

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

What Does the Resurrection Prove? John 14:19

On this Resurrection Sunday I would like to build on a thought I introduced to you several weeks ago. Please take your Bibles and turn with me to **John 13**.

When Jesus chose to serve His disciples by washing the dust off their feet in **John 13:1-5**, He was communicating by that action far more than what the disciples, at least at that point in time, could understand. This was made clear to us by Peter's interaction with Jesus in **John 13:6-11**. So, what were the disciples of Christ at that point in time unable to understand?

When Jesus washed the dust off His disciples feet, He was providing a picture of the atonement, or in other words, He was providing a picture of what He was about to do on Calvary when He would wash away the guilt of their sin with the blood of His cross.

This is what Jesus was picturing for His disciples when He washed their feet! But even though this is what was pictured, they could not at that point in time understand what Jesus was trying to communicate to them through the foot washing. They would understand it later. But they could not understand it then.

But this lack of understanding did not prevent Christ from exhorting His disciples. And what was His exhortation in light of what He was seeking to communicate to them in the foot washing? Christ exhorted His disciples in John 13:14 to serve one another in the same selfless way He had served them.

This was, of course, an extremely high standard that Christ gave to them, and it continues to be the standard that every disciple of Christ needs to be continually striving to reach, even today. When push comes to shove, Christ's disciples should be striving to serve others rather than themselves in each and every situation regardless of its difficulty. This is the point of Christ's command in **John 13:14**.

This approach to the way we live our lives I am sure for many people would seem rather foolish and perhaps naïve. But this was the way that Christ chose to live His life, and this is the way that Christ wants His disciples to live their lives. From Christ's perspective, our lives as His disciples should not be about us but rather about others.

If we, therefore, as professing believers, choose to live our lives in this way, how should we view ourselves? Hopefully we would view ourselves as "blessed." Let me read for you the words of Christ in **John 13:17**. "**If you know these things** [or in other words, if you know what I want you to do in respect to serving others, then], **you are blessed if you do them.**"

Disciples who, in obedience to Christ, seek to live their lives serving others without any regard for themselves should consider themselves blessed based on the word of Christ (John 13:17).

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This was the last thought that we considered in our study of John's account of the foot washing. This weekend as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ I would like to build on this thought. And I would like to do this by asking just a couple of questions. First of all, why would Christ consider those disciples who lived their lives serving others without any regard for themselves "blessed?"

Could it be that He would have considered them blessed because their desire to serve others without any regard to themselves would somehow lead them to material wealth? And the answer would have to be no! In fact, our desire to serve others without any regard to ourselves might deplete our material wealth and make our lives less comfortable on a number of different levels.

Let me read for you **Luke 9:57-58**. "**And as they were going along the road, someone said to Him, 'I will follow You wherever you go.'** (58) **And Jesus said to him, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.'**" So, what can we conclude from these verses? We could conclude that Christ did not consider those disciples who followed Him and His example "blessed" because it would lead them to material wealth (Luke 9:57-58). And certainly the same thing would be true in respect to the comforts that material wealth might provide. In fact, the truth is this, following Christ and His example will more than likely lead us away from material wealth and the comforts that material wealth might provide rather than toward material wealth and the comforts material wealth can provide.

So, if Christ did not pronounce His disciples "blessed" because it might lead to material wealth and the comforts that material might provide, then what else might have led Christ to pronounce those disciples who lived their lives serving others without any regard for themselves blessed?

Perhaps He pronounced them "blessed" because of the social benefits that would be derived from such a lifestyle, such as having a large number of friends and a close-knit family. But this certainly cannot be true!

Let me read for you **John 15:18-20**. "**If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. (19) If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (20) Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.**" So, what can we conclude from these verses? We can conclude that Christ did not consider those disciples who followed Him and His example "blessed" because it would benefit them socially (John 15:18-20). This is what we would have to conclude.

Did Christ consider those disciples who followed Him and His example "blessed?" Absolutely! But it was not because they would be socially benefited. In fact, the truth was if they would serve others in the same way Christ had served them they would most likely find themselves socially challenged both in terms of their friendships as well as in terms of their family.

So again we come back to the question. What did Christ mean when He told His disciples in **John 13:17** what He told them? The answer will not be found in looking at material wealth, creature comfort, friendship or family. The blessing that Christ pronounced in John 13:17 was not based on the world's values but on His values.

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So once again we go back to our original question. Why would Christ consider those disciples who lived their lives serving others without any regard for themselves "blessed?"

Christ considered those disciples who served others without any regard for themselves "blessed" because it proved they were His disciples and recipients of the gift of life. This is what I believe He meant. In other words, those who say they are disciples of Christ but do not do the things He has commanded and exemplified cannot with assurance know they are, in fact, one of His disciples; but, of course, those who do seek to obey Him and those who do seek to follow Him can be assured. And what does Christ say about those disciples who are assured? He tells them that they are blessed in **John 13:17**.

