

## **The Gables – Resurrection**

### **Opening Story:**

From - <http://www.beliefnet.com/Inspiration/Christian-Inspiration/2001/04/What-Do-You-Do-The-Day-After-Easter.aspx>

How should you celebrate the day after Easter? With a good laugh, of course. Better yet, with a party, a really fun party. Far from being a strange, new idea, this is actually a long-standing tradition rooted in good Christian theology.

It began hundreds of years ago. A monk, whose name has been lost in history, was pondering the meaning of the events of holy week, with its solemn observances of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the astonishing, earth-shaking events of Easter. "What a surprise ending," he thought. Then suddenly, like a bolt of lightning, he had a new insight. His hearty laugh startled his fellow monks, breaking the silence of their contemplation.

"Don't you see," he cried, "It was a joke! A great joke! The best joke in all history! On Good Friday, when Jesus was crucified, the devil thought he had won. But God had the last laugh on Easter when he raised Jesus from the dead."

### **Dialog between Rick & Donna:**

**Donna:** What does "Maundy Thursday" mean?

**Rick:** The word "maundy" comes from the Latin word *mandatum* (commandment) which is the first word that Jesus spoke to His apostles after He washed their feet (John 13:34). It commemorates the Last Supper that Jesus had with his disciples.

**Donna:** If Jesus was crucified on the cross, why do they call it "Good Friday"?

**Rick:** We call it "Good" because Jesus paid the price, he paid the penalty for our sins by dying on the cross for your sins and mine.

**Donna:** What did Jesus do between Good Friday and Easter?

**Rick:** Jesus was crucified the cross on what is known as Good Friday. He then descended into Hades for three days. You may remember from our lesson last month that Hades had two parts: a paradise side for the Old Testament saints who were waiting for the Messiah, and a punishment side for the lost (Luke 16:19-26). The Bible says the following about what Jesus was doing in Hades:

- Matt 12:40 - For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
- 1 Peter 3:19 - through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison

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- 1 Peter 4:6 - For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

**Donna:** What did he do next?

**Rick:** First he took all the Old Testament saints up to heaven, along with any New Testament saints who may have died during his ministry.

- Ephesians 4:8b-10: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

**Donna:** What about after that?

**Rick:** Then he appeared to his disciples many times (Source NIV Study Bible chart, page 1588):

- At the empty tomb outside Jerusalem early Sunday morning (Matt 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:1-9)
- To Mary Magdalene at the tomb early Sunday morning (Mark 16:9-11, John 20:11-18)
- To two travelers on the road to Emmaus midday on Sunday (Luke 24:13-32)
- To Peter in Jerusalem during the day on Sunday (Luke 24:34, 1 Corinthians 15:5)
- To the ten disciples in the upper room Sunday evening (Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-25)
- To the eleven disciples in the upper room on week later (John 20:26-31, 1 Corinthians 15:5)
- To seven disciples fishing on the Sea of Galilee on day at daybreak (John 21:1-23)
- To the eleven disciples on the mountain in Galilee some time later (Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:15-18)
- To more than 500 some time later (1 Corinthians 15:6)
- To James some time later (1 Corinthians 15:7)
- At the Ascension on the Mount of Olives forty days after the resurrection (Luke 24:44-49, Acts 1:3-8)

**Donna:** What is Jesus doing now?

**Rick:** He is seated at the right hand of God the Father in the heavenly realms (Mark 16:19, Acts 2:33, 5:31, 7:56). His primary mission has been completed. Yet God is still active in running the world:

- Romans 8:27 - And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.

**Donna:** Why does God intercede for the saints?

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**Rick:** Because believers in Jesus still have the old sin nature in them warring against the new nature that was given to us when we became Christians. Satan and his demons hate us and want us to be ineffective as Christ's servants here on earth. Did you know that nothing bad happens to Christ's saints unless it first passes through the will of God?

**Donna:** Like in the book of Job?

**Rick:** Yes.

**Donna:** Satan had to ask God's permission before he could inflict all the terrible things he did to Job's family, property, and body (Job 1).

**Rick:** That's right.

**Donna:** So we don't have to live in fear that something bad will happen to us.

**Rick:** Correct.

God will not give us more than we can handle:

- 1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

He has guardian angels watching over us:

- Matthew 18:10 – See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.
- Hebrews 1:14 - Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

**Donna:** But the main reason the resurrection is important to us is that we can know our sins are forgiven and that we will be with Jesus in heaven one day.

**Rick:** Absolutely.

- 1 Corinthians 15:19 - If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

**Donna:** What if you're not sure if you are going to heaven or not?

**Rick:**

We first of all have to recognize that we are a sinner:

- Romans 3:23 – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Then we have to recognize that we need a savior:

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- Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We have to ask Jesus to be our savior; He won't force Himself upon us:

- Romans 10:9 – That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Jesus will come to live within us through the power of the Holy Spirit

- Revelation 3:20 – Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

God doesn't want us to doubt. He wants us to know that we are saved:

- 1 John 5:13 - I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Easter should be a time of celebration, not gloom. Thanks be to God for His many blessings!