

"The Uplifted Christ"

4/16/06

Luke 24:6 "He is not here, He has risen!"

Introduction

It is only a coincidence that our Lord was crucified on a hill. His death would have been just as effective if He had died in a valley. But his death on a hilltop is a very instructive coincidence - and His death by crucifixion was no coincidence at all.

I. We Feel the Pull of the Cross

A. We are familiar with physical magnetism. We know it makes our electricity. We see it in the atom, the smallest thing we know, and in the universe, the largest thing we know. But Jesus is not talking about physical magnetism.

B. We are familiar with personal magnetism. There are those to whom people are naturally drawn. There is a force in their personalities, but that is not what Jesus is talking about.

C. We are familiar with the magnetism of influence. People are drawn to power figures: political leaders, business leaders, physicians, preachers. That is not what Jesus is talking about.

D. Jesus is talking about a spiritual magnetism that we experience every time we encounter the cross, whether in song, or sermon, picture, or thought.

E. New Life occurs when people are drawn to Christ. It is not accomplished by driving people to Christ. It is not accomplished by luring people to Christ. It is only accomplished as they are led to Christ by their admiration of His character and love.

F. Commitment does not occur when people are shamed into service, but when they are drawn into service by the uplifted Christ... His example in you.

G. Consecrated Christian living is not induced by appeals to fear or shame. It is rather when people see the beauty of His holiness that they begin to lead pure lives.

II. We Contemplate the Puzzle of the Cross.

- A. We can only partly understand the atonement.
- B. It's such a large idea we need a large word for it.
- C. It can be understood only in the light of Christmas.
- D. "God was in Christ" so that God Himself makes the sacrifice.
 1. The innocent makes the sacrifice for the guilty.
 2. The offended makes the sacrifice for the offender.

III. We Experience the Power of the Cross.

- A. It is a powerful symbol. That is why it replaced the fish as the symbol of our faith. Today the cross is the most widely recognized symbol in the world.
- B. It is a powerful lesson. In the cross we see how far sin will go. Men killed the world's one perfect person; killed the Savior of the world; killed the Son of God!
- C. It is also a powerful lesson in this: it shows us how far love will go. The apostle Paul speaks of this in Romans 5:7, 8 "For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Paul goes even further in Roman 8:32: "He who did not spare his own Son ... how will he not also ... graciously give us all things?"
- D. It is a powerful cleanser. "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!"
- E. It is a powerful motivator. It moves us to action as nothing else can.

Conclusion

Can you reject such love? Ancient sailors believed there was a Magnetic Mountain that would pull the nails from their vessels and destroy them. There is an actual Magnetic Mountain - Calvary