

Deeper walk 10. 9/4/23

DEATH HAS LOST ITS STING! JESUS IS ALIVE! – Elizabeth Jordaan

The disciples of Jesus had just had the worst possible three days of their life. Their hopes were shattered. The Messiah was dead! Crucified by Romans. They mourned and wept as they huddled together behind closed doors. For Peter it was probably even worse than for the others. He had betrayed his Rabbi. He had wept bitter tears already. Suddenly the women burst into the room. "The grave is empty! His body is gone! The angel told us: He has risen!" Peter and John rose up and ran to the tomb. It was true! His body was gone. Only the stained linen cloths remained. Then Jesus appeared to Mary, and to Peter, and to the ten, and to the two on their way to Emmaus. Then to the ten and Thomas. Then to James, his half-brother. Then to more than five hundred brothers! Jesus was alive! This was the most astonishing thing they have ever seen, and they have seen hundreds of healings, deliverances, and Lazarus, Jairus' daughter and the widow's son raised from the dead. But Jesus! God raised Him from the dead! He had a new body! They were witnesses of something that would change the world forever. Death has been defeated. Jesus is alive! Death, where is your victory? Where is your sting? Jesus is alive!

This testimony and message was the core of the gospel the apostles preached in the Book of Acts. Then Saul, the persecutor, saw the risen Jesus and was immediately converted. This was the greatest message of all time. This was the hope every human being has been waiting for since the Fall in the Garden of Eden. Death has been defeated. Jesus is alive! Is there any better message? Jesus is alive! Let's go tell it far and wide. Death has been defeated! Jesus is alive! Would you be able to keep that message for yourself? I bet not.

The Gospel according to Paul: 1 Corinthians 15. The Resurrection of Christ.

"Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of FIRST IMPORTANCE what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that HE WAS RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY in accordance with the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me."

"Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And IF CHRIST HAS NOT BEEN RAISED, THEN OUR PREACHING IS IN VAIN AND YOUR FAITH IS IN VAIN. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And IF CHRIST HAS NOT BEEN RAISED, YOUR FAITH IS FUTILE AND YOU ARE STILL IN YOUR SINS. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE. But each in his own order: CHRIST THE FIRSTFRUITS, THEN AT HIS COMING THOSE WHO BELONG TO CHRIST. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For He must

reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. THE LAST ENEMY TO BE DESTROYED IS DEATH."

"But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?' You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. JUST AS WE HAVE BORNE THE IMAGE OF THE MAN OF DUST, WE SHALL ALSO BEAR THE IMAGE OF THE MAN OF HEAVEN.

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED, IN A MOMENT, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE, AT THE LAST TRUMPET. FOR THE TRUMPET WILL SOUND, AND THE DEAD WILL BE RAISED IMPERISHABLE, AND WE SHALL BE CHANGED. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

"Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain."