

Sermons 2008

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Chapter 1. What Kind of Man is This?

Note: Preached on Easter Sunday, 2008

READ - *Matthew 8:23-27*

TEXT - *What manner of man is this... (Matthew 8:27)*

THEME - The only Man who ever lived, died, and lived again, offers you a choice, and you must choose.

Introduction

You may think our text seems like a strange one to use as an Easter message. We have come to expect a message about the empty tomb on Easter Sunday.

But today, I'd rather talk to you about the One Who vacated the tomb, than the tomb itself. Rather than share with you the fact that the tomb was empty on that first Easter Sunday, I want to share with you the Man Who so amazingly emptied it.

In today's text we see a group of men who were just recently terrified by a raging storm, but now they sat stunned on a calm sea, without a breath of breeze blowing about them. And as they in shocked disbelief at the man who had calmed that storm with just His words, they asked a question which I want us to consider this morning - "What manner of man is this?"

This man was Jesus. And He was:

1. A man Who lived like no other.
2. A man Who died like no other.
3. A man Who rose from the dead, like no other.

A Man Who Lived Like No Other

What manner of man is this?

1. He was a man who lived a sinless life.

The writer to the Hebrews said He ... *was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)*

He had the boldness to challenge His enemies, saying *Which of you convinceth me of sin? (John 8:46)*

I wouldn't have the guts to ask that question. My wife and my kids certainly know I'm a sinner. I've been around here long enough now that most of you are pretty convinced of it, too. But nobody could ever come up with a single thing in Jesus' live - because there wasn't anything.

2. He was a man who loved people.

Jesus just plainly loved people. And He loves you.

ILLUS - Rich Young Ruler - *Then Jesus beholding him loved him... (Mark 10:21)*

- When He saw sinning people, He forgave them and loved them.

ILLUS - Woman caught in adultery - *Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more. (John 8:11)*

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ILLUS - Even those who were in the process of crucifying Him! *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34)*

- When He saw heartbroken people, He wept with them... He comforted them.

ILLUS - Mary and Martha when they mourned the death of Lazarus - *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. Jesus wept. (John 11:33,35)*

Do you need to know the love of the Savior this morning? Perhaps everybody who looks at you thinks you have it all together, but on the inside you know you are falling apart, feeling unloved and broken and depressed and discouraged about life. Know this, my friend. Jesus is a man who loved people. And He loves you.

3. He was a man whose life demonstrated supernatural power.

- Over disease.

Time would fail us this morning to share all the examples. He made blind eyes see, deaf ears hear, lame limbs walk and leap and dance. He gave speech to those who could not speak. He healed those who were mentally ill and oppressed by demons. He healed and healed and healed and healed.

... great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; (Matthew 12:15)

- Over the elements.

cf. today's text

We ought not be too surprised by such power, for the Bible is clear that He created all these things in the first place.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:3)

4. He was a man who lived a purpose driven life.

ILLUS - Rick Warren wrote a best selling book entitled "The Purpose Driven Life." Jesus is the ultimate example!

Some people consider Jesus a tragic figure - horribly cut down in the prime of life. But they are wrong.

His was not a life shaped by His circumstances. He came with a purpose, He lived with a purpose, and He worked according to that purpose every day of His life.

Before He was even born, the angel told Joseph, *... he shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)*

He stated His purpose - *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10)*

He stated it other times - *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)*

Everything about His life, from His birth, to His childhood, to His adult years in the carpentry shop, to His 3 years of earthly ministry - ALL LED TO THE FULFILLMENT OF HIS PURPOSE - to go to the cross and die.

What manner of man was this? He was a man who lived like no other.

A Man Who Died Like No Other

1. He died for you, and in your place.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

When He died on that cross, He died for your sins. He died for you!

Every sin that you would ever commit... every evil thought, every unkind word, everything in your life that is displeasing to God, was put on Him on that cross.

2. He died for you because He was the only one who could!

The wages of sin is death... (Romans 6:23)

SONG - "My sins demanded hell, on Him the judgement fell."

If you were to pay the price for your sins, you would have to die and spend eternity in hell. That is the penalty.

