

# St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups - Easter Day - 4<sup>th</sup> April 2010

## 'A New Day Dawns – A New Day'

### Luke 24: 1 - 12



#### **Word: Key points from Sundays sermon:**

'Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again'!

#### **The most important question:**

"If you could meet any person in the past and just ask one question, whom would you meet and what question would you ask? When asked this, A Professor of Philosophy, not a Christian, answered: 'I would meet Jesus Christ and ask him the most important question in the world – "did you or did you not rise from the dead?" Easter is all about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If Jesus did rise from the dead then he is alive today and the amazing truth is that we can know him too.' (Why Easter? By Nicky Gumbel)

#### **Context:**

Read how St Luke draws his gospel to a conclusion (v1). Luke describes a beginning. The events of this chapter are chronicled as if they all happened on one day. A whole new world was coming into being and so Luke draws us in with an account of that first day, which was to begin not just a new day but an entirely new age!

#### **The journey begins:**

Early in the morning 3 women (Cf v10 & Ch. 8:3) arrive at the tomb to find the stone rolled away. Suddenly two men, gleaming white, stood beside them. We can almost feel the fear as Luke recounts the story (v5) Then the men speak, *why do you look for the living amongst the dead?* Isn't that a question to ask? I'd love to know what the women thought as these angels from God spoke to them. But this makes us ponder the question - am I looking for the living amongst the dead? Are we so busy seeking after all that is not important, that is not real gold, that we find ourselves looking for the living amongst the dead?

#### **A God-possessed people:**

Grace Turner in her book 'The Kings Gold' quotes this beautiful phrase from 1 Peter *we are a people for God's own possession*. This scripture says we are to be a God-possessed people. Our thoughts, our words and our deeds are then determined by God himself. If we are to be those who seek the living amongst the living, rather than amongst the dead or that which is dead, then this has to be the deepest desire of every true lover of Christ: that He should possess our every thought, word, emotion and action.

#### **Why do you look for the living amongst the dead?**

As the women bowed low, too frightened to answer, the men continue: **He is not here; he has risen!** (Read v5-8) It's like a dazzling light goes on in their hearts and minds: (v8). In all the pain and sorrow they had forgotten, but now they knew – a new day had dawned for them! They must have run back to the eleven their hearts ablaze; the risen Jesus now possessed their every thought, word, emotion and action. They wanted the others to meet the risen Jesus too, but the response of the eleven was disheartening (v11) after all no one had ever risen from the dead before. But something triggered in Peter's heart and he *got up and ran to the tomb...wondering to himself what had happened..*

#### **Our heart's desire?**

If we are aware of what happened that first Easter morning, then we too will at least desire that everyone we meet will recognise the risen Jesus in us. In Grace Turner's words: "We would become a God-possessed people who heal the sick, and see his power in our neighbourhood, but more telling, our family would see us curb our temper, ask forgiveness when we fail, use our money generously, and demonstrate Jesus in the way we live our life before them. We will fail and fall but if our passion is God possession, everything around us will begin to change!" It did for Peter, who on that first Easter day was left *wondering*. But Jesus had risen; he did come back and restore Peter, who then went on to proclaim the gospel (Read Acts 10:34-43)

#### **A new day dawns:**

On Easter Day, as this new day dawns, in the words of Hosea (6:3): *Let us press on to know him! Then he will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring.* may we all know the wonder of this glorious Easter message; **'Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again'!**



**Witness:** Before discussion, read the Bible passages and ask God to help you discern what the Spirit wants to say to your group. Consider a few questions - Make sure there's plenty of room for prayer and ministry.

1. If like the professor you could ask Jesus a question, would it be the same as his or a different one?
2. What are the pitfalls today which make us look for the living amongst the dead?
3. Do you identify with the women who were disheartened by the response of the others, or with the 11 who were disbelieving? How can we deal with disappointments from other Christians?
4. Share any experiences of 'resurrection life' to encourage one another.