

Kid's Church - Zone

Sunday, April 12th

Happy Easter!



Everyone likes a good comeback story.

The Bible is full of them... a young boy who defeats a giant, a stuttering prophet who leads God's people to the Promised Land, and the greatest story of them all... God's Son who is put to death, but comes back to life!

This lesson that may have looked like defeat to the world was actually

Jesus winning the greatest victory.

In Matthew 27, Jesus is sentenced to die by Pilate, the Roman governor.

Though Pilate famously "washed his hands" of this death sentence, the plot to crucify Jesus had been in place long before this moment.

The Pharisees, religious leaders and government officials were angered and intimidated by the works and the words of Jesus long before this day.

We read throughout the gospels that they are constantly plotting ways to eliminate His powerful ministry through conspiring to murder Him, like in **Mark 3:6**.

Right after Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath, breaking a sacred religious law, we see that:

"At once the Pharisees went away and met with the supporters of Herod to kill Jesus."

Jesus' enemies thought by killing Him they could extinguish His power and His ministry.

And, why wouldn't they?

After all, the world had never seen anyone comeback from that sort of deficit.

But, what looked like defeat for Jesus was actually His greatest victory.

In His death, Jesus was not succumbing to the plans of His enemies.

He was sacrificing Himself for the sins of the world.

He was willing to die so that those who followed Him could have eternal life.

There was nothing unexpected about Jesus overcoming death.

In Matthew 16:21, Jesus plainly explained to His disciples that it was necessary for Him to suffer and die at the hands of the religious leaders.

He also explained that even though He would be killed He would also rise from the dead 3 days later!

This was God's plan.

Even though He spelled it out for His followers, there was still much agony and confusion in the moments after His crucifixion.

Despite His many warnings, the followers of Jesus believed His death to be an insurmountable defeat at the hands of the world.

Jesus's disciple Peter ran away from the Lord during the crucifixion, denying he even knew Him.

But the cries of pain from Jesus's followers would soon turn into tears of joy.

In John 20, we see Mary Magdalene visit the tomb of Jesus after His death and burial.

When she arrived, she found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance.

Initially, Mary and some of Jesus's disciples thought someone had stolen Jesus's body.

However, Mary soon found out something even more incredible had happened.

Read John 20:11-18.

What looked like defeat to Mary, to the disciples, and to all the world was actually the greatest victory of all.

Jesus was not dead.

But, Jesus did not escape death through some magic trick.

No, in fact, Jesus overcame death and rose from the grave in a comeback victory like the world had never seen!

There was no need for Mary to cry.

Instead Jesus commanded Mary to go share the good news.

He later commanded those that follow Him to share the good news as well and to go and make disciples of all the nations.

The cross - which once was a symbol of defeat was turned it into a symbol of the miraculous victory of Jesus.

When we look to the cross at Easter, we must remember that the cross once was once a recognized symbol of death and defeat.

Jesus upended this and turned it into a symbol of victory.

This is why Christians celebrate the cross!

Jesus has overcome the world!

What looks like losing to the world is actually victory in Christ.

What looks like defeat in your life is often just the setup for an incredible comeback by Jesus.

And incredible comebacks make great stories and testimonies.

Remember this at Easter.

And remember it whenever you feel like you're down in a hole you can't come back from.

Don't lose hope.

Don't walk out on the game.

Look to the championship banner of Christ - look to the cross.

Remind yourself daily of His sacrifice and His comeback victory.

Remind yourself that if you surrender your life to Him then you are on the winning team!

Remember that even though the world thought they were winning, Jesus never had any doubts about the outcome.

And remember that He does not want you to have any doubt either.

Because as Jesus himself said even before He faced the cross in **John 16:33**:

"Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."