

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

A weekly study to strengthen families

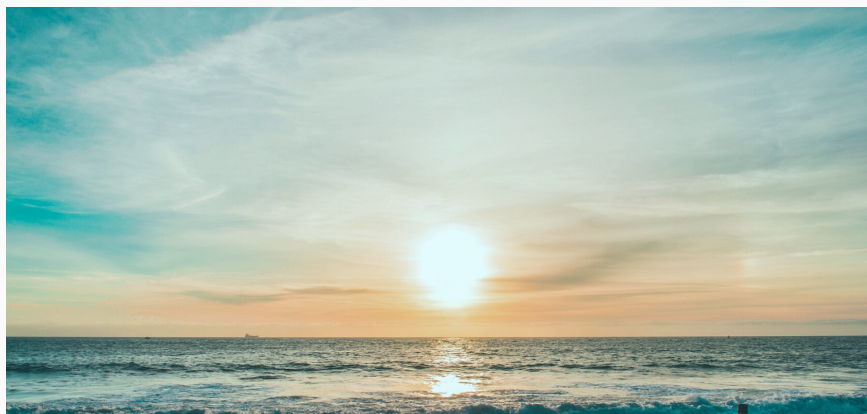
He Appears

BY PASTOR JONES

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 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.

I CORINTHIANS 15:1-8 ESV

Our text gives an account of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this text, the apostle encourages us to hold fast to the word that was preached concerning Jesus. He then begins to list all of the people to whom Jesus appeared showing Himself alive after His resurrection. There are many other places in the New Testament that document more of His appearances. For example, Mary Magdalene (John 20:15-18) and the two followers (Mark 16:12) who were walking along the road discussing what happened in Jerusalem. Jesus continued to appear for years after His crucifixion in the most unlikely places and to the most unlikely people thereby proving that He is alive and desires to reveal Himself.



Application

Many of us have had personal encounters with Jesus through a crisis, a dream or vision, or His undeniable presence. There is no doubt that He continues to appear today and show Himself alive to those who are in need and desire truth. In our current crisis, many find themselves isolated, alone, and searching. Many are also coming face to face with an emptiness inside. Sometimes it takes a crisis or a disaster to help us admit that there is a place in us that cannot be satisfied with the world. Even going to church cannot satisfy the thirst inside of us. Church cannot replace a relationship with Jesus Christ. The Easter story gives us the solution for emptiness. After they discovered an empty tomb, Jesus appeared and filled their emptiness. After discovering your emptiness, you can discover a risen Jesus. He can appear and fill our emptiness.

Discussion

1. Who were the “unlikely people” to whom Jesus appeared after His death and why do you think He revealed Himself to them?
2. How has Jesus revealed Himself to you? How can we be sure that we are not filling our emptiness or “void” with things?
3. Is it possible to substitute Church for a relationship with Jesus Christ?
4. How has this current crisis helped you experience the resurrected Christ?

Prayer Focus

Pray that people would hunger for a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

Pray that the body of Christ would not substitute religion and church for a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Pray that many would take this opportunity to seek the Lord and fill their emptiness with Jesus and the new life He offers.