

The Ressurrection

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[0 : 00] It is remembering. It is good to remember. It is helpful to remember. It is helpful to remember.

But ironically, some of those sad memories, some of them, some of those saddest, most horrible memories, ironically have a side of goodness.

War. World War I, World War II, the Gulf, Northern Ireland, the war in terror, and so on, are truly, truly horrible, horrible memories.

The countless accounts of so many lives needlessly destroyed by acts of pure evil is absolutely horrible.

And no one, no one in their right mind would happily enjoy remembering them. Though again, as I say, ironically, these horrible memories turn good.

[1 : 30] For when we pause just long enough to remember the ultimate outcome of these wars, remembering that for all those lives lost, there was also countless and countless freed.

Freed from slavery and death camps, oppression, unlimited killings, fear, dictatorship, and all such other things.

When you remember, that's good, that's good news. For all the horror of those memories, we must also remember the goodness delivered by those who responded and still do respond to the evil of war.

The old 18th century Irish politician, Edmund Burke, is famous for having said that famous quote, All that has to happen for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing.

Let's just take a moment here. For horrible, gruesome evil to have victory.

[3 : 02] The only thing that necessarily needs happen is for good people to stay away and do nothing about it.

Or from the other side of view of it. For horrible, gruesome evil to be defeated and destroyed.

Goodness, goodness needs to get involved and act back, respond back.

Goodness has to do an act itself to defeat the act of evil. And whereas this is certainly true of war, when the war has gone by, it is also true of the life around us.

What would happen in the U.S. if when these mass school shootings occur, the police didn't respond? By shooting back.

The attacker would keep going. Good officers must act to stop the evil. Or similarly, the terror attacks here in the U.K.

[4 : 13] If good officers did nothing, then as Edmund Burke said, evil would triumph. Evil would win. So our memories of remembrance are really, really the best description of what that little saying means.

Bittersweet. Truly is a bittersweet memory. Awful memories, yes. But they deliver goodness. Listen, I don't want to sound too morbid this morning.

But we should together acknowledge an absolute truth with regards to all this. Something which no one really likes to dwell on.

So even if only for the next couple of minutes you take account of this, and then even if you never, ever, ever think about it again for the rest of your life, well, at least you know it.

It is, of course, that all the wars and the terror attacks and the acts of violence are the one and same thing.

[5 : 30] Look, there really, really is a dark, vile evil in this world, which is so awful and so dark, which is so poisonous and so deadly, that as soon as you're exposed here, it burns, it hurts.

And be warned, this evil is really, really sleek. It prowls around, enticing people in, with all sorts of false promises, of all sorts of false help and love and peace.

This evil is so nasty, it has no limits. It will use any tactic to kill and destroy. That's how Jesus put it. Jesus said the enemy, the evil one, is out to kill and destroy.

Because every bit of evil, no matter what, the thinking behind it, whether the thinking is political, religious, greed, turf war, drugs war, guerrilla war, crimes or anything of the kind, all of it, may claim to be driven by a particular way of thinking and a particular political stance, may claim that, but it's all the same.

It's all the devil. And it's all him, simply, sleekly, prowling whatever method, whatever interest, whatever personality, whatever he can get hold of.

[7 : 01] He doesn't care really. Whatever. To carry out an evil attack for him, then he'll do it. Every act of evil and terror from wanting to destroy and hurt God.

And how do you hurt God? You attack what God loves most. And that's us. That's humans. And so, as I say, politics, religion, or anything else, he can, just as long as it results in more than hurt God. the devil is out to kill and destroy. And being aware of this changes. It changes how we view what's going on in this world.

Ephesians explains it is, it will, when we will, isn't actually against flesh and blood. it's not against the human powers of this world.

Our struggle is, struggle is against the rulers, the authorities, the powers of the dark world. And it's against the spiritual in the heavenly realms.

[8 : 14] That's the Bible. And that's talking about Satan. All the wars, all the acts of terror, the mass shootings, it's all Satan.

And on top of that, you see all the drugs addiction, crimes committed, the riots, the awful accounts of abuse, the sectarianism, the racism, the devil.

It's all him, everything. All the evil in whatever shape, way or form it comes in is the devil. We've covered his one and only aim is hurting God by hurting what he created, humans.

And he will do anything. and everything to achieve that goal. But really, wonderful, exciting, good, good, good, good news is, this good friend John tells us, Jesus came to defeat the devil's work.

So when we finally arrive here at the very, very last pages of this biography of the last six months, working our way through, we now find we are feeling because whereas last week's chapter, the crucifixion chapter, wonderful, pleasant, beautiful, kind, caring, all-loving Jesus, who, in the first 22 chapters, all of a sudden, he, in chapter 23, he's being horrifically, understandably, and very naturally, we're rather saddened when we get to that just before.

[10 : 04] It's all love, it's all goodness, it's all healing. And then chapter 23, bang, it's all, kill him, get rid of him, destroy him, hurt him. All of a sudden, it says, everyone turned on him.

To the point where, in spite of the Roman governor proclaiming him innocent, he's taken away anyway, crucified, mocked, spat upon, and speared.

