IT'S DIFFERENT NOW

Your salvation is bought and paid for, so leave the grave clothes in the grave, and step into God's resurrecting power.

KEY POINTS

- The disciples could remember it all so clearly: the joyful procession; the streets lined with people chanting, their Palm branches swaying; the people rushing forward to lay their clothing on the street so that the feet of the donkey Jesus the Messiah rode on would not even touch the dirt.
- For this was the day that the new King of Israel—the son of David, the great Deliverer—was entering Jerusalem. And the disciples were in the midst of it.
- Fast forward to a few days later. It's different now; things have changed. The followers of Jesus are in hiding, with every noise from outside and every check of the dwindling water and food supplies being painful reminders of how different things can get, and how fast.
- How could people change so suddenly? How could that Passover crowd shift from "Hosanna" to "Crucify Him" in such a short space of time?
- It was after the crucifixion, and Peter had made his way to the house. He went there because he didn't know where else to go.
- While he sat, it seemed, in a dark prison of his own that no one could penetrate, Mary Magdalene and the other women involved themselves in a pointless task of gathering spices.
- What purpose could there be in doing so? The place where Jesus was buried was guarded by Roman soldiers, and a big circular stone—secured by a Roman seal—closed the entrance to the burial cave.
- Whatever their thoughts may have been on that early Sunday morning, off went that little group of women to the cemetery with their spices. And when they got there they found out…things were different now.
- The boulder they thought would block them—gone. The seal they thought would stop them—dissolved. The soldiers that might arrest or kill them—unconscious. The body they went to embalm—not there at all.
- Their feet, which had stepped so stealthily and silently on the way to the tomb now almost flew back into the city with the message that everything they thought they knew had changed (Mark 16:1-7).
- When Peter heard, he jumped up and ran. John outran him and reached the tomb site first. The tomb was open and, but for a neatly folded pile of grave clothes, it was empty. And suddenly, "it's different now."
- Like the world of Jesus, our world is very fickle. Spiritual wickedness in high places has managed to get a different message in people's consciousness: not so much "crucify Him," but "ignore Him."

KEY SCRIPTURE:
John 12:12-19

- But today you're in the house.
- Somebody here may be like Mary; no matter how dark it gets, no matter how hopeless things might seem, you're going to do whatever you can to worship Him.
- Someone else might be like Peter. You're here, but you're feeling internal turmoil because you know you've denied Him in some way. But receive the message Jesus has for you: "Tell the disciples, ***and Peter***, I'm alive: come meet with me."
- God is saying "It's different now." Your salvation is bought and paid for.
- If you're a Peter, it's not about what you think of yourself because your failures are forgiven.
- If you're a Mary Magdalene, it's not about what anyone else thinks of you; God appreciates your worship and devotion to Him.
- And if you're a Thomas, it's not about what you're able to grasp or understand (John 20:24-28); God will bring the truth you need right before your eyes, right into your hands.
- So, tell your fear it's different now, tell discouragement it's different now, because now it's Resurrection Day.
- Your salvation is bought and paid for, so leave the grave clothes in the grave, and step into the power of His resurrection.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. The women who went to the tomb expected certain obstacles to block them. Have you been in a situation that you knew would present certain difficulties, but still had to take that particular path? What type of roadblocks did you encounter, and what did you do to overcome these obstacles?
2. Have there been dead situations in your life that you would like God to resurrect? Pray for one another that God would speak life into these situations.

Prayer Time

Lord, let Your resurrecting power take hold on my life and my situations. Cover me, Oh God, and have Your way with me. Amen.

L.G. ice-Breaker: How much would you willing to pay for something that you really wanted (not needed)? What are you willing to sacrifice to get it?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, APRIL 1, 2018

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

! (Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS