

DEEP SIX STUDY

March 31st, 2024

Easter Sunday – “It’s True... And It’s For You”

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com)*

Opening: Today, over two *billion* people around the world are celebrating Easter. What is that all about? On the surface, the story is familiar: a young man from a small town in the Middle East lived a relatively short but amazing life that drew the attention of many; then he was put to death, and miraculously rose again from the dead. But how did that simple story become a worldwide movement and a holiday celebrated around the world? Many would say that it’s because their own encounter with the risen Jesus changed everything – that somehow, this man who came back to life has now given *them* life.

1. It’s True (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)

- The Apostle Paul is arguably the most famous of Jesus’ early followers. An important thing to know about Paul, though, is that he didn’t start out as a follower of Jesus – in fact, he was just the opposite. As the movement we now call Christianity was just gaining momentum after Jesus’ resurrection, Paul (then known as Saul) was the #1 *opponent* of Jesus and his followers.
- In a letter he wrote just 25 years or so after Jesus’ resurrection, Paul recounts the basic creed of the Christian faith – the facts of the story that had been told to him by the eyewitnesses who’d see it happen in person. In doing so, Paul reminds his readers that many of those who told him the story were still alive – implying that his readers could still hear the eyewitness accounts for themselves.
- For 2000 years, billions of people – skeptics, scientists, historians, philosophers and everyday people – have examined the evidence, considered the implications, and come to the same conclusion as Paul: that the story is true, and that Jesus of Nazareth really did rise from the dead like he said he would. And that’s why we celebrate with billions of others on this Easter Sunday.

2. It’s True – And It’s For You (Romans 8:28-30)

- 2000 years later, we’re offered the same eyewitness story, and the same question: if it’s true, what does it mean? And what am I supposed to do with it all? Because if it’s true, it changes everything.
- Writing in what we now call the book of Romans, Paul hits the most important point of Jesus’ resurrection for us today: that God is actively involved in the world and in each of our lives. If the story is true and Jesus rose from the grave, then that’s proof that Romans 8:28 is also true: God can use any situation that we face – even death itself – for the overall good that he has planned for us.
- In our darkest moments, pain always feels like it’s final – like there’s no way out and the story is over. But the resurrection of Jesus is proof that God can turn any pain and any darkness into good – just like

he did when he resurrected Jesus from the dead.

- Whatever you're going through, there's a promise for you in Paul's famous writing: God's work in your life isn't finished. He knows you, he loves you, and he is "working all things for good." He wants to give you the gift of a full life – a life of meaning and purpose and joy. Trust him with that!

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Isaiah 26:19; Mark 16:1-6; John 11:25; Acts 4:33; Romans 6:4-5; 1 Peter 1:3-4

Video of the Week: [The Resurrection of Jesus – Luke 24](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. As you celebrated Easter on Sunday, what thoughts, feeling and emotions did you experience during the day?
2. Would you say that you believe the story of Jesus of Nazareth – his life, miracles, teachings, death and resurrection as they've been related to us in the New Testament – is 100% true? Why or why not?
3. If you believe that the Jesus Story is true, what difference has that belief made in your life?
4. Read Romans 8:28-30 again. How would you explain the meaning of these verses to someone who's never heard them before?
5. By your understanding, how does the truth of Romans 8:28 lead to the "full life" that Jesus promised us?

6. If the Jesus Story is true, and if Jesus' resurrection means that God can use anything that happens for our "good," how should that affect how we live our lives going forward from today?