

Lesson 188

TEXT Mark 16:1-14; John 20:19-29

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that only through believing the truth of the resurrection of Christ will they have access to the power and blessing it affords.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. — John 20:29

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. — John 20:29

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **The Resurrection Really Happened**
**SEARCH
TITLE:** **The Risen Christ**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Easter miracle is the heart of Christian faith: the New Testament is more resurrection-oriented than it is cross-centered. Indeed, it is the Resurrection which interprets the Cross and which therefore shapes the Church's theology as well as its worship and life. In our Lord's own teaching, His Resurrection is never divorced from His Crucifixion. The atoning cross and the empty tomb form a redemptive complex.

By virtue of His Resurrection our Savior entered upon His ministry as High Priest, presenting His own sacrificial Blood to the Father, performing the functions of interces-

sion (Romans 8:34) and benediction. Though the Letter to the Hebrews contains only a single reference to the Resurrection (Hebrews 13:20), the truth expressed in that single reference is, nevertheless, presupposed at every turn in the apostolic argument: the resurrected Christ is the Melchizedekian Priest. Again, by virtue of His Resurrection, our Savior was appointed Judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42; 17:31). In sum, by virtue of His Resurrection, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High, the victorious Destroyer of death, a life-giving Spirit, the Savior, Head, and Priest of His people, the world's future King and Judge.

YOUR OPENER

The Risen Christ

TEXT: Mark 16:1-14; John 20:19-29

KEY VERSE: Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. — John 20:29

RESPONSES

1. To *believe* is “to have confidence in a statement or promise; to have faith—especially religious faith.” Your students’ answers to the second part of the question should bring out that in order to become a Christian, one must believe and obey God’s Word. Ask your class what the difference is between the belief of a sinner and the belief of a Christian. This should clarify the difference between a “head” belief and a “heart” belief.

2. Jesus meant that all those who never saw Him after the Resurrection and yet believed, would be blessed. Not only those people of that day and age, but also all those who had truly believed God in the centuries before and those who were to come after, including us, would be blessed. The greatest reward for truly believing will be eternal life.

3. After your students respond, it should be obvious that there are many things we believe in and yet don’t see, but we enjoy the benefits of them. In paralleling these to our faith in Jesus, you might bring out that we don’t see the shed Blood of Jesus, yet we receive the benefits of salvation. We believe that He is risen, and yet we have not seen Him in person. We know that someday we will see Christ and enjoy eternal life with Him. This is a benefit yet to come.

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection, and the life” (John 11:25). All human hope centers at Calvary and the resurrection of Christ. Calvary shows Christ’s humanity, and the Resurrection shows His deity. Faith in the truth of Christ’s resurrection brings access to a spiritual resurrection for the believer. Jesus Christ’s life here shows us He was the Son of man; and His power over death shows us He is the Son of God.

1. What does the word *believe* mean, and how does it apply to the Christian?

2. Until they saw Jesus after the Resurrection, the disciples had a difficult time believing Jesus was alive. At the end of our text in John, Jesus said, “. . . blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” What did He mean?

3. What are some things in this life that we believe in and yet don’t see or understand? Parallel this belief to our faith in Jesus Christ and the Resurrection.

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. How does the Resurrection show that Jesus was not a mere human? Why is the Resurrection so important to the Christian? See Revelation 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:20-23.

5. What is the Christian's guarantee that if he dies he will be resurrected? See Romans 8:11.

6. How many people were in the largest group recorded as seeing Jesus after His resurrection and why is this such a great fact to us today? See 1 Corinthians 15:6.

7. Suppose a friend asked you the question, "How do you know Christ really rose from the dead?" How would you answer him?

8. How does water baptism typify the Resurrection? See Romans 6:3-5.

4. At the time of the Resurrection, Christ conquered death. He has the keys of death and Hell. This is important to the Christian because Christ is the firstfruits of the First Resurrection. As your class discusses this question they should come to the realization that it was because Jesus came forth from the grave by His own power, the only one to do so, that they, too, have this hope of the Resurrection. See Revelation 20:6.

5. Your students' response to this question should bring out that their hope of the Resurrection rests on their having the Spirit of Christ in them, and a "heart" belief in the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. See Colossians 1:27.

6. On one occasion, a group of more than five hundred people saw Him. Your students' responses to this question should bring out that this one happening presents an opportunity to stress the certainty of Christ's Resurrection. Suppose you were a reporter and you interviewed the group of five hundred who all agreed to the fact, even to the details. Certainly that would be conclusive evidence.

7. This question should stimulate various lines of thought such as the overwhelming recorded historical data given us by witnesses who believed enough to give their lives in martyrdom. Present-day evidence includes miracles of salvation from sin and healing of sick bodies through belief in the risen Christ. This may be an opportunity to share your testimony.

8. Paul used the mode of water baptism by immersion as a symbol of being buried with Christ in death and raised in the likeness of His Resurrection. Discuss with the class the folly of immersing people in water and then bringing them up in the likeness of His Resurrection if there has been no spiritual rebirth.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What if: Jesus had chosen not to die? Jesus' disciples had not believed that He was alive again? Jesus had told everyone to keep His Resurrection a secret?

How would you describe the emotions and feelings of the disciples after Jesus was crucified?

When the women went to the tomb on Sunday, what were they expecting to find?

Why do you think it was difficult for the disciples to believe Jesus had risen?

What does the word *resurrection* mean?

How does the Resurrection of Christ change lives today?

How did the people in that day react to the Resurrection of Christ? How are people today reacting to the Resurrection of Christ?

In our ANSWER story, why did Mr. Martin, who knew so much about Jesus, fail to respond when Jeanette asked if he were a Christian?

THINGS TO DO

As a review, shine a projector light onto a screen. Ask the students if they believe that there are colors in the beam of light. Hold a prism (triangular piece of glass) in the beam of light and you can see a rainbow of colors on the screen. There are more colors in that rainbow that you cannot see, such as infrared and ultraviolet. Did the students believe you when you said there was color in the beam of light? Do they believe there are still colors there that they cannot see? Faith in God's power works in much the same way. If we watch some people's lives, we can see the "colors" come to life. We can believe. But faith is also finding out that there is more to God's power than meets the eye. He has "ultrapower" and can add deeper meaning and more warmth than can be dreamed of. Just have faith!

Prepare a list of some of the main words from the text of this lesson: JESUS, MARY, SWEET, ANOINT, MORNING, SEPULCHRE, STONE, etc. Make a crossword grid into which these words will fit. Number the grid and the words to match. (Keep the numbered list of words for your reference.) Ask your class to guess the word that fits each

space as you review the lesson. Write each word into the grid as it is given. For example:

1. Who arose from the grave? JESUS
2. What kind of spices did the women bring? SWEET

As an Easter review, use three crosses. These can be made of brown construction paper or suede paper. Mention how Christ died, the Just for the unjust, between two thieves. Have three large paper R's colored black, red, and white. The black R stands for Rejecter, and is hung over one cross for the thief who rejected Christ. The red R is hung over the center cross, and stands for Redeemer. Christ, through His own Blood redeems those who accept Him as Savior. The white R means Receiver, and is to be hung over the third cross that stands for the thief who received Christ Jesus as Savior. He had his sins washed away by the Blood of Christ. These thoughts can be enlarged upon very effectively.

Answers for ANSWER

The Risen Christ

Do you believe that Jesus lives? He does, and if you believe on Him you can have power and blessings. Fill in the missing words in the verses at the top of the page. Then put those words in correct order on the acrostic puzzle below. The word in the shaded area is the key word for this lesson.

1. Christ is all, and in all. Colossians 3:11
2. For in him we live. Acts 17:28
3. The world through him might be saved. John 3:17
4. Redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:24
5. The disciples were called Christians. Acts 11:26
6. He is not here; for he is risen. Matthew 28:6
7. I believe that thou art the Christ. John 11:27
8. Take up the cross, and follow me. Mark 10:21
9. Intending after Easter to bring him forth. Acts 12:4
10. Jesus Christ, Who died for us. I Thessalonians 5:9,10
11. Love one another, as I have loved you. John 15:12
12. Christ died for our sins. I Corinthians 15:3