

They Remembered His Words

Turn with me to Luke 24. I felt led to share a word of encouragement today. 2020 has produced an unending series of unprecedented events. Once again, here we are, anxious, facing uncertainty about our nation, about our future, America more divided than ever. I was praying and meditating Monday, knowing this might be a difficult week and wondering what I was to say, and I ran across some notes I had made and this thought jumped into my heart and stirred my spirit. It's found in the resurrection account in the gospel of Luke. **“On the first day of the week, 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 tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ Then they remembered his words.”** Luke 24:1-8 It was that last sentence that grabbed my heart and spirit. “Then they remembered his words.”

If there has ever been a time we need to remember the words of Jesus, it is today. There is uncertainty about everything, not just election results. America seems to have lost her moorings. We aren't anchored to anything. There is no faith or common morality to anchor us, to guide us. We are drifting. Everyone does what seems right to themselves, everyone has their own truth, their own sense of morality. Now, more than ever, we need to remember the words of Jesus. The word of God must be our anchor, it must be our foundation. Remember his words!

Understand, his words, the word of God, the bible, is truth. Jesus said in his prayer in John 17, **“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”** John 17:17. God's word is truth. If you want to know the truth, you won't find it on CNN or Fox news, you'll find it here, in the word of God, the bible. And Jesus said in John 8 **“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will you know the truth and the truth will set you free.”** John 8:31-32 There is confusion and doubt, uncertainty and questioning on every side. If you are wondering what is the truth or where you can find the truth, remember his words – “your word is

truth...hold to my teaching and you will know the truth.” Remember his word because it is truth and knowing his truth will set you free. In addition...

Remember his word because the bible says **“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” Psalm 119:105.** With all the uncertainty of our world, our culture, we don’t know the next step to take, but remember his word because his word will shine like a lamp on your feet to illuminate the next step. God’s word will light up the path so you can know the direction to travel.

Remember his word because the bible tells us **“Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.” Psalm 119:89.** KJV says “Forever O Lord thy word is settled in heaven.” We are being shaken and troubled by circumstances here that are temporal. Remember his word because his word is settled in heaven. It is eternal. It is firm, established, written in stone. You can rely on his word, his promise, his faithfulness, even in the storms and the uncertainty of life! How can I be so sure? Because: **The certainty of His word is based on the character of the One who promised.** He is eternally true and faithful and just. I have it on the authority of the Son of the Living God. It’s his word I’m remembering. **The power of His word is in the faithfulness of His personhood.** The bible says he is not a man that he should lie. He cannot lie. He does not change like shifting shadows the book of James says. He is the eternal God, eternally faithful in all his ways and it is His word we remember!

Remember his word. Hide it in your heart. Let God’s word take up residence in your mind, in your spirit and then live by it, live in obedience to his word. **“How can a young person keep their way pure? By living according to your word.” Psalm 119:9** This is how we live, this is how we survive, this is how we succeed, by remembering and living according to God’s word. Remember his word, not song lyrics, not memes on social media, not social trends and popular culture, remember God’s eternal word and live by it! Here is the truth!

Look again at Luke 24. Notice where they were. In a graveyard, among the tombs. A dead environment, near to the place of execution, and they couldn’t find Jesus. They found the tomb, but Luke said, “they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.” What do you do when you are in a dead environment, “dead in the water” we used to say, and you can’t find Jesus? What do you do when you don’t feel alive anymore? Everything feels dead, broken, in despair, grieving, you’ve lost a family member, a spouse, a child, you’re going through a divorce, the person you thought would be faithful to the end isn’t and you feel dead on the inside, betrayed.

What do you do when there is turmoil, relationships strained, family members estranged from you, you're battling depression, feeling hopeless, or the truth is, you feel so empty on the inside you can't feel anything, you can't see Jesus, you can't find him. What do you do? What did the women do that were feeling all that grief and confusion and pain? They remembered his words! They remembered what Jesus said and that changed everything. It changed their outlook, their perspective. They remembered his words and found direction. They left the graveyard and went to tell the disciples. They remembered his words and found hope in a cemetery.

Think about this. **If they had remembered his words, they wouldn't have been in a graveyard to begin with.** If they had remembered his words, they would have known the tomb was empty and he was risen. If they had remembered and understood his words, they wouldn't have bothered going to the tomb looking for a dead body. Listen, when you forget his words, when you start living by your own words, you're going to end up confused, frustrated, deceived, going to the wrong places, wasting time and effort in futile endeavors.

