



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Romans 1:1-4

KEY POINT: The resurrection is Jesus' vindication!

FOR LEADERS

- Welcome back! Welcome to the Spring 2020 Communities Season! With the current covid-19 quarantine still in place, the plan for the immediate future is to continue meeting digitally through whatever means necessary. MANY folks across Emergence have been sharing what an incredible blessing and personal value it is to continue gathering with their friends and church family, even if it is digitally, and as our Communities leaders we want to say THANK YOU for all of your dedication toward keeping us all focused on our walks with Jesus during this crazy season.
Spring 2020 Season: The Spring 2020 Season will run for a total of 7 weeks, ending the week of Sunday, May 31st. We'll be in two different series for this season: Romans for 3 weeks and Proverbs for 4.

GETTING STARTED

- [1] Communities Video: Watch this week's community extras video!
[2] Icebreaker: Name something that God has challenged you with this Easter season!
[3] Opener: What was one takeaway you had from the sermon this week?

GOD'S TESTIMONY

This week we've turned the page from the Gospel of Matthew and his account of the crucifixion to several passages that comment on how God raised Jesus from the dead and vindicated Jesus. Ryan explained how the Gospels give us a "play-by-play" rundown of the events themselves, but it's actually through the apostles' sermons and letters that God gives us the meaning, significance and implications of these events.

Ask for a volunteers to read: Matthew 3:17, 16:16-17, 17:5, 26:63, Romans 1:1-5.

- [1] What is the common thread that runs throughout these passages? Why do you think this is significant?
[2] In your own words, how would you explain the significance of the resurrection? How does it add to what has already been said so clearly about Jesus?
[3] How would Christianity be different if Jesus had never been raised? What if God had simply taken him up to heaven? (Use Acts 17:30-32 for reference)

Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Timothy 3:16.

- [4] What do you think it means to say that Jesus was "vindicated" by his resurrection? In what way should this be incorporated into the way we share our faith?

The New Testament says that it was the Father who raised Jesus from the dead but also that the resurrection is the work of the Holy Spirit (Romans 1:4). In general, Christians often speak in the former way ("God/the Father raised Jesus"), but rarely in the latter ("the Spirit raised Jesus").

- [5] Why do you think this is? How might our witness to the world be improved if we started speaking more boldly of the Spirit?



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WHAT MINISTRY LOOKS LIKE

In the sermon, Ryan explained how the resurrection vindicated Jesus and gave us three implications for our own ministry: This shows us: **1.** What ministry looks like, **2.** How we minister, **3.** The ultimate hope of ministry is glory.

- [6]** Why do you think a faithful servant of God would be in need of “vindication?”
- [7]** How would you explain the difference between a Christian whose life sincerely cries out to God for vindication and a Christian whose simply being over-dramatic & different from the world in all of the wrong ways?
- [8]** Do you think that a Christian’s hope for vindication is a future hope (to be realized when we go to be with the Lord), or a present hope (in a sense that God vindicates us here in this life)? Explain
- [9]** Do you live your life in a way that requires vindication from God, or would you say that your life too closely resembles what it would be if Jesus wasn’t even a part of it?

HOW WE MINISTER

Ryan shared two ways in which Jesus’ resurrection impacts how we minister: It gives us a sense of urgency and it reminds us of the importance of the Spirit.

- [10]** Take a look at Acts 17:30-31 and notice the sense of urgency that follows from Jesus’ resurrection. What areas of your own life do you feel like there is a lack of urgency?
- [11]** What would it look like for you, practically, to be more urgent regarding the things of God?
- [12]** Romans 1:4 & 1 Tim. 3:16 both stress the work of the Spirit of God in raising Jesus from the dead. What are some of the roles that the Spirit plays in the everyday life of a Christian?
- [13]** Read through the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Which of these do you feel are most evident in your life, and which is most lacking?
- [14]** In what way(s) should our lives show that our truest hope is our final vindication with God?

PRAYER

- [1]** Pray that God would give you the mind of Jesus, who fixed his eyes on the work the Father had for him with the joy of knowing it would be God who would reward him.
- [2]** Continue to pray for the work of the Gospel to go forward in the midst of this quarantine, and how you can personally be a light in a dark season.



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LEADER'S COMMENTARY

- It is important to remember that when we speak of “resurrection,” we are not just saying that Jesus was brought back to life. Rather, we are saying that Jesus is the “firstfruits” of God’s new creation (1 Cor 15:20, 23). It is the dawning of the kingdom of God, with Jesus reigning as king. That is why the New Testament forces us to look beyond the miracle to what it means—the Son of God reigning (Rom 1:4), the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven (Matt 26:64), and Jesus coming to judge the living and the dead (Acts 17:30–31).
- It may not appear obvious that “vindicated by the Spirit” in 1 Timothy 3:16 refers to the resurrection. However, with the notable exception of John Calvin, there is widespread agreement by New Testament commentators that this is, in fact, what Paul means by this. Note that this verse presents various central truths about Jesus as “bullet points”: “manifested in the flesh,” “proclaimed among the nations,” “believed on in the world,” and “taken up in glory.” What is missing from this list among things that are central to the early Christian proclamation about Jesus? Clearly his death and resurrection. Moreover, Paul’s wording here—“vindicated *by the Spirit*”—meshes nicely with what the apostle articulates with different words in Romans 1:4: “declared to be the Son of God in power *according to the Spirit of holiness* by his resurrection from the dead.”