And so the heart of the, you think, this can't be. It can't be the same person that the rest of the biography is talking about. A good person who was lovely, he was gentle.

And this sort of death is reserved, this can't be the same person. But no, upon looking closer, it is very, very, very clear. It's the same amazing, gentle Jesus who is being brutally murdered as a horrific criminal.

Close the book. Similar to our memories of war. One doesn't want to remember that. To the world's most loveliest. Who in their right mind would want to remember an account of the story?

[11 : 13] No, that's not a good, nice memory. But there's only one more where we landed on today, chapter 24. And there is, it begins.

The very first words tell us on the first day. Very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the body of the Lord Jesus. And while they were wondering about this, suddenly two men enclosed them.

The men said to them, why do you look from the dead? He is not here. He has risen.

He has risen indeed. And all of a sudden, the horrible memories of chapter 23 are raced away. And instead, there is goodness. There is happiness.

There is joy. Because we now read that the wonderful that we read about in all those 22 chapters has actually not been defeated. No. And once the initial excitement calms down and you're looking again at the words and one gets to verse 44 and we read, Jesus said to them, to the disciples, this is what I told you.

[12 : 31] while I was still with you. And he continuously told them it while he was with them. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms.

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures. He told them, the Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.

Just what exactly did they write there? What exactly was Jesus referring to? Those prophets, those laws, those Psalms. What did they write? Well, there's a lot in different ways by different writers. but they all truly said the one and same thing. And the very, very, very best summary of all what Jesus was talking about there, they come together famously in Isaiah.

He's the one who writes all those Christmas lines that we hear at Christmas time and see on our Christmas cards. And in his 53rd chapter he says, Jesus was despised and rejected by mankind.

[13 : 45] He was a man of suffering and familiar with pain like one from whom people had their faces. He was despised and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took our pain and suffering.

Yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities.

The punishment that has brought don't miss this here. The punishment that brought peace. That line says the punishment that brought me and you peace was on him.

By his wounds we by his wounds we all of us here are healed. So now the greatest finale ever ever written we learn that the horrific sad memories of chapter 23 that awful crucifixion was Jesus taking the punishment for me and you.

Because that evil work of the devil that I've been talking about is attacking us all. It's enticing us all. And we are all giving in to it.

[15 : 04] We are all caving to his evil because it's not just about all his evil acts of war and terror. While it's as much about the ways he keeps us ordinary, decent, hard-working citizens, he keeps us in fear, in worry, in addictions, in temptations, in dishonesty, jealousy, money obsession, prudeness, hypocriticalness, and all sorts of other ways.

all of this is also the devil getting us riddled in ways that will destroy our lives. So again, same result, it hurts God, our creator.

And so this passage says that the horrific events of the cross was indeed the goodness of Jesus doing something about all that evil.

And so just like our memories of war, our horrible and sad but endless goodness at the saving of countless lives, so we in joy can remember the events of the cross because the good truth is that lots and lots and lots of goodness came from the cross because it was all about evil Satan and his evil work being defeated by the goodness of Jesus Christ.

And so we can happily remember the cross on that basis. that we've seen the good news doesn't stop there because as the ladies discovered upon running to the tomb that first Easter this same Jesus had risen back to life.

[16 : 45] Jesus, the one and only truly good one had risen back to life. And then back to Luke 24 there verse 47 Jesus then says and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations.

And so the whole biography concludes by telling us that we today can still be set free from the evil of Satan still even today by believing in Jesus by trusting in his death and resurrection.

And this is why we remember. This is why we have communion because this truly truly is their best their greatest memory.

All that has to happen for evil to triumph is for good ones to do nothing. Nothing what a journey all that had to happen for Satan to triumph and destroy you was for Jesus to have done nothing. But Jesus did everything to take care of the enemy's evil that we may be free. What a journey it's been eh?

[18 : 15] The wondrous biography of Jesus Christ according to Dr. Luke. And when we take the whole book into account from beginning to end and as we take all of Jesus' teachings and words and summarize them all up we know that what was actually really really now happening here was goodness.

The real and only genuine good one Jesus was doing something about the evil one. That's what the whole biography is about. because all that had to happen for Satan's evil to triumph was for the good Jesus to have done nothing.

And so Jesus did everything absolutely everything needed and necessary to destroy Satan's evil. And so we have this real bittersweet event to remember of the battered and crucified Jesus rising up in goodness to defeat evil.

And so let's now remember that. We as a church we're going to spend time remembering Jesus remembering his death and resurrection communion.

And if you sure are safe then join us. If you're not quite there just yet that's okay. Feel free to relax to reflect to think to ponder your own faith status and perhaps talk later if you'd like to.

[19 : 48] And so on that note if you're able I'll ask you to stand as we now sing this greatest day in history. The resurrection of Jesus has happened.

Death has been defeated. It's a bittersweet memory but we can remember it with so much joy and happiness because Satan is defeated and no longer has any hold over our lives.

This truly is the greatest day in history. Thanks Ian. you