that will impact their lives and bear fruit for the kingdom of God.