Luke said they couldn't find his body (v4) and were wondering about this. "What could have happened? Where could his body be? Who could have stolen it away and for what purpose?" When you forget his word, you'll end up confused. Your path is darkened, your heart and your thoughts are darkened, you can't find your way. Remember his word!

Not only does forgetting God's word lead to confusion in your mind, it leads to fear in your spirit. Verse five says "in fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground." If we don't remember his word, and if we don't live according to his word, we are going to be bowed down by and paralyzed by fear. The uncertainty of it all will be overwhelming. "What can we do? How will we make it?" But when you remember his words, it changes everything!

The women at the tomb had forgotten all he had said, and here they were, confused, frightened, anxious. Listen, if you forget God's word, you'll eventually find yourself among the dead, dead in spirit, dead in outlook, dead in your prospect for the future. When you forget God's word, when you choose to live by your word and not according to his, it won't take long before you'll look around and realize something has died or is dying. You've lost something, the source of life. You're living in a graveyard. Living in a hopeless place. Rejecting God and his word, surrendering to sin rather than obeying God's word will lead you to a spiritual graveyard, some place you never expected to be. Someone wisely said sin takes you where you never wanted to

go, makes you stay longer than you ever wanted to stay and costs you more than you ever wanted to pay. You don't have to go down that road. Remember his word!

Bear in mind what Jesus said in the sermon on the mount. **“You have heard it said...but I say unto you.”** There are a lot of words out there. Social media tells you one thing, news outlets tell you something else, friends and peers tell you how you ought to live, how to fit in, the culture spins a narrative about what life is and how to be happy and you should do this and smoke this and live like this. “You have heard it said, but I say to you...” Remember his words. His words cut through the cultural narrative, the politically correct foolishness to biblical truth, biblical bedrock. “Thus saith the Lord.” “You’ve heard it said, but I say.” Here is the truth of God’s word. Discern his voice and remember his words. It’s why we need the Holy Spirit at work in our lives now more than ever. We need the discernment of the Holy Spirit because Jesus said the Holy Spirit would “remind you of everything I have said to you.” John 14:26. Remember his words.

I can’t emphasize it enough, the importance of remembering and knowing and living according to his word. God’s word must be the guide for our life, our choices, now more than ever! As you read on in Luke 24 we find Jesus opening the word of God to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. They needed to know and believe the word of God. He then appears to the disciples in the upper room and told them that everything written about him in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Luke says, **“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, ‘This is what is written...’”** Luke 24:45-46 We must remember his words. We must know his word and live by his word.

The women were confused, frightened, not knowing that to do, but then they remembered his words. What did they do? They moved from the graveyard, from that place of death, to a place of hope and trust, with confidence in the resurrection. They went back to tell the others what they had seen and heard. “Don’t you remember what he said, what he told us? It’s all true.” They remembered his words and that guided their choices, their actions, their lives.

Remember his word today, in all the chaos. It’s frightening, troubling, but remember Jesus said, **“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”** John 16:33

Feeling alone, forsaken, abandoned? Remember his word, **“Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”** Matthew 28:20 He hasn’t bailed out on us. God himself

promised, **“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5** Remember his word. He is going to be with us and show us the way! His promise is true today!

Frightened? Overwhelmed? Unsettled by what is happening in our country? Remember his words. **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27**

We may all feel a bit like wringing our hands about the unrest and unsettledness. I don't know what is going to happen but when I remember his words, it changes my perspective and outlook. What do we do? **“When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” Luke 21:28.**

Remember his words. It will move you from your head bowed down in despair to your head lifted up in expectation and anticipation of his redemption and his return. The women at the tomb were confused, frightened, shocked, but when they remembered his words they went from shocked to shouting, from confused to comforted, from fright to freedom. Church we need to remember his words. Jesus said, **“I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overcome it.” Matthew 16:18** He didn't promise anything about political power, but he promised to build his church. It's time for the church to remember his words and be salt and light in this hour!

Remember his words. It was in a cemetery that Jesus said, **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” John 11:25-26.** Remember his words because he can turn death into life, defeat into victory. He can turn your despair into triumph and joy. He can do all things. His words are life if you will believe them, obey them, live by them. Remember his words! Don't give in to fear. Don't let your heart be troubled, instead, be encouraged as you remember his word and his promise. Let's pray!

Homework: Memorize a verse of Scripture this week! Hide God's word in your heart!

May the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace!