

The Church on the Move: Risen Life

Acts 9:32-43 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 28 August 2022

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: What's the most remote place you've ever been? Describe the experience.

Worship: [Psalm 52:8-9](#) (*Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?*)

Sermon Summary for [Acts 9:32-43](#) (*Read aloud before reading the sermon summary.*)

Jesus continually brings resurrection into our lives. By Acts 9, we are in the midst of large, sweeping events: Christ's ascension, the day of Pentecost, Stephen's martyrdom, and Saul's conversion – all huge moments for the early church. And soon will come the opening up of the Gospel to the Gentile world. But in this passage, Luke pauses to share smaller, more intimate stories about Aeneas and Tabitha. Why, though? Because these are stories of risen life within the body of Christ. They remind us that Christ's Good News brings resurrection into our lives.

Jesus keeps resurrection at the center of things in the life of His church // As Charles Spurgeon preached, *"The doctrine of the resurrection in the early church was the main battle-axe and weapon of war of the preacher."* Time after time, the high point of these early sermons is that God has raised Jesus from the dead and demonstrated Him to be the Son of God. The miracles in Acts function the same way as these sermons. Healings, rescue, casting out evil spirits, raising people from the dead – all gracious expressions of Jesus' resurrection in the lives of His people. These more intimate stories in Acts 9 reinforce this commitment before launching into God's mission to bring His Good News to the gentiles.

What does this mean for us? First, church life is not about affirming or galvanizing our personal views on current events or social issues. These might be important things to us and to the world at large, but they should (and need to) be secondary to our relationship with Jesus. If our Savior is what binds us together, such issues should not have the power to drive a wedge between us. Second, we need to remember that Jesus has and will repeatedly bring resurrection into our lives. But He will do this according to His schedule and in ways that He chooses. Our Lord is always moving toward us with His perfect love and timing. But this doesn't mean instant healing for everyone, everywhere, all at once. As Joni Erickson Tada wrote: Yes, our God heals. "But in this broken world, it's still the exception, not the rule" because God is concerned with more than just our physical wellbeing. And He alone knows what is necessary to heal, to redeem and to make us more Christlike children in His kingdom.

Jesus engages out on the margins, bringing resurrection with Him // Peter has left the central, important place of Jerusalem where the apostles had previously remained. He has gone out from there to encounter people as Jesus had, all the way to the sidelines of society. Because it's here that the most vulnerable, the most marginalized, and the most needy are to be found. Our Father wants us to have no doubt that "there is no such thing as a small errand in the kingdom of God" (as NT Wright wrote). There is no insignificant person or someone who is too far astray. The movement of God's healing and care is toward all people. And God will use all of it for His glory.

*Here in His resurrection Kingdom "no one stays in his or her place. Common fishermen are preaching to the temple authorities, paralyzed old men are up and walking about and changing lives, and a woman called Gazelle heads a welfare program among the poor. ...Every time a couple of little stories like these are faithfully told by the church, the social system of paralysis and death is rendered null and void. The church comes out and speaks the evangelical and prophetic 'Rise!' and nothing is ever quite the same."
(William Willimon)*

Discussion Questions *(You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)*

Jesus keeps resurrection at the center of things in the life of His church

- Why do you think the New Testament is filled with multiple resurrections in addition to the resurrection of Christ? (See: [Luke 7:11-17](#), [Luke 8:49-55](#), [John 11:1-44](#), [Matthew 27:50-54](#), [Acts 9:36-42](#), [Acts 20:7-12](#))
- How should potentially divisive conversations go if we have Christ and the resurrection at the center? What might they look like if these are healthy conversations?
- How have you experienced resurrection in your own life?
 - Where and how have you seen others' lives transformed by the healing power of resurrection?

Jesus engages out on the margins, bringing resurrection with Him

- The “margins” are easily misunderstood to only mean the poor, the lowly, the widow, or the outcast. While true, it can also include those we personally (or as a society) have marginalized. Who might God be calling us to move toward in our own lives?
 - Considering the “margins” in this broader sense, who is God calling you to move toward?
 - What do you think “moving toward” these people might look like?
- How do our lives (and the world) look different when we take action, moving toward the marginalized?

Prayer

This week's Prayer Guide for personal or group use is [HERE](#).

Engage & Experience: Prayer

CG Discussion Guides will be provided through November 20th, the last day of our sermon series on **Acts: The Church on the Move**. As we continue our 2022 Focus on Prayer, we suggest you and your CG read a book on prayer together for the end of the year. Here are our recommendations:

- [Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God](#)
Timothy Keller
- [Prayer: Does it Make Any Difference?](#)
Philip Yancy
- [If God Already Knows, Why Pray?](#)
Douglas Kelly