

The difference the resurrection makes

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Preacher: Philip Wells

[0:00] That didn't make sense until after the resurrection. In John's Gospel there's quite a little list of things that were not understood! and didn't come into focus until after the cross and resurrection.

! And I'd like us to ponder three of these together and ask ourselves, do they make sense? Would they have made sense to us? Should they have made sense? What is it that makes the difference between the puzzlement of before and the clarity of after? What's the big ingredient that's changed that? That's the sort of thing I'd like us to look at. So let's look at John 2.22. As we read, there was this discussion.

No, it wasn't a discussion, was it? This confrontation as Jesus turns over the tables of the money changers and makes a big fuss in the temple.

[1:14] If he'd done it in the House of Commons, he would have been arrested, been on news at 10.

Jesus provokes this incident. There is a discussion, debate with the Jews. Verse 18, they say, What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?

Which I suppose is a reasonable question, isn't it? Who are you to be upsetting our God-given temple and making a big fuss like this?

Jesus answers, destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days. And the Jews replied, it has taken 46 years to build this temple.

You're going to raise it in three days. But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said.

[2:19] Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. So there is something about this incident that didn't make sense until after Jesus was raised from the dead.

See verse 22, after he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

So there is that one. Not quite the same, but similar is John 7, 37-39.

John 7, 37-39.

On the last and greatest day of the feast. This is the feast of tabernacles, isn't it? On the last and greatest day of the feast.

[3:28] Jesus stood and said in a loud voice. If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.

By this he meant the spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

So again, that's another thing which, it's not that it doesn't make sense, it doesn't happen until after Jesus' glorification.

Which I take to mean that sort of combination of his work on the cross and his resurrection. So there's another thing which doesn't click into place until after the death and resurrection.

Now why doesn't it click into place? Why couldn't it just click into place straight away? What is there about the death and resurrection of Christ which so changes the situation that it now clicks into place?

[4:44] So there's that one and here's the third one. John 12 from verse 16. Which we probably ought to read John 12 from verse 12.

So this is what we would call Easter week and what we would call Palm Sunday. The next day, John 12 verse 12, the great crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was on his way to

Jerusalem.

They took palm branches and went out to meet him shouting, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the King of Israel.

Those are all quotations. Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it as it is written. Here's another quotation. Do not be afraid, O daughter of Zion.

See, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt. At first his disciples did not understand all this. [5:58] Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him.

And that they had done these things to him. So again, it's something on face value. It seems to make some sort of sense.

But it's told, we're told that at that time, the disciples did not understand it. There was something that didn't make sense until after Jesus is glorified.

He says, only after his cross and resurrection does this one click into place. In the sense that, only after this did they realize, remember.

Has anybody got remember for that in verse 16? Do not realize? Do not realize? Anybody got a different version? Do not understand? Do not understand?

[7:02] Yeah, I've got, at first his disciples did not know all this. Verse 16. And then the second part, only after Jesus was glorified did they remember that these things had been written about him.

And that they had done these things to him. Do not understand something about understanding something, remembering something in its proper significance.

Something like that. Do you ever have that experience that you have a conversation with somebody, you heard what they said, and then only later, when some other fact comes into view, do you understand why they said it the way they said it?

I can't think of a single example, but you must be, I'm sure you've had that experience. So there's something of that in these, something like that in these three texts.

So I thought we would look at them this evening. And what I'm thinking is, we might read the text and we say, well what was the problem? It's pretty obvious, isn't it?

[8:16] If we thought that, I guess we must be overlooking something, we must be taking something for granted that is actually a big thing, because the disciples didn't understand it until later.

What is the big thing that we're taking for granted? You know, if there's a big thing, we ought not to take it for granted. We ought to say, yeah, that's actually rather amazing, that. So that's the sort of thing I'm trying to get at.

And I may or may not succeed. We've prayed for the Lord to help us, but let's see what we can do. So let's go back to the John 2.

It's about the temple. Jesus has made a fuss in the temple.

