

Synchronizing the Resurrection Narratives, Event #20h: Lessons for the young and old (John 21:18, 19)—part 2: Remember your Creator!

Review of the resurrection *events* up to this point (I have narrowed down the *approximate* hour of the events based on sunset of Saturday, April 4, 33 and the sunrise of Sunday, April 5, 33; MM is Mary Magdalene):

- Event #1: Saturday, 5:45 p.m., April 4, 33: Two Marys go to “look” at tomb, Matt. 28:1.
- Event #2: Sunday, 3:00 a.m., April 5, 33: Earthquake and angel from heaven, Matt. 28:2-4.
- Event #3: Sunday, 4:00 a.m., April 5, 33: MM visits the tomb before daybreak, Jn. 20:1.
- Event #4: Sunday, 4:15 a.m.: MM reports empty tomb to John & Peter, Jn. 20:2.
- Event #5: Sunday, 4:30 a.m.: Peter and John run to the tomb, Jn. 20:3-9.
- Event #6: Sunday, 4:40 a.m.: MM returns to tomb & sees 2 angels, Jn. 20:10-13.
- Event #7: Sunday, 4:50 a.m.: MM sees the Risen Lord, Jn. 20:14-17.
- Event #8: Sunday, 5:00 a.m.: MM tells disciples who do not believe her, Jn. 20:18; Mk. 16:9-11.
- Event #9: Sunday, 6:00 a.m.: MM & other women go to tomb of Jesus, Mk. 16:1-3; Lk. 24:1-2.
- Event #10: Sunday, 6:30 a.m.: Women enter tomb; 3 angels, Mt. 28:5-7; Mk 16:4-7; Lk. 24:3-8.
- Event #11: Sunday, 7:00 a.m.: Women run in fear; Jesus meets them, Mt. 28:8-10; Mk. 16:8.
- Event #12: Sunday, 8:00 a.m.: Women went to tell disciples; soldiers report, Mat 28:11-15.
- Event #13: Sunday, 8:10 a.m.: Once again, the disciples do not believe the women, Lk. 24:9-11
- Event #14: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.: However, Peter runs to the tomb a second time, Lk. 24:12.
- Event #15: Sunday, 8:45 a.m.: Private meeting between Jesus and Peter, 1 Cor. 15:5; Lk. 24:34.
- Event #16: Sunday, 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Jesus & 2 travelers to Emmaus, Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:13-32.
- Event #17: Sunday, 5:00 p.m. The 2 travelers tell the 11 Disciples, Mk. 16:13; Lk. 24:33-35.
- Event #18: Sunday, 5:20 p.m. Thomas leaves; Jesus appears, Lk. 24:36-49; Jn. 20:19-25.
- Event #19: 8 days after the resurrection. Jesus appears to Thomas, Mk. 16:14-18; Jn 20:26-31.
- Event #20: 2 weeks after the resurrection. Jesus appears on shore of Sea of Galilee, Jn 21:1-25.

We are in the midst of extracting doctrinal principles related to the young and old in application of our Lord’s description of young and old Peter:

John 21:18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."
¹⁹ Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"

In this daily doctrinal reflection I would like to focus on the importance of remembering our Creator and thus maintaining a doctrinal/divine viewpoint attitude whether one “finds” oneself in youth or among the aged. Whether your physical body is like a spring flower full of life or a flower that is fading, the key issue is God and overcoming kosmos diabolicus.

Let’s begin with the young. Indubitably, the two greatest assets any young person has is his volition and open future (possibilities). Every young person has been given freewill by his Maker to have his life shaped by God through Bible doctrine and the Holy Spirit or by kosmos diabolicus and the old sin nature. The greatest weakness of the youth is naiveté. The young are generally clueless about the true nature of themselves, the old sin nature, God, and kosmos diabolicus. Their youth and vigor tend to tempt them not to be fearful of living independently of God. This “tendency,” however, can be overcome through a relationship with the Lord and His Word. The young who maintain their relationship with the Lord as they transition from family connections (nest) to connections among their peers will not fall prey to kosmos diabolicus and its mores. As long as the young person stays in doctrine, God will see him through these transitions and he will come out the other side with a virtuous soul and a blessed perspective on life. The young believer who neglects the Lord and Bible doctrine will *increasingly* find himself the product of his old sin nature and “hooked” into kosmos diabolicus and even rejecting God’s norms and standards as he succumbs to what is politically/kosmically correct. There are two areas that the Bible says the young person must especially guard himself against: the wrong crowd (Prov. 1) and *youthful* lusts (2 Tim. 2:22)—I will touch on these in the next essay. At the end of the day, each young person will either increasingly become more connected to kosmos diabolicus as he cares for what the world thinks of him (tries to fit in) or God as he cares more for his Creator. Young people: Your Creator has given you the freedom to advance through life with Him into the promised life or to reject Him for the slop of the world. You are young and have that choice before you. Because of His grace, His best plan is always available. He is a God of matchless grace and has plan for your life beyond what you can ask or imagine. Take it while you still can 😊

