

Cross & Empty Tomb Shaped Disciples - Luke 9:18-25

Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

It is Easter! We celebrate in a more pronounced way what we preach every single week here at Genesis, that our faith is based on a person and an event in history. Jesus crucified and risen for our redemption, this is all we have, but its all we need. Furthermore, this is the central event in all of human history. During Passover week, probably in 33 AD, A Jewish rabbi who was being heralded as the promised Messiah came into Jerusalem. He was arrested, abused, then tried illegally by the Jewish Sanhedrin, yet they still determined that his fate must be crucifixion. So they took Jesus to the Roman leader Pilate who ordered Jesus executed on a cross although he actually found Jesus innocent of the crimes charged. So Jesus was nailed to a cross, lifted up outside the city, and gave away His life. And something cosmic happened on that day, because the death of this man was really the sacrifice of the Son of God in our place, absorbing the wrath of God on our behalf and building the bridge of reconciliation between God and people. And to prove this truth, Easter morning, Christ the King rose from the grave. Furthermore, the person of Jesus and the events of the first Easter week were prophesied for centuries, with the last prophecy coming from the lips of Jesus in our text this week.

Yet, the truth is that a person can be orthodox in his or her understanding of Easter and still not be an authentic disciple. When Jesus asked the disciples about the claims of other people, their response was that people thought that Jesus was some kind of prophet, maybe the resurrected Elijah or John the Baptist. Their answer is nothing more than a restating of the fearful thoughts of Herod the Tetrarch, another of the Roman rulers in the region from Luke 9:7. Sure there were skeptics who didn't believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the promised King who would usher in the glorious Kingdom of God. Yet, there were myriads of people who showed up in to experience the ministry of Jesus day by day who did believe that Jesus was the Christ. Yet, they are only in as long as Jesus kingship represents their wishes and longings, a king who will overthrow Rome and make Israel the new global empire. After years of oppression, this is only fair, especially if their God is the True God, right?

After being asked who the twelve say that Jesus is, Peter responds correctly that Jesus is "the Christ of God." We too believe this. Yet, what they expected next was a campaign speech. Finally, Jesus is announcing His messianic candidacy and mission. We have to get a white horse, start a publicity campaign, and get to Jerusalem for maximum impact. Of course, they probably also believed that Jesus had already chosen his cabinet. Going to be glorious, they must have thought., No wonder Jesus' words go right by them, but they hang here. "The Son of Man must suffer." The word "suffer" here is the Greek word "pascha" or passion, hence the title of the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. The way to the Kingdom was not up, but down, not a campaign but a cross. They would go to Jerusalem, but not for the reason the disciples assumed. If Jesus campaigned he would have been a king, but just another king who created an ethnic dynasty, a king who came and went. But Jesus is not just another king whose kingdom rises and falls. The way to Easter and to millions still worshiping Him on this day was through a cross. And many still name Jesus as Christ, the King.

Yet, in this exchange, Jesus also tells His disciples that following Jesus means laying down the pursuit of power to influence in exchange for their own cross. Weakness, suffering, justice, humility, and love defines His disciples. To follow Jesus means a path of self denial, taking up a cross, and following Him. Jesus words here are not trite, they are not symbolic, they are not soft. A cross was more than a place of execution, it was the most shameful, painful, and humiliating way to kill a person. To be Jesus follower is to take up the cross, to

lay down our own lives. Ours is a world that says the path to life and wholeness is to discover yourself, pursue your own happiness, and follow your dreams. To us Jesus says that authentic discipleship is to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus. But don't miss the point, Jesus also tells us that this is the path to life, the way to salvation. If we try to hold on to our "true selves" we lose it, but when we lose our lives for His sake, into His life, for His glory, this is where we will discover our true identity and true self. The way to resurrection, to Easter is still through a cross. And the tradeoff is easy. Put the whole world on one side, and put knowing Jesus and salvation with nothing else on the other side. The choice should be easy. Yet myriads of Christians will celebrate the resurrection today and call Jesus the Christ, and at the same time choose the world for their identity and hope. So we need to be reminded that discipleship is a day by day journey of having our lives shaped by the cross and resurrection. This is true discipleship.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Psalm 91	Psalm 92	Psalm 93	Psalm 94	Psalm 95	Psalm 96	Psalm 97

Reading from this past week: Luke 9:18-25

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Peter 3:16-18

Family Worship

Song - *Glorious Day*

https://youtu.be/gkJJ2XZwDHc?si=BX67usoBbtsv_zD

Gospel Project

Unit: The Church is Opposed

Story: Jesus Suffered for Us

Big Picture Question: Why did Jesus become human?

Answer: Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

Scripture: Philippians 2

New City Catechism

Question14: Did God create us unable to keep His Law?

Answer: No, but because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve we are all born in sin and guilt, unable to keep God's law.

Verse: Romans 5:12

Scripture

Luke 9:18-25

- What do you think people in our culture believe about the identity of Jesus?
- Why is Jesus careful to connect the truth that He is the Christ to the story of His coming death and resurrection?
- What does Jesus say is involved in being an authentic follower? What does this mean for us?
- The world on one side, gaining life and your soul on the other. Why is this a harder choice for us day by day than it should be?

Prayer

*Pray that we would follow Jesus as we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow.

*Pray for the building project as they begin inside work soon. And pray for our Rise Up and Build giving.