Verse 18, the Jews say, what is the sign that you do to show that you have authority to do this? Jesus' answer to that is, destroy this temple, I will raise it again in three days.

[9:25] So the raising in three days is the sign, we presume, which shows his authority. The Jews replied, it's one of these typical conversations in John that works on two different levels, isn't it?

Jesus means something. The people he's speaking to have got something completely different in their minds, and the conversation goes along on two levels where they interact, but with that they don't really connect, if you see what I mean.

So the Jews say, it's taken 46 years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said.

Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. Now, so I ask you, what was it that was not obvious?

What was it that the disciples found so difficult to compute until after he was raised from the dead?

[10:35] Okay, Jesus being the temple. Is that a problematic thing? Okay, you think it's...

Yes, well, I think you're right. I think they found it was quite problematic. Do you see what I'm trying to get at? So they're discussing the temple.

Jesus says, destroy this temple, I will raise it again in three days. And we're sitting there saying, yeah, well, we know what that means, Lord. Any sensible person would have understood that. But the disciples didn't, did they?

They're thinking, what on earth is that? What does he mean by that? How can he possibly make that connection? How can he possibly make a connection between this wonderful temple and anything?

It doesn't say that the temple he spoke of was his body. That's the bit, presumably, that they didn't realize. I think that there is a huge, big jump in connecting the temple with the body of Jesus.

[11:53] I mean, we look back at it and we say, oh yeah, we know that. And our eyes just flip over it. Yes, we knew that. Anybody, anybody sensible would know that. But I think they're right to say, what a huge connection this is to make.

It's, I would call it an explosive fulfillment connection. It's one of those connections, and there are a number of these things as we go from the Old Testament to the New Testament, where the connection doesn't just go, oh yes, that's a connection.

Oh yes, that's a connection. It doesn't do that. It goes, pow, that's a connection. Like that. Wow, look at that. Connect that with that. Amazing. And it turns things completely around once you make that connection.

So this connection, I would think, is an explosive fulfillment of temple theology in Jesus Christ. And to make that is a huge jump.

Let me show you a couple of things that this brings into focus. So let's look at Ezekiel 47. I'm sure you know this.

[13:12] I'm sure we've looked at it before. But let's not look at it with familiarity as if, oh well that's fairly obvious. Let's look at it with the sense that there is an explosive fulfillment that Jesus is bringing into the situation here.

So let me just remind you what's happening in Ezekiel 47 and round there. There is a whole acreage of text about the new situation that God will bring in.

Ezekiel witnesses the temple in the days of the kings being destroyed. He himself is in exile.

And it looks for all the world as though the promises of God have gone kaput. And they'll never happen. And in prophetic language, Ezekiel envisages a rebuilt temple.

And he envisages it on the most grand and amazing scale. You've got some of that in chapter 40.

[14:31] And you've got lots of cubits of how big it all is. And how harmonious the measurements are and everything like that. And in chapter 47, we have this thing, this one feature of the temple.

The man brought me to the entrance of the temple. And I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple towards the east for the temple faced east.

And the water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. And he brought me out through the north gate and led me round the outside to the outer gate facing east.

And the water was flowing from the south side. And the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand. And he measured off a thousand cubits and led me through water that was ankle deep.

He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. he measured off another thousand and now it was a river I could not cross because the water had risen was deep enough to swim in a river that no one could cross and he asked me son of man do you see this and

he led me back to the bank of the river and when I arrived I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river and so on it says in verse 12 that the fruit will serve as food and their leaves for healing so he sees a temple and this river flowing out from it and this river has the property of getting bigger and bigger until you swim in that river and it's a healing river or if you like it's a river that brings healing and the fruit that that grows on it is a healing fruit there's a song by woody guthrie i think called oh healing river i would almost i'm almost tempted to sing it to you but i think i might spare you but it says oh healing river send down your water send down your water upon this land um it's very dramatic and very heartfelt uh that the land need is this land is what does he say this land is dying this land is i can't remember um and he says wash the blood from off the land i think that's the woody guthrie song it's a sort of secular song as i as i understand it but this is the real thing this is the temple from which flows the healing river which flows out and um if we take the

