



RISING TO THE OCCASION
John 2:13-20; Matthew 28:1-6

Woodland Park Church of Christ

17 April 2022

Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. ¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. ¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" ¹⁷ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up." ¹⁸ So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "***Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.***" ²⁰ Then the Jews said, "***It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?***" John 2:13-20

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*. 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.” Matthew 28:1-6

Rising to the Occasion

- Performing exceedingly well in responding to a special situation or event.
- Entails ***making a special effort*** that is required to successfully deal with a difficult situation.
- Doing very well unexpectedly – Overcoming the doubt, shade and hate!
- May have limited opportunity, very slim margin of error, scarce resources, yet you have to travel the same path and are being measured by/held to the same standards as others who seem to have more (or greater advantage)!

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

- In John 2, Jesus has begun His ministry and performed His first miracle.
- John, like Mark, tells very little of Jesus' birth and/or early life.
- In fact, when the man Jesus is introduced in John's account of the Lord's gospel in chapter 1 (1:29-34), John the Baptist is introducing Him as they cross paths when John is going about baptizing and setting the stage for Christ.
- Jews are confused and they, walking by physical sight and not by faith, miss the whole point.
- It never enters their individual or collective minds that Jesus could ever be talking about being resurrected from the dead!

So many have a misguided reality of the Lord's teaching and His testimony. . .

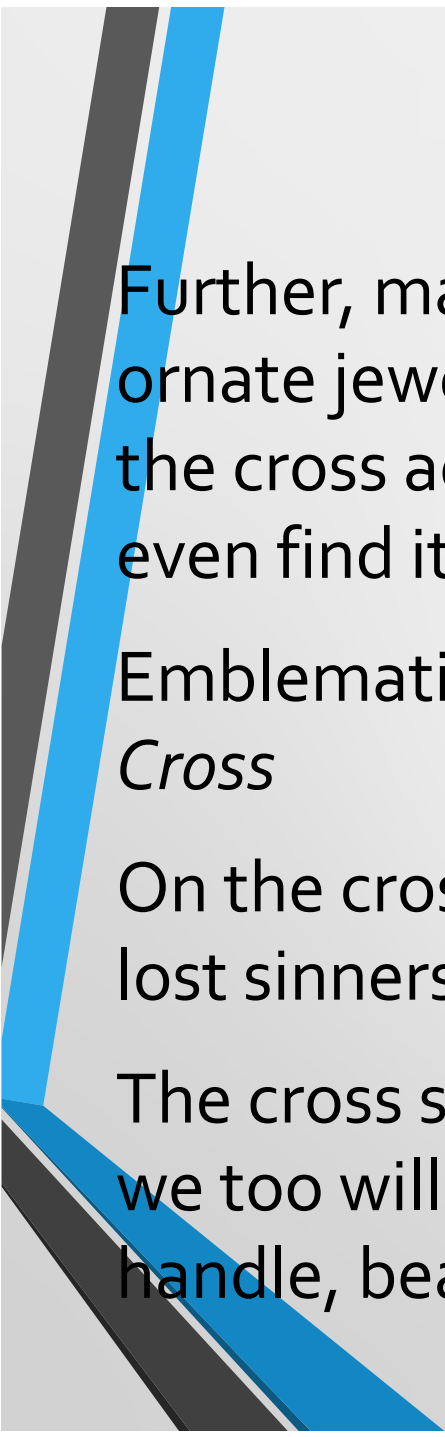
Many think God's people are somehow immune or exempt from the cares, difficulty and trials of life.

This is a great misconception. *See Psalm 34:19; Job 14:1; John 16:33*

We will all experience loss, hatred, temptation, difficulty and adversity in this life.

But, because He overcame all and rose from the grave, we can rise above the concerns and feelings that keep others doubting and in a tailspin for years.

Because He rendered death a nullity, we too can LIVE IN VICTORY and overcome life's challenges.



Further, many wear the cross as a random piece of ornate jewelry without giving it a second thought what the cross actually symbolizes or what it means – many even find it “fashionable.”

Emblematic of suffering and shame! *The Old Rugged Cross*

On the cross, heaven’s dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain!

The cross should serve as a sobering reminder to us that we too will have our own burdens to bear; but we can handle, bear, and overcome them.

The Lord was on a special mission – one that only He could complete.

- We too have our individual races to run, which will require bearing our own crosses – but we, like the Lord, can endure and emerge victorious!

*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him **endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.** Hebrews 12:1-2*

Let's Revisit the Road to the Cross

- Remember, Jesus, being acquainted with human feelings and emotions, understood the pain and humiliation about to befall Him. **Matthew 26:36-42**
- He was betrayed with a kiss by one of the 12. **Matthew 26:47-49**
- He would be forsaken and left alone by His "closest" friends. **Matthew 26:56**
- The apostle who vowed stand with Him and a friend to the end thrice denied knowing Him. **Matthew 26:69-74**
- He stood a sham of a trial before Pilate – talk about a real miscarriage of justice. **Matthew 27:11-14; Mark 15:2-5; Luke 23:1-5; John 18:28-37**

The Road cont'd

- The crowd chose a notorious murdering insurrectionist (Barabbas) over Jesus to be saved (spared). **Matthew 27:15-22; Luke 23:13-25**
- Scourged (beaten) with whips bearing pieces of metal or other objects that literally tore chunks of flesh from the body. **Matthew 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:1**
- He was mocked, taunted, struck, and spat upon by Roman soldiers. **Matthew 27:27-31; Mark 15:16-20; John 19:2-3**
- Given sour wine when He was athirst on the cross. **John 19:28-30**
- Although He had taken His last breath, the Lord's side was pierced, springing forth blood and water! **John 19:33-34**

We all get down sometimes, but, glory to God almighty, we do not have to stay down!

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that ***Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures***, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that ***He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*** . . . I Corinthians 15:1-4

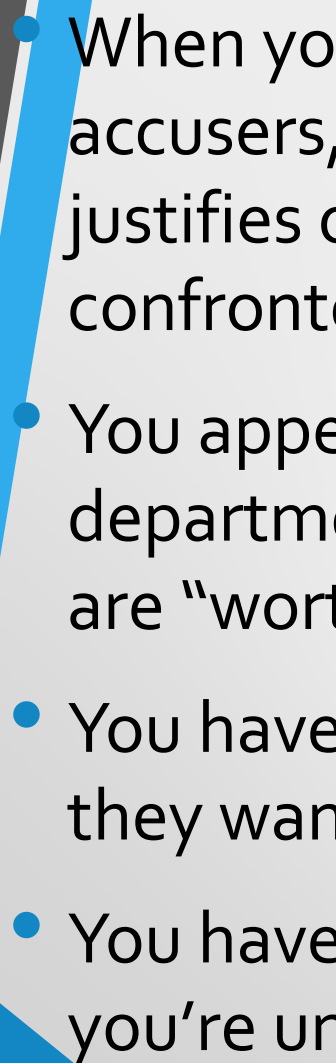
God Gives Us What We Need to “Rise” in Every Situation

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; *but God is faithful*, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, *but with the temptation will also make the way of escape*, that you may be able to bear it. **I Corinthians 10:13**

For *You have armed me with strength for the battle*; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. **Psalms 18:39**

At times, the Lord's reassuring presence helps us to rise above circumstances, although we remain in the struggle and conflict.

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste *and* spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." ²⁵ "Look!" he answered, "***I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and*** they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." **Daniel 3:23-25**

- 
- When you have to endure trials and face false accusers, and you know you have done nothing that justifies or warrants the level of scrutiny you are confronted with.
 - You appear before review boards and personnel departments, and they are determining whether you are “worthy” of advancement or promotion.
 - You have done your best in raising your children; yet, they want to “break away.”
 - You have to have that next round of chemotherapy; you’re understandably anxious and nervous.

WE SERVE AND ARE JOINT HEIRS WITH A RISEN SAVIOR!

Because we do and are, life's trials and struggles shouldn't defeat us or keep us down!

*"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.**"* **John 16:33**

The Spirit Himself testifies *and* confirms together with our spirit [assuring us] that we [believers] are children of God. And if [we are His] children, [then we are His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance], if indeed we share in His suffering so that we may also share in His glory. **Romans 8:16-17 [AMP]**

Lord's Invitation Extended to All

- **Be added to the Lord's body**
 - Hear the gospel (**Acts 15:7; I Corinthians 15:1-4**)
 - Believe (**Acts 15:7; Rom. 10:17**)
 - Repent (**Acts 2:38**)
 - Confess (**Acts 8:37; Rom.10:10**)
 - Be baptized (**Acts 2:38, 8:38**)

Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- **Be reconciled unto the Lord** (1 John 1:8-9); or
- **Desire prayer** (James 5:16).