

April 28, 2024 - Jesus After the Resurrection

Jesus' Breakfast on the Beach

Scripture Passage: John 21:1-19

1. Our passage this week is another famous meal story with the resurrected Jesus. What similarities do you notice between this passage and Luke 24:34-45 from two weeks ago?
2. Are you a breakfast person? What is your favorite breakfast? Do you have a favorite breakfast memory?
3. Biblical scholars often suggest that John 21 was a later addition to the original manuscript of John. Some call it an "epilogue." As you read this passage, does it remind you of other stories from the life of Jesus? If so, which ones?
4. Many people find it amazing that—after all that had happened with the disciples—they went back to *fishing*. Why might they have wanted to go back to a place of familiarity?
5. Jesus gives the fishermen advice about catching fish, and it produces more fish than they ever imagined. How does Jesus bring abundance?

6. After breakfast, Jesus asks Peter three questions. Close readers of this text will recall that Peter previously denied Jesus three times. What significance do you see in Jesus asking Peter, “Do you love me?” three times?

Going Deeper

7. Have you ever returned to familiar surroundings or practices to bring a sense of stability in your life? What was the end result?

8. How important are miracles to your understanding of the faith? Do you *need* to see or experience miracles?

9. Jesus instructs Peter on what kind of death “would glorify God.” What kind of death do you think would bring glory to God?

April 21, 2024 - Jesus After the Resurrection

The Apostle Paul's Theology of the Resurrection

Scripture Passage: I Corinthians 15

1. How does Paul defend the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and why is it central to the Christian faith?
2. In what ways does Paul address the question of the nature of the resurrection body?
3. What significance does Paul give to Jesus being the "first fruits" of those who have fallen asleep?
4. How does Paul address skepticism about the resurrection?
5. How does the resurrection impact the way Christians should live their lives according to I Corinthians 15?
6. What practical implications does the resurrection have for believers regarding hope, suffering, and death?
7. How can believers today apply the teachings of I Corinthians 15 to their daily lives and their understanding of the Christian faith?

Going Deeper

8. How does the concept of “resurrection” in I Corinthians 15 contrast with other views of the afterlife prevalent in Paul’s time?

9. What role does the resurrection play in the broader theological framework of salvation according to Paul’s teachings in I Corinthians 15?

April 14, 2024 - Jesus After the Resurrection

“A Ghost Does Not Have Flesh and Blood”

Scripture Passage: Luke 24:34-45

1. What's the most memorable meal you have ever shared with a group of friends? What made it so memorable?
2. Luke 24 contains two stories of meals with Jesus. Why do you think Luke found it important to tell these stories?
3. Luke 24 also offers one of the few biblical descriptions of Jesus' physical body after the resurrection. What do you notice about Jesus in the text?
4. When the disciples recognize Jesus standing with them, they are afraid. This is not the first time Jesus did something that frightened them. How does Jesus respond to their fear?
5. Verse 41 says that Jesus appeared to the disciples, “While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering...” How does the Christian faith make room for *joy, wonder, and doubt*? Do these three things ever exist at the same time in your life?

6. Jesus asks his students for food to eat. They give him broiled fish. Some translations add that he also received honey. How does this scene compare to other stories of Jesus sharing meals?

7. After the meal, Jesus opens their minds to understand the scriptures in the law, the prophets, and the psalms. How does Jesus help us to understand the Bible? What difference does his presence make when we open the scriptures?

8. In Matthew's gospel, Jesus offers a glimpse of the final judgment and tells his followers, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat" (Matt 25:35). In Matthew's context, the disciples were "feeding Jesus" through their feeding of others who were hungry. How do these passages from Scripture inform how Christians feed the hungry today?

9. If Jesus physically stood next to you right now, what would he find in your heart? Would it be fear, unbelief, joy, or other things? Where is Jesus asking you to trust?

April 7, 2024 - Jesus After the Resurrection

After Jesus rose from the dead, he continued to teach and interact with people. This post-Easter series will be centered on those very teachings and interactions.

Doubting Thomas

Scripture Passage: John 20:19-31

1. How do you relate to Thomas's doubt in the story? Have you ever experienced doubt in your faith or beliefs?
2. Discuss Thomas's transformation from doubt to belief. What factors influenced his change of heart, and how can we apply these lessons in our lives?
3. Reflect on the role of evidence in faith. How much evidence do we need to believe, and where does faith come into play?
4. Consider the importance of community in overcoming doubt. How can we support and encourage each other in times of doubt and disbelief?
5. Explore the relationship between doubt and spiritual growth. Can doubt be a catalyst for deeper faith, and if so, how?
6. Reflect on Thomas' confession of faith ("My Lord and my God!"). What does this statement reveal about his

understanding of Jesus' identity, and how does it impact our understanding of Jesus today?

7. How can we cultivate a healthy approach to doubt in our spiritual journey? What practices or attitudes can help us navigate doubts without losing our faith?
8. Discuss the balance between skepticism and openness in faith. How can we maintain a critical mindset while remaining open to the possibility of encountering God?
9. Reflect on Jesus' response to Thomas' doubt: "Stop doubting and believe." What might this teach us about the relationship between doubt and trust in God?