the the references answers for the healing of the nations so there we are in ezekiel with this mind-boggling vision that god's purposes will be restored the temple will be restored and it won't be um a dud temple it will be a source of healing and redemption if you like and freshness and life and the the jump that's made is to say that's jesus that's the jump that is made it has to connect together when jesus says destroy this temple i'll raise it again in three days the new temple the new glorious temple the temple that heals the nations the temple from which flows their healing river out into the world and does all this amazing stuff and the connection is jesus is the temple do you not agree that that's a real mental jump uh to make that connection and i think i've got a lot of sympathy with the disciples not understanding that not getting that until after jesus was raised from the dead and then you begin to put two and two together and realize it makes at least four and it probably makes four hundred and actually makes four thousand and maybe makes four million because the death of jesus christ and his resurrection just explosively fulfills all that temple stuff it's quite a thought isn't it i think glory to jesus is what though that thinking shows are you with me on that do you get the let's do let's look at john 7 i'm going to stop at half past

[19:26] anyway so if we don't do it all doesn't matter john 7 37 to 39 so this is jesus on the last and greatest day of the feast can you imagine it this all these people gathered together uh for the feast of the tabernacles there was a water pouring ceremony there was a light lighting ceremony the rabbi said if you hadn't seen that you hadn't lived it was so splendid and everybody's come for that and jesus stands up on the last and greatest day of the feast and says if anyone is thirsty let him come to me and drink whoever believes in me as the scripture has said streams of living water will flow from within him links with the temple doesn't it by this he meant the spirit whom those who believed in him were later to receive up to that time the spirit literally was not since jesus had not yet been glorified okay this is it's not an understanding thing here it's just this hadn't happened yet and i asked the question why not so we read it okay yes yes yes yes but let's stop and say well why why was this promise not available until after jesus whatever it says had been glorified again let's take the glorification to mean his death on the cross and his resurrection why was this promise not available wasn't there the trinity was the trinity not there was the holy spirit not in existence in the old testament is the what what why the delay what what what's the what's the problem do you have any thoughts on that okay we were still sleeping in adam we hadn't been raised to life we didn't have a relationship with god and the spirit is the helper in that relationship which i think is what you said yeah okay thank you we tease that out anybody want to mm-hmm mm-hmm okay he does say unless i go away the comforter won't come so that we do get that same almost like a blockage isn't it until jesus has gone away until he's done something the holy spirit does not come so there is a step change in the experience of the holy spirit between old testament and new testament not entirely easy to define that completely but definitely some sort of step change so let's so let's can we take it further and say well why is there a step change what why should there be a step change right because of the glorification of jesus christ and he is then able to send the spirit was he not glorious before could he not have sent the holy spirit

in the middle of the old testament what has he what has he done what is the difference between his glory before and his glory after what had he done in between times sorry i didn't obeyed well he has obeyed yes he has he's obeyed to do something what did he obey to do the particular it was a perfect sacrifice yes he there hadn't been one before he had been glorified before he was human in his pre-incarnate state he was glorious but in his post in his resurrection state he is a glorified man isn't he he wasn't a glorified man before he was the glorious son but now he is glorified with our human nature and he is glorified having made a sacrifice of huge dimensions and it's this christ having done all that who gives the spirit so he's achieved something let's put it i think you just put it in a very simple way before we're forgiven how on earth could the holy spirit live within us you know