Regarding the aged, you may be surprised just how brutally honest the Bible is with regard to one’s *physical* being in old age. Ecclesiastes 12 is the clearest picture of old age in the Bible. It has been called the most pessimistic description of old age ever written, but it also is realistic:

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them"; 2 before the sun, the light, the moon, and the stars are darkened, and clouds return after the rain; 3 in the day that the watchmen of the house tremble, and mighty men stoop, the grinding ones stand idle because they are few, and those who look through windows grow dim; 4 and the doors on the street are shut as the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one will arise at the sound of the bird, and all the daughters of song will sing softly. 5 Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street. 6 Remember Him before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed; 7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

Consider the various descriptions in the passage

1. Solomon exhorts the young to remember God in their youth, before old age and poor health overtake them and life's physical pleasures vanish.
2. Old age is like a gathering storm (vs. 2), old house (3-4).
3. "Watchmen of the house" (3) = arms and hands.
4. "Mighty men stoop" (3) = legs that become weak.
5. "Grinding ones" = a few remaining teeth.
6. "Those who look through windows grow dim" = weak eyes.
7. "Doors on the street are shut" = ears that can scarcely hear.
8. "One will arise at the sound of the bird" = unable to sleep.
9. "Daughters of song will sing softly" = decreased appreciation of music.
10. "Afraid of a high place" = difficulty of ascending a height.
11. "Terrors of the road" = fear of falling when walking.
12. "Almond tree blossoms" = white hair.
13. "Grasshopper drags himself" = crippled or bent limbs impair mobility
14. "Caperberry is ineffective" = sexually impotent.
15. "Mourners" = at the funeral.
16. "Silver cord" = loss of life support.
17. "Golden bowl is crushed" = signifies the crash of death
18. "Pitcher by the well is shattered" = fragile life is lost
19. "Wheel at the cistern is crushed" = the apparatus for sustaining life is ruined.
20. "Dust will return to the earth" = beginning at death the body decays to dust
21. "Spirit will return to God" = each person has a destiny with God and will be evaluated as a believer (Judgment Seat of Christ) or condemned as an unbeliever (cast into the Lake of Fire).

Whew! Tough stuff! However, one can never accuse the Bible of not keeping it real. While not everyone who lives to a *ripe* old age will face all of these health issues, it is an indubitable truth that the longer one lives, the more of these things he will experience.

So how can one live an abundant joy-filled life under such physical limitations? Is life just "vanity of vanities." No! Every person, including those who are old, can find meaning in life in personal love for God that is undergirded by the dynamics of the Spirit-filled life—in Solomon's language, "fear God and obey His commandments." While young people have strength, the elderly can enjoy something the young cannot enjoy: matured wisdom, wisdom of God and of life. This is only possible through Bible doctrine and continued philosophical ("love of wisdom") advancement that makes possible a deep and profound personal love for God that is greater than the circumstances of life—or as Peter says "an inexpressible joy full of glory" (1 Pet. 1:8). There is so much more to learn and sit in awe over every *advancing* year we are alive. Wow!

There is a carnal/reversionistic alternative, an alternative that exists in the souls of many elderly people, including Christians: misery compounded upon misery. Apart from an ever-growing spiritual life, the aches and pains of the body are parlayed into greater misery of the soul that is compounded even further by a real fear of death because they do not really know their Maker and have no clue about the spiritual life or could give a hoot about Bible doctrine. What a shame, especially in light of God's ever-present love, grace, and His instruction book: the Word of God. If only they had listened to what He has "put down" for all to see:

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them";

For the young and old, God's plan always brings delight though evil may surround us.

On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don

