THE RESURRECTION AND MISSION

Posted on April 23, 2019 by Eddie

The Resurrection marks the dawn of a new age and with it a new orientation and mindset for Jesus followers? Do we live pre or post-resurrection?
Category: Observations

For a variety of reasons, John chapter 20 is one of my favourite passages in the Bible. the opening few words to the chapter set the tone:

> *Early on the first day of the week...*

This seemingly inconsequential detail is important because John is not writing a chronology he's writing a theology. His Gospel starts with the words; "in the beginning" echoing the first day of creation in Genesis. there are then a series of sevens: seven *I am* sayings and seven signs, again echoing the seven days of the week. And now, on the morning of the Resurrection, a new week starts. A new week, symbolising a new world because after the resurrection nothing will ever be the same again. Incidentally, this is why I think the new living translation is wrong to use the term *Sunday morning* rather than the first day of the week. This isn't about dates.

One of the things which the dawning of this new week is the role of the disciples. Previously their calling was to follow their Master and to learn from him, but now that changes.

When Mary first encounters the empty tomb, her first reaction is to run an tell Peter and John. Later in the chapter when she meets the risen Messiah, he commands her to go and tell his brothers that he is risen (v17). Mary is no longer simply a follower of Jesus she is now a herald of his resurrection. This movement from followers to heralds reaches its climax in verse 21:

> *Again Jesus said, â€œPeace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.â€*

The disciples are sent out into the world in the same way that Jesus was sent; in humility in self-sacrifice and in the power of the Holy Spirit. In the book of Acts, Luke takes up the story and shows how this bunch of Spirit-filled disciples went out into the world telling people about Jesus and the resurrection. There was still in need, obviously, for the believers to meets together to worship, to break bread, and to be taught, but the focus has shifted from an internal oneÂ to an external one. It seems to me that the shift in terminology from disciples, that is learners and followers, to apostles - sent ones - is significant here.

A new day and a new age dawned on that first day of the week, and in that new age, the role of the disciples changed entirely. A question: do our churches and congregations live in this new age? Are we outward facing, outward focused,Â Spirit-filled heralds of Jesus and the resurrection, or are we disciples and learners not sent ones?