if we're all unchanged and polluted and the spirit comes to live within us how could that how could that be put it another way how would jesus have the right to pour out the spirit on sinful people unless he had first made some colossal sacrifice for them to make that a right thing to do if you look in i don't know whether they put this let's look in the acts acts chapter two acts chapter two verse thirty three talks about the resurrection of jesus doesn't it that bit is the resurrection as promised in scripture and verse thirty two acts two thirty two god has raised this jesus to life we are all witnesses of the fact exalted to the right hand of god he has received from the father the promised holy spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear this puts it in a nutshell doesn't it it's the the christ who made the sacrifice who is raised from the dead it's the christ who is raised from the dead who is exalted to the right hand of the father so that's the place of power isn't it and the redeemer is in the place of power and he receives from the father the promised holy spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear so you've got this step change it's not a step change in in every individual person's life it's a step change across history up to that time the spirit was not given because jesus was not yet glorified but now he's died and risen as in is exalted he has the right he has purchased the right to pour out on us his people the holy spirit so i think that's pretty brilliant don't you no it's just me

i think that's that's pretty brilliant that he has through this amazing work that he has done purchased the right been exalted to pour out the holy spirit upon us the baptism of the spirit the poured out holy spirit the same thing in different words is the gift of the king it's the gift of the crucified king isn't jesus great that he did all that and the father says to him you rightly have in your hands the right to pour out on your people the holy spirit it's one of those things we take for granted isn't it we take for granted that we are able to pray we take for granted that we can ask the lord to work within us we take for granted that we can read scripture and that our hearts might burn within us sometimes we forget that that's even what christ died to give us but shouldn't forget that should we what a privilege if you thirst come to me and i will give you living water says jesus he spoke about the holy spirit who was not yet given because jesus was not yet glorified we were just thinking this morning at the prayer meeting jesus says if you thirst i give you living water because to thirst in the sense that jesus means it is not to be thirsty in the sense of oh i'd like a nice cup of tea wouldn't you like a nice cup of tea it's it it's the situation of death to be so dehydrated that you haven't got any life in you and jesus says i give you water so that you will never be dried up and dead and interestingly as we as we thought this morning on the cross jesus himself said i thirst that he experienced what it was he cut off as it were from the source of life something like that he experienced that so that we should never experience it so that we should never be cut off from living waters the third text was john 12 16 which is the triumphal entry 12 16 at first his disciples did not understand this only after jesus was glorified did they realize or remember that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him so there's another situation where on the face of it okay it made a certain sort of sense but the completeness of it the total sort of rightness of it they didn't get it until after jesus was glorified made it made it all make sense i'll leave that with you we've seen these two things haven't we the explosive fulfillment of temple theology in jesus christ that's who he is and the gift of the spirit that the one who thirsted on the cross did something that was so great that when he was exalted the father said yes you can pour out the holy spirit on people like us let's stop there and we'll sing a song together and then in a moment we're going to have communion let's sing number 456 this is the one that got bumped because adam this morning wanted us to sing low in the grave he lay which was great this one's apparently by martin luth and it says christ jesus laid strong bands for our offenses given but now at god's right hand he stands and brings us life from heaven let us give thanks and joyful be and to our god sing faithfully loud songs of hallelujah it was a strange and dreadful strife when life and death contended the victory was gained for life the reign of death was ended stripped of its power no more it rains an empty form alone remains its sting is lost forever let us obey the heavenly call by which the lord invites us christ is himself the joy of all the sun who warms and lights us in love and mercy he imparts eternal sunshine to our hearts the night of sin is ended let us his people feast this day upon the bread of heaven the word of grace has purged away the old corrupting leaven now christ alone our souls will feed he is our meat and drink indeed faith lives upon no other well that seems very worth singing to me are you happy to sing this have we sung it ever before so i think the tune is oh okay we know the tune don't we yeah okay let's stand and sing an ending ending ending Thank you.

[36:45] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Lord, we thank you for the resurrection and the death and resurrection of our Savior and the huge difference that this has made.

The things that we now understand to enlarge our minds and cause us to wonder and worship. the privileges that we now have that are far above what the saints had before let us not take them for granted lord and the view of you that we have help us lord to look to you and keep on being captivated and motivated by your glory your person and your grace towards us thank you for being able to think about these things bless us as we come now into communion help ray as he leads us for jesus sake amen so so so

[39 : 34] Thank you.