

WHO NEEDS EASTER?

SERMON NOTES

March 31, 2024 (Easter Sunday)

“Who Needs Easter?”

Luke 24:2-3, 5-6, 11; Acts 17:16, 18, 22–27,
29–31

I. Introduction

- A. _____ is the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus.
- B. The reason Christians believe in the resurrection of Jesus is because of the written eyewitness _____ about his resurrection.
- C. When Jesus’ followers visited His tomb, nobody expected no _____.
- D. Easter addresses and answers the two questions that every single person _____ with at some point in their life:
 - 1. Is there a personal God?
 - 2. What does that mean for me personally?

II. Paul’s Speech on Mars Hill

- A. In ancient _____, there were hundreds of idols, shrines, and altars everywhere to many, many gods and goddesses.
- B. Paul’s message to the Greek intellectuals was focused on the _____ of Jesus.
- C. The people of Athens had built an altar to an _____ god.
- D. Paul said the missing piece to their beliefs is not a new philosophy, new idea, or new organizing principle, the missing piece is a _____.
- E. Paul says it’s time for everybody to adopt a brand-new way of thinking; to change their _____ about how the world works.
- F. For Paul and his audience, the resurrection was a current event that _____ everything Jesus claimed about himself, about God, and about us.

III. Does Easter Matter?

- A. Easter matters because it confirms that there is a _____ God who sent his Son to die for your personal sin.
- B. Easter matters because it validates the claim of Jesus’s first century followers who said “God is _____, and God loves you.”

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *April 1-6, 2024*

INTRODUCTION

Easter can mean many things to different people. Some people associate Easter with getting dressed up and going to church. Others think about Easter egg hunts and getting candy. But what is Easter all about? Does Easter matter? And Who needs Easter?

Monday: Luke 24:1-12

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Lazarus' body was wrapped in typical grave cloths. "*Jesus said to them, 'Untie him' (John 11:44).* As Peter peered into Jesus' empty tomb, "he saw only the linen cloth." Grave robbers would never have taken time to unwrap the body and leave the cloth. One sign that Jesus' resurrection was qualitatively unique was that no one had to untie him. That resurrection changed everything for Peter. What effect has it had on you?

Tuesday: Luke 24:13-24

Cleopas, like the other disciples, was still in the grip of preconceived ideas of what the Messiah would be and do (cf. Luke 9:44-45). In what ways can fixed assumptions today make it harder for you to trust the Bible's testimony? When have you found greater joy and peace after letting God alter or overturn some fixed idea you may have held for years?

Wednesday: Luke 24:25-32

Scholar William Barclay said this story "tells us of the ability of Jesus to make sense of things... Jesus came and talked with them, and the meaning of life became clear, and the darkness became light... It is only in Jesus that, even in the bewildering times, we learn what life means." * Can you recall any moments when something painful and puzzling suddenly made more sense in the light of Jesus' love and grace?

Thursday: Luke 24:33-49

Jesus' summary of his message in verse 47 was "the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations." In what ways does believing that Jesus rose from the dead change your heart and life? How does the resurrection make credible for you Jesus' claim to have the divine authority to forgive your sins?

Friday: Acts 17:22-31 (Luke wrote Acts as well as the Gospel of Luke)

In this passage, Paul was speaking to people who weren't raised with a Jewish background. What do you observe about Paul's approach with them? Does God seem far away from you or near to you? What makes you say that?

MOVING FORWARD

Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and it answers two questions that everyone wrestles with at some point in their life:

- Is there a personal God?
- And what does it mean for me personally?

Easter matters because it validates that there is a personal God who sent his Son to die for your personal sin. Easter matters because it validates the claims of Jesus' first century followers who said "God is love, and God loves you." Who needs Easter? Everyone.

Answers to the sermon notes: A) Easter, B) testimony, C) body, D) wrestles. IIA) Athens, IIB) resurrection, C) unknown, D) person, E) mind, F) validated. IIIA) personal, B) love.

** William Barclay, The Gospel of Luke (Revised Edition). Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1975, p. 295*