



Does Your Truth Work?
Sermon Discussion Questions – April, 9 2023

Scripture Passages:

John 20:11-18 (NIV84) Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb 12 and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. 13 They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." 14 At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. 15 He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). 17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20:19-23 (NIV84) On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and

stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

1 John 1:1 (NLT) We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life.

Colossians 1:19–20 (NIV84) For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Warm Up:

Happy Easter, He is risen! Growing up, my family used to have these large gatherings for Easter and share Jesus' resurrection story around a table. These were great times to remember the impact of Jesus' resurrection and were great times with family and friends.

What are some of your Easter traditions? What is your favorite memory of celebrating Easter?

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom opened his message by highlighting the beginning of John 20:19. He also painted a picture of what the disciples might be talking about and feeling in this room.

What types of conversations do you see the disciples having in this room? How might you have been feeling in this room?

2. Pastor Tom continued to explain what this room would have felt and been like. Then he turned this conversation towards us, saying, "The atmosphere we have depicted in that room mirrors the condition of our world today. The state of the disciples mirrors the condition of some of our lives: facing death, despair, lostness, emptiness, regret, and fear.

Do you resonate with any of these things in your own life? How do you see the atmosphere the disciples had reflect the condition of our world today?

3. Last week, we had everyone send in a word that summarizes what life was like without Jesus. We saw through this word cloud that fear and lost capture this best. E. Stanley Jones explains

the root of fear is inadequacy. He says, "When we feel inadequate, we don't know what to do with life, so we retreat into fear and anxiety."

What are your initial thoughts on this quote from E. Stanley Jones? Do you have a story from your life that shows this quote to be true? How has fear ruled your life?

4. Read Luke 20:19-21. "If fear was that which they experienced behind that locked door, then faith is that which was to be restored" -Pastor Tom.

How has Jesus given you faith to overcome your fears? What does it look like to live out faith in the midst of fear?

5. Read John 20:11-18. Pastor Tom explains how Jesus doesn't have the dramatic entrances we might expect or even hope for. Rather Jesus appears quietly or is in the midst of the mundane. In what ways have you seen Jesus show up in quiet or unexpected ways in your life?

6. Read John 20:19-23. Shalom or peace is noted twice in this passage. It connotes importance, but it also presents a new reality among God's people. There now truly can be and is peace. Where do you need some peace in your life? What do you think it looks like to accept the peace God extends to you? How has God given you peace?

7. "It is the Easter message that holds the answer to our fear and loss. Because the resurrection doesn't simply mean that there is a Jesus, there is a Christ, who defeated death one day long ago and far away, but what it says is this: that Christ is alive forever, that Christ is the decisive answer to the chaos of our upside-down world, to the predicament of our individual lives"- Pastor Tom.

What are your initial reactions to this quote? Where in your life have you seen Christ become the answer to the chaos of the world or to the predicament of your life?

Next Steps:

Karl Barth, a pretty well-known theologian, was once asked, "When were you saved?" Karl Barth replied, "33 AD." Jesus, in this year, had paid the penalty for all. He was the ultimate sacrifice who died on the cross. Sunday came around, and death had been defeated, and Jesus rose from the dead. 33 AD is when Jesus saved all who call on him, but there is also a moment in your story when you called on Jesus. You declared him Lord and King of your life and recognized that you could not save yourself from death or clean up the sin in your life. Take a few moments to remember Jesus' story and how this impacted your own story.

Now take a few moments to reflect on these questions:

1. What fears, doubts, losses, regrets, or despairs are you carrying that are weighing you down?
2. What things might you need to surrender or even accept to step into faith?
3. How does Jesus' story impact your own story?
4. What might God be wanting to do with your life?