

Pastor's Corner

“THE RADICAL GOD OF EASTER!”

Have you noticed the progression of Jesus' miracles in the gospel of John? In chapter 2, Jesus did His first miracle at a wedding in Cana by turning water into wine because the wine was running out. Jesus' last miracle, in John 11, was Him restoring life to Lazarus after he had been dead and lying in a tomb for four days. No one else has personally witnessed their religious leader raising someone from the dead, especially after being dead four days, to substantiate the leader's claim: “I am the resurrection and life” (Jn. 11:25a). What a radical miracle and claim!

God raising the dead, however, was not a new concept that Jesus introduced. The earliest Biblical belief of God being able to raise the dead, I'm aware of, was Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac around 1,700 B.C. Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead so God's promise to bless all nations would become a reality (See Gen. 22:1-14 & Heb. 11:17-19). What a radical belief!

In the 9th century B.C., the Old Testament prophet Elijah obeyed the God of Abraham by going to Zarephath in Sidon where a widow feeds him. The first miracle God did through Elijah was enabling the wid-

ow's jar of oil to never run out until the rains came. The second miracle was when the widow's son died and Elijah was God's instrument to bring the boy back to life, demonstrating the word of God is true and trustworthy (I Kings 17:8-24). What a radical miracle!

In late 500 B.C. the prophet Daniel was inspired by the God of Abraham to write these words: “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2). What a radical prediction!

In Jesus' day, three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, walked up a mountain with Jesus. There they witnessed Jesus being transformed. His face became like the sun and his clothes became dazzling white. “Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.” After Moses and Elijah disappeared and the remaining four were strolling down from the mountain, Jesus said, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” (See Matt. 17:1-9). What a radical foretelling!

In I Corinthians 15:17-20, the apostle Paul wrote, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those

also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.” What a radical fact!

Have you understood your need of the resurrected Jesus to live within your heart to not only forgive your sins, but to empower you to overcome your powerful bodily cravings? If not, may God open your eyes to understand your need of Jesus and trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord. What a radical new life!

If you have received Jesus as Savior and Lord, share with at least three people this month how His presence and resurrection power enhances your life. That is also a radical miracle – the birth and empowerment of the resurrected Jesus living in and through His people! What a radical witness!

Have a blessed Easter by encountering, worshiping, and obeying the radical God of Easter, who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead to live in and through us.

From Tod – Your Pastor

*Our sins
put Him on
the Cross,
but **love** kept
Him there!*

HAVE A BLESSED AND
HAPPY EASTER

