

Synchronizing the Resurrection Narratives, Event #20i: Lessons for the young and old (John 21:18, 19): biblical view of sex-1

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.

Our Lord’s remarks to Peter about his youth and old age (John 21:18-19) have lead us to consider lessons for the young and old. In the last two essays I have noted the various physiological and psychological changes a person experiences as he transitions from being young to old. I am going to expand “lesson for the young and old” into applications for all ages and touch on the issue of sex. Like it or not, we live in a sex saturated culture that is reeking havoc on people of all ages. Statistics indicate that illicit (unsanctioned) sex is on the increase among all ages. This is even true among Christians—those who know better and claim to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The results are devastating both psychologically and spiritually. While all sin is sin, and Christ died for all sins, the sin of illicit sex is singled out by God Himself as the one sin that is against one’s own body:

1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

While Christ died for all of the illicit sexual sins (just like all of the other sins), illicit sexual sins (fornication and adultery; all sex outside of marriage) still bring some of the most devastating temporal consequences on one's body, soul, and spirit. Being forgiven and justified by God through Jesus Christ does not remove all of the temporal consequences one may suffer from committing this sin against one's own body.

In covering the subject of sex, it is important for churches and ministries to avoid two extremes: 1) approaching the issue with a legalistic, self-righteous, unforgiving, and judgmental attitude—we are all sinners saved by the grace of God, and we have all done things we regret; 2) ignoring or remaining mute on the subject of sex as if it is not a real issue in the spiritual life of Christians. If the believer is going to have victory in this area of temptation, it is going to be through Bible doctrine, what the Bible says about sex and not simply “don't look, don't think.” The key to victory in the spiritual life in any and all areas is applying the right doctrine under the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the situation. For example, when a believer is tempted to covet, the solution is not simply to think “don't covet, don't covet”; rather, he is to apply the appropriate doctrine to the situation in his relationship with God—for example, remembering that God has provided exactly what he needs to be content:

1 Timothy 6:8, And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

Hebrews 13:5 Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"

The same is true regarding sexual temptation. When one is tempted, it is not enough to think “no, no, no,” or to confess it and expect the temptation to magically disappear. This will only lead to having to confess again, again, and again. The solution is to apply the appropriate doctrine. For the single person it would be recalling the doctrine of right-man/right-woman and treasuring the future special time with one's right person. If the person is married and is tempted by someone else, the solution would be to bring in doctrines regarding his or her spouse. By recalling what Scripture says about the sacredness and intimacy of marriage with one's spouse, the person is no longer tempted. Again, the issue is to apply the appropriate doctrine. Throughout Scripture, we are not told simply to put off the old man; rather, we are enjoined to put on the new man:

Ephesians 4:22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

This new man is more than simply being in fellowship. It is divine viewpoint, the mind of Christ, Bible doctrine! We also see the emphasis on the positive in warnings regarding married men in relation to sexual temptation. He is to find all fulfillment in his wife (this would include prohibition against autoeroticism which robs both partners of intimacy and satisfaction). The Bible actually teaches says that each husband and wife has sexual responsibilities to each other:

1 Corinthians 7:3 Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

After Solomon outlines the dangers of illicit sex in Proverbs 5:9-14 (loss of health, self-respect, money, ruin, and disgrace), he vividly describes the beauty of marital sex/love in very positive terms; note that the Bible is anything but prudish on the subject of sex between husband and wife:

Proverbs 5:15, Drink water from your own cistern, And fresh water from your own well. 16 Should your springs be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets? 17 Let them be yours alone, And not for strangers with you. 18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice in the wife of your youth. 19 As a loving hind and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love. 20 For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress, And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?

After noting the dire consequences of adultery (5:9-14) and the blessings of marital sex (5:15-20), Solomon provides four additional motivations to avoid temptations and illicit sex:

Proverbs 5:21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his paths. 22 His own iniquities will capture the wicked, And he will be held with the cords of his sin. 23 He will die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.

- 1) Illicit sex committed in secret is known by the Lord.
- 2) Man cannot escape God's scrutinizing.
- 3) Sins ensnares and ties a person down like ropes. Though people like to talk about having "free" sex as they wish, sin actually takes away their freedom.
- 4) Illicit sin will lead one astray from the plan of God and eventually the sin unto death.

