

Shook Up to Wonder!

Sunday Morning, March 27, 2016

Over the years I have experienced a pretty good number of earthquakes of varying sizes and intensities. I will never forget one particular one in the Fall of 2004. We watched the fish tank rocking back and forth, the cars in the driveway actually rolling back and forth and the large pine tree across the street radically swaying. As we stood in the doorway we were wondering if the cars would roll in to the house or the street or if the tree would fall across the street. The power of that earthquake was amazing.

When Jesus died the Earth quaked too.

When Jesus rose the Earth quaked.

His death and resurrection were truly events of cosmic proportions.

Has Jesus shook your world up?_____

Has your heart been rocked by Jesus?_____

Has the Resurrection of Christ affected your life?_____

The Earth felt the effects.

The Angel felt the effects.

The Guards felt the effects.

The Women felt the effects.

(Matthew 28: 1 – 8)

1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

6 He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

Does the Resurrection move and affect you?_____

Is Easter Sunday just another Easter to you?_____

The Resurrection of Christ is an earthquake that shook the whole world. Jesus not only became the talk of the town, but He became the talk of the world!

In the 1950's there was a devastating earthquake in China. As a result of the quake, a huge boulder was dislodged from a mountain, thus exposing a great cache of wonderful artifacts from a thousand years ago. A new world became visible.

When the stone was rolled away that entombed Jesus, and the earth shook, we got our first glimpse of a new world. It is a world where death doesn't have the last word, where injustice is made right, and innocent suffering is vindicated by the intrusion of a powerful God. The soldiers witness the stone rolled away. It was estimated to be between 2,000 and 4,000 lbs.

It was set in a trench and secured over the tomb's door.

The women did not have to worry about who would remove the stone for them!

Jesus was gone. The Tomb was empty!

(Luke 24: 9 – 12)

9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.

12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

Address the empty burial cloth display

Neither the soldiers nor the women left from the tomb the same that day. Their lives were moved and changed forever!

The eventful Resurrection of Christ can have that effect on people.

How does it affect you? _____

Does God need to move the stone from your heart for you to know Him? _____

Is there a stone in your heart that stands in the way for you to have a fresh relationship with Jesus? _____

The Resurrection of Christ is a wonder in itself.

Are you still moved by the wonder of Jesus' Resurrection?

"The World will never starve for want of wonders, but only for want of wonder."
G.K. Chesterton
(Theologian, Writer, Christian Apologist, 1874-1936)

In Chicken Soup for the Soul, Dan Millman tells the story of Sachi. When she was four years old her baby brother was born. Little Sachi began to ask her parents to leave her alone with the new baby. They worried that, like most four year olds, she might feel jealous and want to hit or shake him, so they said no. Over time, since Sachi wasn't showing signs of jealousy, they changed their minds and decided to let Sachi have her private conference with the baby. Elated, Sachi went into the baby's room and shut the door, but it opened a crack - enough for her curious parents to peek in and listen. They saw little Sachi walk quietly up to her baby brother, put her face close to his, and say, "Baby, tell me what God feels like. I'm starting to forget."

Is childlike wonder disappearing?

Have we forgotten the wonder of Jesus rising from the dead?

Have we grown ashamed of the distinction of a God who can conquer death?

Are we so caught up in reality that we have no place for mystery in our lives?

Have we become so religious that we have lost the wonder?

Have we forgotten what it feels like to have God remove the darkness and coldness in our heart?

Are we, too, starting to forget what God feels like?

Wonder begins in the presence of Jesus.

As we become more aware of God's presence we become more filled with wonder. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary felt it. When they saw Jesus their only response was to fall at his feet in worship.

(Matthew 28:17)

When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

When you and I encounter the living Christ, our only response is to celebrate His presence. That's Easter. It is the presence of Jesus that moves us and touches us deeply. Easter makes us want to fall at Jesus' feet in gratitude and praise for what He has done. That is something you don't explain and never forget. You experience it. You feel it. You know it. You know Him!

Celebrate His presence today and every day!