**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, December 11, 2020**

Good Afternoon!

Some years ago, I was approached by my neighbor. She said to me, I know that you are a minister and I hope that you can help me. With a tear in her eye, she told me that her dad had passed away and that she was wondering if I would help with his funeral. I consoled her for a few moments and then asked her when all this happened. She said, 15 years ago! Pausing, I was a bit confused thinking that I was lacking understanding. I said, 15 years ago? She responded yes that’s correct! I said, well I don’t understand, I think you are a little late. She said no the funeral is not scheduled for another three days from now. Then she explained, you see my dad died 15 years ago and was cremated. He was placed in a community plot, but now my family and I want to have his ashes exhumed and give him a final resting place of his own. I told her that I would be happy to help out. After the funeral service was over, I thought to myself, here is a person who was raised from the grave only to be buried once again! I also thought, but we serve a risen Savior, Jesus, who was not only raised from the grave but remains risen today!

When it comes to the resurrection of Jesus Christ there should never be any confusion or a lack of understanding. In fact, the power of the resurrection becomes powerless when there is a lack of understanding. The apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:10, “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection.” When it came to the resurrection of Jesus, there were many who simply did not understand what was happening. As a result, that which was powerful became powerless! It’s time to recapture the power!

First, there were the women who went to the tomb early resurrection morning. They didn’t seem to understand! “Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might come and anoint Him...very early on the first day of the week...they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone from the entrance of the tomb for us?” Mark 16:1-3. If they understood, they would not have needed spices or anyone to roll away the stone! But instead, Luke tells us that when they arrived, “they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus...they were perplexed about this.” They were told by what seemed to be an angel there, “He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee... And they remembered His words.” The women fled trembling and astonished. Why? Up to this point, all that Jesus said was just words! Like words on a page, words in the bible, words to tell a story. It left them powerless in their walk with the Lord.

Second, there was the apostle’s reaction to the news from the women. They didn’t seem to understand! When the women returned to share this great news of the resurrection, their words “appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe the women.” Luke 24:11. As they listened there must have been a lot of beard rubbing, odd looks, and analyzing going on. But for sure lots of doubt! How many times had Jesus told them! It left them powerless and paralyzed in their faith.

Finally, there were two on the road to Emmaus. They didn’t seem to understand! While they were walking and discussing with each other about all that was happening in Jerusalem, Jesus approaches them and began to travel with them. Jesus asked them, “What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?” And they came to a stop, looking sad.” Then they said, “But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.” But later that evening Luke tells us that “then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.” They said to one another, “Were our hearts not burning within us when He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?” And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, saying, “The Lord has really risen...”

Friends, when our eyes are truly opened to the truth of the resurrection our hearts will burn within us about the Christ! Then we will clearly and confidently understand the resurrection fact and our lives will be empowered like never before! The resurrection of Jesus Christ was never meant to leave us perplexed, to be just words, be referred to as nonsense, to leave us looking sad or doubting. It is the single most important event in history!

The question is when it comes to the resurrection, is there a lack of understanding or still uncertainty in your life or is it real to you? The only thing worse than living with uncertainty is believing that it is a fact but still living like it is a myth! I hear some people say, yes, I know that Jesus has been raised from the dead and I know that I will be too, but I’m still living a life full of fear, anxiety, hopelessness, doubt, and more. Folks, because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as Christians, when we die, we will be raised with Him to live with Him forever! It’s no uncertainty, it is a fact! Plain and simple we have no reason to fear death since the future is so full of hope and happiness! The future belongs to God’s people! When the last chapter of this world is closing, Christians will be absent, but present with the Lord in heaven forever! You can be certain!

Blessings,

Mike