



## LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

### “Resurrection: The Truth That Sets You Free”

Ps. James Lowe - April 5, 2015

#### WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

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

- What religious upbringing, if any, did you have?
- Were your parents' religious beliefs strong, nominal, or non-existent?
- Are your current religious beliefs the same as when you were a child?

#### WORD (10-15 minutes)

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

John 11:25-26 ESV *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*

- Everyone of us will die. But Jesus declares that he is able to raise the dead and give them immortal life. However, this promise is given to those who believe in him.

Acts 2:24 ESV *God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.*

- Jesus did not merely make empty promises about life after death. He proved the veracity of his claims and promises by rising from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 ESV *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.*

- Many people who knew Jesus were witnesses to his resurrection. Even his own half-brother, James, who had doubted and questioned his claims, testified to his having seen Jesus raised from the dead. Furthermore, the violent persecutor of the early Christians, Saul of Tarsus, who wrote the text above, also encountered the resurrected Jesus. The number and variety of witnesses establishes his resurrection beyond reasonable doubt.

Luke 24:13-35 ESV *That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped*

*that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

*So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

- Jesus helped his confused, disheartened followers believe and understand that he was indeed risen from the dead. He took them through the Holy Scriptures and explained how many things that were written by the Jewish prophets predicted his sufferings, death, and resurrection.
- These Jewish writings preceded Jesus' life by hundreds and in some cases more than a thousand years. The number of these prophecies is so large and their specifics so detailed that together they make his fulfillment of them beyond chance. They are an overwhelming set of further evidence to the historical reality of his resurrection.

The early Christians, the Jewish Scriptures, the New Testament documents, and the Christian church throughout history and around the world all testify to the resurrection of Jesus and his ongoing spiritual presence in believers' lives. Together they also testify to his ascension to heaven and to his promise that he will return one day to raise the dead and to judge everyone who has ever lived. Those who are forgiven and made righteous in his sight will be rewarded and granted a share in his eternal kingdom in a new creation. But those who stubbornly refused to acknowledge their own sins and turn from them to serve Jesus as King and Lord will be eternally punished and banished from his presence.

### **PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)**

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

- What do you believe about Jesus? Who was he?
- Do you believe Jesus rose from the dead? How does your view of this affect your life? Why?
- Do you believe Jesus is alive in heaven and will return again physically to this earth? How does your view of this affect your life? Why?

### **PRAYER (10-15 minutes)**

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

- Pray that God will confirm in each of us the reality of Jesus' resurrection by giving us revelation through the Scriptures and the witness of the Holy Spirit.
- Pray that God will guide us in ordering our lives to reflect the fulness of Jesus' claims, teachings, warnings, and promises.
- Pray that God help us be faithful witnesses to others about Jesus by filling us with love, boldness, and clarity of communication.