

The Resurrection & The life

Week 1- He First Loved us

Over the next several weeks leading up to Easter we are going to be learning about Following Jesus! We will see how Jesus is the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world... that he is the Way, Truth and Life.

We will discuss what it looks like to follow him as a true disciple as we study his descent from heaven to earth, his perfect life, his ministry and road to the cross and grave and his victorious resurrection from the dead after conquering death hell and the grave. We will find out about his finished work and all it means for us. We will learn how to walk in the way of resurrection life in Jesus by the Holy Spirit in us!

“Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “**I am the resurrection and the life.** Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.””

John 11:23-27 ESV

He has a **resurrection** and a **life** for us

“I want to **know Christ**—yes, to know the **power** of his **resurrection** and **participation in his sufferings**, becoming **like him** in his **death**, and so, somehow, attaining to the **resurrection** from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I **press on** to **take hold** of that for which **Christ Jesus took hold of me.** Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: **Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead**, I press on toward the goal **to win** the prize for which God has called me **heavenward in Christ Jesus.**”

Philippians 3:10-14 NIV

The **most important thing** for any human is to know Jesus!!

Not religious customs.. But a real **relationship!** Where he is Lord and Savior.. from enemies to friends, from God's wrath to God's favor.

He has called us toward heaven!

So we can forget what is behind and run...

There is a prize that is worth the suffering

The suffering is dying to ourselves... to the old way

Jesus took a hold of you for a reason and with a purpose! Let's press on for that!

This next scripture presents a sobering thought... Jesus talking...

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed **from death to life.**

"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live..... For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good **to the resurrection of life**, and those who have done evil **to the resurrection of judgment.**" John 5:24-29 ESV

The good news is that each one of us has the opportunity **today** to take hold of what Jesus has for us.

God First Loved Us

God is Love

"Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is from God**, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because **God is love.**"

1 John 4:7-8 ESV

Before the creation of the world God.. the great I AM was Love

Father, Son and Spirit..In perfect love and unity

God created the heavens and the earth

The Holy Spirit was there. The Son, "the Word" was there

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." Genesis 1:1-3 ESV

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”
John 1:1-5 ESV.

“In this... the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, **so that we might live through him.**”

“In this is love, not that we have loved God **but that he loved us...** and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:9-10 ESV

“We love because **he first loved us.**”

1 John 4:19

We have the ability to love God.. because he loved us first... and made a way for us to know His Love

I pray that you know his love today!

He first loved us, family!

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him **before the foundation** of the world, **that we should be holy** and blameless before him. In love he **predestined** us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,”

Ephesians 1:3-5 ESV

God's love caused him to give us a destiny in him

His predestination plan was Jesus going to the cross!

For God so loved the world...

We can be chosen before the foundation of the world to be Holy because before the foundation God loved us first and decided that:

While we were still sinners Christ would die for us... Romans 5:8

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom **we all once lived** in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **But God**, being rich in mercy, **because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses**, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; **it is the gift of God**, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”
Ephesians 2:1-10 ESV

Jesus said.. John 8:12 “ ...“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.””

“This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, **and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin**. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:5-9 ESV

We are not a church of perfect people..

That’s not how it works.. We don’t come to church to claim to God how perfect we are and to tell him and everyone how deserving we are of eternal life..

We come before him broken and to be broken that we may be healed, delivered and restored.

We come before him poor knowing that apart from his Mercy and Grace we are hopeless!

Let’s bring our sin before him and to each other so that we can be free!

So if you are stuck in sin or struggling in any area of your life you don’t have to be ashamed..

He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us!

Sin in your life will stunt your growth and bring you around in circles... but who the Son sets free is free indeed!

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— the life was **made manifest**, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the **eternal life**, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too **may have fellowship with us**; and indeed our fellowship is with the **Father** and with his **Son Jesus Christ**. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.” 1 John 1:1-4 ESV

We are called into Love and into fellowship with God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit who seals us as his own and causes us to cry out ABBA!

Eternal life in Jesus has been proclaimed to us!

He loved you first!

He loves you today

How will you respond to his love today?

Romans 12 says the reasonable response to God's mercy is to offer our Lives as living sacrifices...