Special Resurrection Appearances

1 Corinthians 15:3-10

The sovereign, all-wise Lord had determined ahead of time to whom He would appear after His resurrection. These special appearances are fascinating, as God certainly had unique purposes for each one.

1) To the Women: In a Roman society dominated by males, His first two appearances were to women (John 20:14-17; Matt. 28:9). Fruchtenbaum commented, “The fact that the second appearance was also to women and not to men strengthens the argument that the Gospel accounts are genuine. Any Jewish author fabricating a story would not have written it this way, but the Gospel writers reported the truth.”

2) To Peter: We are given no details of this encounter, except that it happened (Luke 24:33-35; 1 Cor. 15:5). This was the first recorded time that Peter saw the Lord since Jesus gave him a piercing glance after the three denials (Luke 22:61). What the Lord said to Peter on that resurrection Sunday is shrouded in secrecy, and later Jesus would deal with him further (John 21:15-19).

3) To Thomas: Doubting Thomas instantly became Convinced Thomas, and a blessing was pronounced upon all believers who had not seen the risen Lord (John 20:26-29).

4) To James: This was the pivotal event in the life of James, the half-brother of Jesus, who would become the faithful leader of the Jerusalem church (1 Cor. 15:7). He was in unbelief prior to this life-changing event (John 7:5).

5) To Saul: This appearance led to a spectacular conversion as the church’s greatest persecutor became its greatest apostle (Acts 9).

6) To Stephen: The church’s first martyr was given a comforting glimpse of His risen Saviour as Christ stood to welcome him to glory (Acts 7:54-60).

7) To John: The aged disciple whom Jesus loved saw the risen Christ on the island Patmos, and became God’s instrument to show us things to come (Revelation 1).

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