If you wanted to pay the price for somebody else's sins - be their substitute, you would have to first pay for your own, and that would not be possible.

Only Jesus had no sins of His own to deal with, and is therefore free to offer Himself for you and I.

What manner of man is this? He was a man who lived like no other, and who died like no other.

A Man Who Rose from the Dead, LIKE NO OTHER.

1. We must consider this fact.

We sing about it so triumphantly. But do you really accept it as fact? It is, you know. What manner of man is this? He is a man who rose from the dead, and is alive for evermore.

But now is Christ risen from the dead... (1 Corinthians 15:20)

He is not here, for He is risen as He said... (Matthew 28:6)

NO FACT OF HISTORY HAS GREATER ATTESTATION THAN THE FACT THAT CHRIST'S TOMB WAS EMPTY ON SUNDAY MORNING! THE BODY WAS GONE!

"Yeah, but that doesn't prove the resurrection, preacher! Somebody stole the body, that's all. Jesus' bones are in some hidden grave in Palestine."

"OK... I'll give you this - if the body was missing (and if that fact of history is not true, none are), then somebody must have stolen it. But who?"

QUOTE (Josh MacDowell in his book, "Answers to Tough Questions skeptics ask about the Christian faith", pp. 48-49) "If He did not rise from the dead, then someone took the body. There are three interest groups that could possibly have taken the body: the Romans, the Jews (i.e. Jewish leaders) or the disciples. The Romans would have had no reason to steal the body, since they wanted to keep the peace in Palestine. The idea was to keep the provinces as quiet as possible, and stealing the body of Christ would not accomplish this objective. The Jewish leaders would not have taken the body, because the last thing they wanted was a proclamation of the resurrection. They are the ones who asked for the guard, according to Matthew 27. The disciples of Jesus had no reason to steal the body, and if they did, they later died for something they knew to be untrue."

MacDowell goes on to point out that since the "somebody stole the body" theory is not reasonable, there is only one other possibility to explain the empty tomb: Jesus did, indeed, rise from the dead.

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Peter said plainly that the story was not made up - it was factual - *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. (2 Peter 1:16)*

Jesus rose from the dead!

2. We must consider the implications of this fact.

Implication # 1 - He is Who He said He was - the Son of God, and God the Son.

Implication # 2 - He does what He said He would do. He said he would rise and He did. And He's said some other things, too. He said He will come again, and He will! He said He's going to judge the world, and He will!

Implication # 3 - He has a claim on your life. His resurrection proves it. He is your creator and your King, and you owe Him your allegiance.

Have you considered the implications of that empty tomb?

Conclusion

Jesus was a man who lived like no other... who died like no other... and (most importantly) rose from the dead, like no other.

Now if you'll let me have just 1 more minute, I need to get real serious with you for a moment:

- Jesus never said to follow a set of rules and regulations and you would be saved.
- He said to believe in Him.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. (Acts 16:31)

- Jesus never said to do a bunch of good works in order to get to heaven.
- He said the only "good work" that matters is to BELIEVE.

This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (John 6:29)

Like Ripley, Jesus offered the choice - "BELIEVE IT OR NOT."

And so I ask you this morning - DO YOU BELIEVE?

Jesus taught that to choose answer YES to that question means you choose life, heaven, hope, meaning, fulfillment... eternal life!

And He taught that to answer NO to that question means you choose death, hell, helplessness, meaninglessness, emptiness. To live and die in such a state of unbelief is to be lost forever.

Do you believe?

WILL you believe?

What manner of man was this?

Invitation

HEADS BOWED, EYES CLOSED, please.

How many - I know I'm saved - I BELIEVE! (Raised hands)

If you were one of those who DID NOT raise your hand:

The decision to follow Christ (or not) is the most important decision in your life. I urge you to not turn Him away.

I PROMISE YOU that you will never regret trusting Christ. I have been a follower of my Lord for 38 years. My life has had many a regret, but I assure you that I have

NEVER regretted making a decision to believe in Jesus Christ. Nor have I ever met a Christian who did regret their decision.

As the music plays, will you step to the front and tell the world you believe? Will you trust Christ today?

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