

Day Thirty-Nine

Jesus: Real, Relevant, Raw and Radical!

Death Got Arrested

Matthew 27:51-54(NKJV) *And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*

Luke 24:1-12(NLT) *The women were terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men asked, “Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive? 6 He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead! Remember what he told you back in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and that he would rise again on the third day.”*

1 Corinthians 15:3-9(NLT) *I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. 4 He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. 5 He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.*

1 Corinthians 15:14-20(NLT) *And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. 15 And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can’t be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. 16 And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. 18 In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! 19 And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world. 20 But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.*

There has been a criminal on the loose since the beginning of man. He is a non-discriminatory villain. He does not discriminate according to religion, race, age or gender. He steals from the rich and the poor. He is against all forms of life. He is merciless in his pursuit and unending in his appetite. He never says “Enough.” He leaves in his wake broken hearts and unfulfilled potential. He is an enemy of all mankind. Some never recover from his devastation. Some deny his existence, blaming his effect on naturalistic causes. He was first seen in the heart of an angel. He does not look like a criminal at first. He is well-spoken, well-dressed and extremely charismatic. He is attractive and enticing. His promises for satisfaction and pleasure abound. He is easy on the eyes, he stirs your desires and appeals to your prideful self. We were

warned about this criminal by our Father. Our Father told us if we let him in, he will bring his cohort with him. His cohort will produce such grief, agony and anguish of soul in us that it will make all the promises of pleasure look utterly foolish. We were never created to have to deal with this criminal and his partner.

Our Father warned us, but we did not listen. The most horrifying thought of all, we let him in. Who is this criminal? His name is Sin and his partner is Death. **Romans 5:12(NLT)** ***“When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.”*** The first man Adam opened the door and let Sin in. Sin brought with it Death, and all of creation was subjected to decay and eventual death. Sin has ravaged the planet, including the human heart, and always ends in death. Adam faced the Father of Lies in the garden and failed. Because of his failure, we were subjected to being separated from our Father. We needed to be rescued. We were living, but dead, and were destined to die. We could not save ourselves. We needed a perfect, sinless sacrifice that could triumph over Sin and its cohort Death.

When our first ancestor Adam opened the door to Sin and Death, our Father used animal skins to cover him. Something had to die so we could be covered. Sacrifice was introduced, but we could only be covered not freed. The Law came in effect but the Law could not save us. **Hebrews 7:18-19a(NLT)** ***“Yes, the old requirement about the priesthood was set aside because it was weak and useless. 19 For the law never made anything perfect.”*** The Law could only point out sin in us because none of us could obey the law completely. We were placed under the protective custody of the Law but still trapped in sin. We were like the man that fell among robbers. We were stripped, beaten and left half dead. Then, the sacrifices (the Priest) came, but could not restore us. In the same way, the Law (the Levite) came, but again could not save us. Then a despised Samaritan (Jesus) came, had compassion on us, took care of our wounds (sin) and brought us to an inn (the church) and promised that He will return for us.

Jesus, our Champion, came. When Jesus was born, a warrant was issued for Sin’s arrest. Jesus lived a sinless life, fulfilling and obeying the law completely. He is the suffering servant, the Perfect Lamb, that submitted Himself to death willingly. By willingly giving His life for us, something incredible happened; something that all of our self-effort, all of our sacrifice and the Law could not do. Sin got arrested on Calvary’s Cross. When Jesus died, the criminal that ran rampant was finally placed under arrest. **Romans 5:17-18(NLT)** ***“For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God’s wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ. 18 Yes, Adam’s one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ’s one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.”***

Jesus, our Champion, could not be kept in the grave. When Jesus triumphed over death and the grave, Matthew tells us there was a resurrection of many saints. ***“And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.”***

When Life walked into the tomb, death ran out! Jesus has arrested Sin and has overcome Sin’s partner, Death. The thing we have feared the most has now been placed under the authority of our Champion. We no longer have to be dominated by that criminal Sin and we no longer have to fear his cohort Death. **1 Corinthians 15:54-57(NIV)** *“When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’ 55 ‘Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?’ 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

The resurrection of Jesus means we don’t have to fear dying anymore. By embracing our Champion and accepting His sacrifice, we receive new life. Jesus has become the Door to the Father. By receiving His grace through faith, we have eternal life. Death has now become the door, the entrance into our Father’s House. *“So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God’s wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* Jesus is our new and living Way. Death has no power over Him. **Romans 6:8-9(NLT)** *“And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. 9 We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him.”*

If you have a loved one that has died in Christ, then rest assured you will see them again. In your Father’s house, there are many places. He promises you that He will dry every tear; that sorrow and sadness will no longer exist; that life will be so full, that trying to describe it will only do injustice to it. We look through veiled glasses and we see glimpses of our eternal reality, but it is beyond description. Our story started in a Garden. Adam was placed in the Garden and failed at the tree. Jesus came and prayed in a garden and was hung on a tree; placed in a tomb, but raised up in three days. Our story does not end in a garden. According to Revelation, the garden has become a city; a city whose Builder and Maker is God. If you and I should go through the door called “Death,” there is a resurrection day waiting for us all!

1 Corinthians 15:20-21(NLT) *“But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died. 21 So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man.”*

What we suffer now cannot compare to the glory that our Champion will reveal to us later. So, we eagerly wait. We wait for complete restoration. We wait because we know all of creation was subjected, but all of creation will be freed from death and decay. There will be a day of reunion! There will be a day of celebration! We celebrate because our Champion, Jesus, through His death, burial and resurrection, arrested Sin and took away the pain of Death! Rejoice today because Death was arrested and your new life has begun...

Prayer:

- **Thank the Lord Jesus for His grace and mercy towards you.**
- **Confess any sin that you might be harboring in your life.**
- **Take a moment and praise God for His glorious gift of eternal life.**
- **Pray that all the saints will live in the freedom from the fear of death.**