Is this knowledge more blessed than material wealth and the comforts that material wealth can provide? I believe it is. Is this knowledge more blessed than having a large circle of friends and even a close-knit family? I believe it is. Is this knowledge more important than anything that this world may have to offer? I believe it is.

How could it not be. If I am convinced by the way I am living that I am truly a disciple of Christ and a recipient of the gift of life, this means that as long as I live and draw breath I have the opportunity each day to enjoy a sweet and abiding communion with the One who loved me and gave himself for me, no matter what may be happening around me or to me until that day He calls me home to glory.

The world may not see the value of this but I know the value of this. It provides me peace in the midst of the storm, comfort in the midst of sorrow, strength in the midst of weakness, hope in the midst of despair. In other words, it continually provides me with a wonderful sense of well-being that causes me to thank Him, praise Him and worship Him.

So in light of this, should it be surprising for us to hear Christ say to His disciples in **John 13:17**, **"If you know these things** [or in other words, if you know what I want you to do in respect to serving others], **you are blessed if you do them.**" Of course they are blessed if they do them because in doing them they assure themselves that they are truly disciples of Christ and recipients of the gift of life and all its subsequent blessings.

But how could this be true in light of the fact that in a few hours Christ Himself, the one whom these disciples were following, would be arrested, tried, convicted and executed? It all seems rather bazaar.

How could Jesus talk about the blessedness of the assurance of being one of His disciples when in a very few short hours He would be crucified? Or in other words, how could He have talked about the blessedness of the assurance of being one of His disciples when it looked like the outcome of following Him would not lead them to life with all of its subsequent blessings but rather to death?

Christ had an answer for that. And His answer was given to them that very same night in the upper room in **John 14:19**. Let me read this verse for you. And what did He say to His disciples? **"After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you will behold Me; because I live, you shall live also."**

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So how could Christ talk about the blessedness of the assurance of being one of His disciples when in a very few short hours He would be crucified?

He could speak of the blessedness of the assurance of being His disciple in the shadow of the cross in John 13:17 because of the hope of the resurrection He spoke about in John 14:19.

Yes, in the foot washing Jesus symbolically pictured for His disciples His atoning death. Yes, in the foot washing He pictured for His disciples how He was about to wash away the guilt of their sin in the blood of His cross. Yes, all of this is true.

But this was not all that He communicated to His disciples that night. He also communicated to those disciples whom He had declared blessed in **John 13:17** that He, after His death, would rise again. He also communicated to those disciples whom He had declared blessed in **John 13:17** that after He rose that they would see Him. And finally He also communicated to those disciples whom He had declared blessed in **John 13:17** that after they saw Him that they could be assured of the fact that one day they themselves would also be raised from the dead.

One thing I think that we would have to say, **John 14:19** may be a very short verse but it certainly is power packed. Did the disciples understand anything of what Christ was saying at least at that point in time? I would highly doubt it. How could they understand what He was saying about the resurrection when they could not even understand what He was saying about His death?

But after they became witnesses of His death, burial and resurrection this all changed, didn't it? All of a sudden it all became so very clear to them. All of a sudden they finally realized what He had been talking about.

They came to understand that the life that He had been offering could not be offered apart from His death. They came to understand that He had to die in order to atone for their sin and for our sin. They came to understand that there was no other choice for Him. This is why the Father had sent Him into this world. But there was more.

They also came to understand that though He had to die, the grave could not hold Him. Why could the grave not hold Him? The grave could not hold Him because had no spiritual debt that He needed to pay because of His sin. He was the spotless, unblemished Lamb of God. His death was not a payment for His sin but for our sin.

And, therefore, after He died on our behalf and paid the debt of our sin, He could not remain in the grave. He had to rise. Why? He had to rise again because He is life. This is how the Scriptures speak of Him, and because He is life and rose from the dead, if we as His disciples die, we will also rise.

Did the disciples of Christ understand what He was saying about His death and resurrection the night of the Passover Feast? No, not likely! But they did come to understand!

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How do we know they came to understand? They proclaimed truths to others without any regard for themselves and in doing so proved to be His disciples. Were they rewarded with material wealth? No! Were they rewarded with lots of friends and a close-knit family? No! Were they rewarded with any of the things that the world so highly values? No!

But they were blessed? Because by the way they lived their lives, they knew that they were truly disciples of Christ and that He was with them in any and every thing they were experiencing. And most importantly, they knew that their life of service would not be in vain. May God, in our service to Him and others, give us this same grace.

May God give us the grace to know that because He lives we shall live also.