

Date: 3.27.2016

Walking Dusty

Teacher: Dan Crist

In honor of Resurrection Sunday, we figured that there was no better week to bring Walking Dusty back from the dead. (Drums please: ba dum, tss).

Speaking of resurrection, picture a Maple tree in the heart of autumn. What anchors the tree to not only function and stand there so majestically, but endure the variety of elements it will face throughout the year? It's not the breathtaking leaves or perfectly symmetrical branches; it's the tree's... [Drumroll]... roots! The roots anchor the tree and provide nutrients for the tree to grow and sustain life. In the same way, our faith isn't anchored in the flashy, but the faithful unseen. If the Christian faith were a tree, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is most certainly the root. Without it, the tree does not exist!

This one will be a bit longer and more packed with information than a typical Walking Dusty, so bear with me. Over the weekend, we saw in 1 Corinthians 15 that Paul was passionately explaining how pivotal the resurrection of Jesus Christ is to our faith. Dan highlighted verses 12-20 and listed six implications of Jesus' resurrection- purpose, faith, truth, forgiveness, hope, and meaning.

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, we have:

- No truth/"false witnesses about God"- claiming he raises the dead when he doesn't. Ouch!
- No forgiveness/"still in our sins"- If Jesus (who never sinned) hasn't been raised, then he didn't conquer death! Then we (who have sinned) most certainly won't be raised because death, the penalty for sin, has not been defeated!
- No faith/"faith is futile"- Faith that isn't grounded in truth is powerless. Without the resurrection, Jesus did not ascend to the Father and give us the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, we have no power and there is thus no evidence (fruit) to testify to the truth of our faith.
- No hope, No purpose, No meaning/"Pitied above all"- Can you imagine anything more pitiful than a group of people who place all of their hope in a dead "savior" and find their purpose in following him, forsaking the things of this life for an eternity that doesn't exist? If there is no resurrection, this life is all there is and there is no lasting purpose or meaning for man. Check out verse 32- "If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep (v. 20). Because Jesus has indeed been raised from the dead, those in Christ have:

- Real Forgiveness- Because Jesus rose again, he conquered death and thus truly paid the penalty for our sin. The Father is pleased to forgive those who look to the Son because they are humbly trusting in his mercy. By placing our faith in Jesus alone for forgiveness, we are saying, “God, let’s keep it real here. You know I can’t earn a right standing with you. I need your mercy and I thank you that you have supplied it in Jesus!” Real forgiveness is centered in God’s mercy.
- Truth- Because of the resurrection, Jesus sits as Lord over all. Because he was raised, we will all be raised and judged (by the very one who laid his life down in humility!) either to eternal life or eternal destruction. Christ will right every wrong and abolish evil forever more. There will be no more pain, sickness, death, tears, suffering, and for those in Christ, this will be the new reality! He is making all things new.
- Real Faith- The Holy Spirit testifies to the truth of our faith by making us more like Christ! The Gospel is power to save, not leave us in sin.
- Real Hope- Because of Christ’s victorious loving obedience, we are set free from sin and death, are adopted by the Father, are given the Holy Spirit to teach us how to walk in the way that honors God, and trust him to handle the very thing that plagues humanity – the fear of death.
- Real Purpose and Meaning- With the resurrection, our purpose becomes clear in *this* life- to forsake it! Our eyes are opened to what is unseen; Jesus’ teachings on the Kingdom of God come to life; and we forsake what is seen for what is unseen, self for Christ, being served for serving, and now for eternity. We are set free from the fear of death and freed up to serve God with an eternal perspective. We are given hearts, eyes, and ears to understand that this life is but a blink of an eye, and we have a mission to share the Good News with others in an effort to change their eternity as well!

Things to Consider

- Jesus, what needs to be resurrected in my life so that I can serve you more wholeheartedly?
- Take some time to reflect on ways that God has made you grow more like Christ.
- Read 1 Corinthians 15 and see what pops out to you.
- Think about the hope that we have in Christ and how wonderful *that day* will be!