Sandwiched between the warnings are the positive commands regarding the blessings of marital sex. Solomon's point is that sexual desires are to be channeled through the spouse. If one is not married, then the person is to wait and focus on the wonderful future God has for him or her (no double standard). God loves His people and wants them to enjoy lovemaking, but the only way there can be authentic "lovemaking" is when there is commitment of marriage.

All sex apart from marriage is perverted activity—like animals which are incapable of intimacy. Although the world has plenty of songs of "making love," there is no true *love* without intimacy, and there can be no true intimacy apart from the commitment of marriage. Regarding love songs, I have been informed that virtually all rap songs today are about the flesh: there is not even an attempt to sugarcoat it with love songs. What a bane, cheap, and sordid view of sex! True love is all about commitment and intimacy that no physical activity could ever create. True, deep, and connected love is only reflected in marriage where there is total commitment. Sex outside of marriage is a perversion and anything but love. It is nothing short of "lust" and desecration of the body of both persons—regardless of how one may "feel." To call it "lovemaking" is to deceive oneself. Only in marriage can there be this enjoyment that is free

from all guilt or negative feelings—which is not the case in illicit sex. Repeatedly, the Bible warns against the enslaving and corrupting influences of sex apart from marriage. There is nothing to even hint that sexually aroused persons are free to engage in sexual intercourse, *even if they intend to marry*.

Regarding temptation, I want to press the point that the key to victory is always in renewing the mind through the Word of God and a personal relationship with Christ. The more the believer overcomes the temptation, the less he will have problems. When one gives into temptations, it has a way of habituating that activity where it becomes so rooted in the mind that it is hard to get out. A person's norms and standards regarding sexual temptations have a lot more to do with temptations than most people realize. It is not just about the physical. It is about the norms of the mind. Consider the fact that normal people do not have any desire to have sex with their relatives. Why is that? If sex was *only* biological, then it would not make any difference if they were relatives. The reason that the very thought of such a thing is so gross is because of norms and standards in the soul. You see, as your mind extracts objects/forms from the photons hitting the vision system, it does so with norms and standards. When the mind extracts that there is a male or female that one sees, the mind also is making judgments based on the norms and standards in the soul. Hundreds of years ago people who were overweight were considered sexy because they were considered healthy. Today, people who are thin are considered healthy, so everyone is trying to be thin to be attractive. Consider another example: If someone is attracted to someone, but is told that that person is filled with all kinds of diseases, you can bet that any sexual attraction would cease. Why? Because of norms and standards. It is not just a bane physical thing. There is more that is going on. I bring all of this up to demonstrate that norms and standards have an enormous influence on what one thinks is attractive. When a husband or wife has very high and healthy norms and standards (which include a deep love and personal connectedness to each other), the idea of having sex with someone else is gross (consider how powerful this is against any temptation). However, when the norms and standards are low due to lack of doctrine and influence of the old sin nature, or there is no personal second-person close connectedness, then there can be great temptation that the person can't *seem* to help. Furthermore, if a Christian is sensate, geared mainly to the senses, he or she will have greater problems with temptation because of lack of ability for these abstract doctrines to be real. To be sensate is a curse in many ways. The single greatest power over temptations is to have a strong attitude for its opposite. For example, the strongest power against hate of the old sin nature is love from the Holy Spirit, cf. Galatians 5:16-22

We must never forget that sex was created by God and is very good *within marriage*. God created the human race with male and female bodies capable of sexual intimacy including the pleasure of orgasm. God called sexual human beings “very good” and instructed them to *multiply!* It is Satan and the old sin nature that have perverted and corrupted what God Himself personally created for intimacy. When the human race fell into sin, God's creation was marred and the potential for unhealthy sexuality came into being. Adam and Eve, who previously were not ashamed of their nakedness, suddenly became self-conscious about their bodies.

The bottom line for each believer is his volition. He will either use it for his old sin nature and kosmos diabolicus and become corrupted like the rest of the world or use it for the Lord Jesus Christ and Bible doctrine and enjoy blessings that the world does not have the capacity to enjoy.

1 Corinthians 6:18, Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don

