

History, Mystery, Victory

Luke 24:1-11

March 23, 2008 (CSBC)

Intro:

1. December 7, 1941 Pearl Harbor
 - a. Historical Event – know the date, many eyewitnesses, many videos and documentaries
 - b. Mystery surrounds it – how did Japanese subs get into the harbor? Why didn't the intercepted communications get to Pearl Harbor in time? Why were we not prepared?
 - c. Victory from defeat – may have lost this battle but ultimately won the war.
2. First resurrection morning
 - a. It is a historical event
 - b. Mystery surrounds it
 - c. Victory from what seemed like defeat

READ TEXT

I. The Resurrection is History

- A. His death is factual
 1. Biblical evidence
 - a. Luke 23:46
 - b. John 19:33 “*But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break His legs*”
 2. Non-biblical evidence
 - a. 2nd century Greek writer, Lucian, speaks of Christ as, “*the man who was crucified in Palestine because he introduced a new cult into the world*”.
 - b. 1st century Samaritan-born historian, Thallus, “*when discussing the darkness which fell upon the land during the crucifixion of Christ*” called it an eclipse.
- B. His burial was factual
 1. Biblical evidence
 - a. Luke 23:52-53
 - b. John 19:38-42
 2. Non-biblical evidence
 - a. It was preparation day (day before Sabbath)
 - b. Death needed to be hastened
- C. His resurrection is factual
 1. Josh McDowell was once asked, “Professor McDowell, why can't you refute Christianity?” To which McDowell responded, “For a very simple reason. I am not able to explain away an event in history – the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”
 2. The resurrection of Jesus is as factual as his death and burial. How do we know this? Several ways:
 - a. Living Witnesses: if it was not true someone would have called their bluff
 - b. Broken Roman Seal: was a death sentence to whoever broke it
 - c. Empty Tomb: Paul Althaus states, “The resurrection could not have been maintained in Jerusalem for a single day, for a single hour, if the emptiness of the tomb had not been established as a fact for all concerned.”
 - d. The Moved Stone: A one and a half to two ton stone moved by the cowardly disciples with out the Roman guards noticing? Come on!
 - e. Roman Guard Went AWOL: They were scared for their lives. They paid flawless attention to duty, especially in the night watches.
 - f. The Grave clothes: they were empty, undisturbed in form and position
 - g. His appearances confirmed: appeared to as few as one person and as many as 500 or more
 3. In his book, Countdown, G.B. Hardy gives us two thought provoking questions about the resurrection. “There are but two essential requirements: 1.) Has anyone cheated death and proved it? 2.) Is it available to me? Here is the complete record: Confucius' tomb – occupied. Buddha's tomb – occupied. Mohammed's tomb – occupied. Jesus' tomb – empty. Argue as you will, there is no point following a loser!”

II. The Resurrection is a Mystery

- A. It was a mystery to the disciples (vv.4,11)
 - 1. they had heard Him speak about it
 - 2. when it happened it was a mystery to them
- B. It is still a mystery today
 - 1. the infallible Word reports this event, but it is still mysterious to us
 - 2. the return of life to that brutalized body is a mystery
 - 3. the manner of His exit from the tomb is a mystery
 - a. the stone was not moved to let Jesus out, it was moved so people could see it was empty
 - 4. the nature of His post-resurrection body is a mystery
 - a. His body was physical, people could see it and touch it, yet He was not limited by physical barriers
- C. It is a mystery that must be accepted by faith
 - 1. this is not an unreasonable idea
 - a. the biblical evidence is there
 - b. the non-biblical evidence is there
 - 2. the fact of the resurrection is firmly established
 - a. we must accept the mysterious aspects of this event by faith.

III. The Resurrection is a Victory

- A. It was a victory for Christ
 - 1. He was arrested as a criminal
 - 2. He was tried as a criminal
 - 3. He was executed as a criminal
 - a. The fact He was innocent doesn't alter the facts
 - b. However, His resurrection proves that the Lord is who He said He is.
- B. It was a victory for the ages
 - 1. through His resurrection He became a conqueror over
 - a. death
 - b. sin
 - c. satan
 - d. hell
- C. It was a victory for all Christians
 - 1. One day, if Jesus tarries, believers as well as non-believers will die
 - 2. because of Christ's resurrection, for the Christian
 - a. death is no longer an enemy which ultimately wins
 - b. the grave is no longer the final destination
 - 3. because of the victory of the resurrection, Christians have hope in the death and victory over the grave.

CONC:

- ❖ How will you respond to the historical evidence of the resurrection?
- ❖ Will you accept the mysterious aspects of the resurrection by faith?
- ❖ Will you come to Christ today and share in the victory of the resurrection?