

Sunday Assembly Reflection

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REFLECTION: On Sunday, Jim told about a man recently found after being lost at sea for 66 days who during that time read the Bible twice while staring death in the face. Why would someone do that? Because the Bible, the story in which we are all characters, is about new life for dead people. There is new life for each of us now, and the entire creation will be resurrected one day. Resurrection means we live in a different world. It may not feel like a resurrected world, because we tend to focus on the front page and the obituary page of the newspaper, the sin and death that surrounds us. But, that is not the real story. The real story is that the same spirit of God that raised Jesus from the dead lives in every Jesus-follower, freeing us from sin and death. Our lives and behaviors should support that hope.

But what if we doubt the resurrection? I went through a period of serious doubt when my father died several years ago – wondering if God was real, was there really life after death? It was tormenting for me. Death of a loved one does that. I was like the doubter in the poem Jim read that said there is no God. But this God who didn't exist was still calling me in the midst of my doubt. As in the poem, the phone rings once, you unplug it. It rings again and you smash it with a hammer until it bleeds springs and coils and clobbered up metal bits. It rings again, and when you answer there is a voice you love who whispers hello. We can doubt, but God pursues us. Why would he do that? Only because He loves us, and because we are His beloved.

QUESTIONS: Please pick one of the questions below to answer in your small groups; more if you have time. Be sure to pray for each other at the end.

1. How would you describe your “hope quotient?” Are you lacking in hope, coping by going along with the world where death is denied, pain is useless and we never sin? Or do you have hope knowing that you have the power of the resurrected Christ living in you, freeing you from yourself to bless the world and not judge it.
2. Share a time when you experienced doubt about God. How did God pursue you?
3. Discuss how your concept of “resurrection” changed as a result of what you heard on Sunday. Pray for one another that we will come alongside the next generation and help them become fearless disciples of Jesus.

The resurrection matters because we need hope when we doubt, we need hope when our loved ones die, or when the world around us just seems like bad news and death – the front page and the obituaries. We grieve the death of David Beller's brother Michael, as well as Randy Moore, Glenn Wamble, Jeff Bowers, and many others, but we do not grieve as those who have no hope. For as Godric says in Frederick Buechner's story, “All the death that ever was, compared to life shall scarcely fill a cup.” Thank you God!

Sunday Assembly Reflection is written by Lake Highlands Church members for Lifegroups and individuals to receive more from the spoken Sunday Assembly message through reflection and quick discussion. It is published on the first three Monday's of the month. If you are interested in knowing more about a Lifegroup or have a question about the reflection, please contact Donjalea Crane, donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org or contact one of our Lifegroup leaders by going to lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings.

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