

LIVING THE RESURRECTION

APRIL - MAY 2021

HOME GROUP & DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

“Abide in Me” – Paul Verryn – 2 May 2021

Sermon link: <https://soundcloud.com/gracepointsa/abide-in-me-by-paul-verryn>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a6MKrzksTk>

Scripture

John 21:15-22

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God’s word to you.

Worship

Spend some time in worship. Try this song: Lord, you have come to the lakeside

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4AVgp7j2cM>

Observation

The Lord’s use of the phrase, ‘Simon, son of John,’ would have been emotional for Peter as this was how Jesus had addressed him when he confessed that Jesus was the Christ (Matthew 16:16-17). Jesus does not explain who or what ‘these’ are. The word could include the other disciples, his love of fishing, or the catch itself. Jesus could have been asking whether Peter loved him more than all the trappings and material things of his life. Was Peter prepared to give all these things up to follow Jesus? Or, more likely, Jesus is asking Peter to remember when he had boasted that he alone would stand firm and true even though everyone else ran away. From this time on, Peter does not compare his faith or his love for Jesus with that of his companions. He does, however affirm his love and is rewarded with a charge to feed Jesus lambs.

And then Peter is asked again. This time the instruction is to care for Jesus’ sheep, giving the instruction to nurture and teach the body of Christ.

The third question must have been hard to hear, but Jesus’ repeated command for Peter to feed his sheep helps Peter to realise that the guilt he was feeling about his denial of Christ in the courtyard has been wiped away. He is forgiven. And Peter assures Jesus of his love for him a third time.

But with love comes responsibility. – and sacrifice. Jesus not only commands Peter to care for his church, but also tells him what his future will hold. Peter could no longer be the headstrong, outspoken young man he had been. Now he had to think about what he said and did as he represented and led the infant church. The prophecy John records about Peter’s last days had already been fulfilled by the time John wrote these words. Tradition has it that Peter was crucified upside down at his own request as he was not worthy to die the same sort of death his Lord had died.

Peter had a lot to learn and his natural curiosity caused him to ask Jesus what would happen to John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, who was following them. Jesus did not answer him. But, whilst Peter was given his role in the church to lead them forward and to care for them, John was able, at the end of his life to say, 'I saw these things and I know they are true.' John's role was witness to tell others what he had seen.

Instead of replying, Jesus gives Peter his final command which Peter had heard right at the beginning and now heard again at the end of his time with Jesus. 'Follow me'. Peter had responded readily earlier to these words. And he responded again as he followed Christ for the rest of his life.

Icebreaker:

How do you feel when you are asked to do something that seems to be beyond you – but that you manage to succeed in doing in the end?

Application

- 'Resurrection is about integrity. Do we love Christ so it shifts our decisions, enflames our lives? Or is he a bit of a habit?' What is your response to these questions and why do you answer them in this way?
- 'Resurrection means going into places of difficult confrontation'. What is the most difficult place you have ever had to go in response to Christ's resurrection presence in your life? What happened as a result?
- How do you feel, at this moment, about people who have hurt you? Have you been able to forgive them? Why/why not? How can/does the resurrected Jesus help you in this situation? (Try not to tell the story of the hurt – concentrate on your current reaction to it).
- How do you live as a resurrected member of the Body of Christ? What is the role Jesus has given to you to do? Peter was a shepherd; John was a witness; later Paul was a traveller spreading the good news. What about you?
- How do you feel about this role? Where do you need help to define/fulfill it?
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

Service

In light of the discussion you have had, look for places and events where you can live out your role as a resurrected member of the Body of Christ and carry out his command to you today – 'Follow me'.

Bibliography

Barclay, William. The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of John Volume 2 chapters 8-21 The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh. 1981

Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on John 21". "Coffman Commentaries on the Bible". <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/bcc/john-21.html>. Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.