**RELATIONSHIP LESSONS FROM THE**

**LORD’S DEATH AND RESURRECTION**

Sunday School Lesson 6

*Building Right Relationships*

Matthew 27-28

4/9/2023

**Introduction:** For the last two weeks, we’ve looked at the parental/child relationship. While we still have a bit left to cover on that topic, we are going to take a step back for Easter Sunday and evaluate a few general thoughts about our relationships based on the events of the resurrection. As we read through the four Gospels and get a full picture of events from the crucifixion through the resurrections and ultimately to Christ’s ascension, we can see the fragile state of the disciples’ relationship with Christ. They had followed Him throughout His earthly ministry, and they were absolutely devastated at the events of the crucifixion. If you fast forward three days and three nights later, you find these same disciples now being told that Christ is alive and coming to see them. The range of emotions experienced by the disciples is very visible to us on the pages of the Bible. We can often be quick to judge the disciples for their failures during this time and throughout Christ’s earthly ministry, but the Lord has not revealed their failures to us to bring a lasting black mark on the very disciples that He loved. He shows us their failures to help us not to make the same mistakes in our relationship with Him and even with others in this world. We must be willing to look at these events and apply them to our own walk with the Lord and consider what we might learn from them. If we will do this with a humble and contrite spirit, I believe the Lord through the help of His Spirit will make known to us some areas of personal growth that should take place in our relationships. Let’s consider the following:

1. **THE RESURRECTION SHOWS US THE NEED FOR ENDURANCE IN RELATIONSHIPS.**

* Matthew 26:56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. 28:6 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. (1 Corinthians 13:7; Hebrews 12:3) It seems that many relationships today lack any type of real endurance. I’m not speaking just of marriage relationships but even regular friendships. For the disciples, their relationship with the Lord was hindered because they were not willing to endure in the relationship. They ran at the first sign of trouble. When things got hard, the relationship was not as important to them as it should have been. Perhaps, they did not see any way for things to move further along in that relationship. For any relationship that lasts over some period of time, you can expect for situations to come along that are going to test the depth of that relationship. Obviously, if it is a matter concerning doctrinal-error or worldly compromise, then there will be Biblical instruction that dictates what that relationship ought to be moving forward. On the other hand, if it is a God-ordained relationship, you must be willing to endure through the challenges that come along the road of life. A lack of endurance is very short-sighted. It only looks at the pain of the now, and it fails to see what might or could be.

1. **THE RESURRECTION SHOWS US HOW MISUNDERSTANDINGS HURT RELATIONSHIPS.**

* Mark 9:31-32 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. 32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him. (Mark 4:12) A proper understanding is important in a relationship. We’ve probably all experienced the pain of being misunderstood by someone. Many times, this person is someone who you don’t have a close relationship with; thus, they don’t properly understand what you have communicated to them. Sometimes, though, a misunderstanding happens among people who share a close relationship together. This misunderstanding can cause great damage in the relationship. Is this not what happened between the Lord Jesus and His disciples. They did not understand what He had spoken to them about regarding His death, even though He mentioned it to them on several occasions. The result of this misunderstanding with great fear and confusion on the part of the disciples. If they had truly understood His words to them, it would have made the three days from His death to His resurrection much easier for them to bear. In fact, His arrest would have been understood and hopefully handled better by them. This example of a misunderstanding should highlight the importance of having good understanding in our relationships.

1. **THE RESURRECTION SHOWS US HOW RESISTANT WE CAN BE TO A PARICTULAR RELATIONSHIP DESPITE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS.**

* Matthew 28:11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. 12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, 13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. (Matthew 12:38-39) In considering the events of the resurrection, there is another truth about relationships that we must consider. We can be resistant to relationships and even blame the other party as the reason for that resistance. Isn’t that what the religious leaders did to Christ? They would not have a relationship with Him because He would not “prove” to them that He is the Messiah. Of course, we know that He did many signs and wonders, but they rejected all of them. Surely, they would change their mind when they heard that He was risen from the dead. It would usher in an all-new relationship with them, and they would finally believe Him. We know that’s not what happened. They chose instead to cover up the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Do we have any potential relationships where we do the same thing? Perhaps, we justify our lack of friendships among the brethren by casting blame on them.

1. **THE RESURRECTION SHOWS US HOW PROBLEMS IN A RELATIONSHIP CAN BE OVERCOME THROUGH THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS.**
   * Luke 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. Matthew 28:10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me (John 21) After Christ had risen, He promptly sent a message to His disciples that He wanted to see them. These were the same disciples who had just left Him for dead days earlier. They had fled and forsaken Him. Despite this, the Lord so easily forgave them. Given that He even forgave those who crucified Him, it’s not hard for us to accept the fact that He forgave His disciples. Yet, I think we see in the Bible that it was somewhat difficult for them to accept that forgiveness. It seems that Peter especially struggled to forgive himself for what he had done to the Lord. Thankfully, the Lord was patient with Peter and took the time to show him that He was forgiven. The Lord’s actions show us how big problems in a relationship can be overcome by the power of forgiveness.
2. **THE RESURRECTION SHOWS US HOW RELATIONSHIPS CAN BLOSSOM AND GROW IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.**

* Acts 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. We see a magnificent change take place with the apostles before and after the events of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We find them tepid in their relationship with the Lord and shallow in their faith when Christ first arose. Peter was scared to let anyone even know that he was a disciple of Christ during the trial of our Lord. Move over to the book of Acts, and you will see a group of disciples who are powerful witnesses of Christ. They are bold in their following of the Lord, and they would not let anyone intimidate them. What changed? Well, we know the obvious help of the Holy Spirit of God. The Lord’s forgiveness of them and final encouragement to them had to help as well. Needless to say, they were given the opportunity to blossom in their relationship with Him, and they continued to grow closer to Him even after He ascended.

1. **THE RESURRECTION SHOWS US THE JOY THAT GOOD RELATIONSHIPS CAN BRING.**

* Matthew 28:8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. Luke 24:52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: (Philemon 1:20; 2 John 1:12) As we noted at the start of this lesson series, the Lord made man to be a social being. He saw that it was not good for us to be alone. We need that companionship. Thus, we understand that Godly relationships in our life are meant to be good for us. They should bring us joy. We see the great joy that the disciples had when they were able to commune with the Saviour. Let’s be thankful for the friends and family that we have in this world and recognize the joy that those relationships should bring us. If that joy is not there, let’s consider the reasons for its absence and be sure to apply Biblical principles to the relationship. The Holy Spirit will help to reveal areas that need to be strengthened.