

“IF” SERIES, LESSON #4



***If** it weren't for the resurrection, where would we be?*

- No chance, no hope for salvation...
- No chance, no hope to see our loved ones again...
- No chance, no hope for overcoming fear during trying times...
- No chance, no hope for an afterlife!
- No chance, no hope to see Jesus!
- Only the last breath...and then...nothing!



***If** it wasn't for the Lighthouse...where would this ship be?*

And I thank God for the Lighthouse...I owe my life to Him.

Jesus is the Lighthouse!...



Thank God, the Father, for giving us the greatest gift ever given...HIS SON, JESUS!

If it weren't for Jesus coming on the scene...the scene for living would be bleak!

John 11:21-25, “Lord” Martha said to Jesus, “**if** you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” ²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “**I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?**”

John 20:11-21, “Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.¹³ They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

“They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, **if** you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”). ¹⁷ Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them that he had said these things to her.

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ **If** you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; **if** you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

Have you ever stopped long enough and taken inventory of the divine "ifs" that have permeated and prevailed in your life?

Not a casual moment...but a still moment where you sat with all your selves.

All the SELVES??

Yes...The good self, the not so good self, the old self and the new self, the self that you desire to be and the self that you are.

Sometimes you need to sit with “yourselves” in the alone moments and as painful or shameful as it may be, just think about the **divine ifs** in your life.

The divine ifs are those places that you recognize that God had to circumvent what was going to happen or what should have happened. **The divine ifs** are those events and experiences where God took the potential of destruction, embarrassments, shame, out of the moment. When you think about **the divine ifs**, you borrow that line from that old hymn written by John Newton, “through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come.”

The divine if is the difference between when I felt myself being pushed to a place that was not going to be pretty, but then I walked away or felt something pulling me back from an emotional melt down or explosion that I could have regretted for life.

The divine if is the difference between the diagnosis (what it is or appears to be) of the situation and the prognosis (a forecast of the likely outcome of a situation; a judgment about what is going to happen in the future).

What we think and how we handle a diagnosis should be through **prayer, and Scripture reading...plus faith !**

The leper came to Jesus with a diagnosis...and what he saw and others saw was a diagnosis of pain, suffering and death.

Matthew 8:1-3, *When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. ² A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, **if** you are willing, you can make me clean." ³ Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "**I am willing**," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.*

Lord, if you are willing, make me clean." Jesus said, "I am willing...Be clean."

From a diagnosis with no hope...to a prognosis of total healing.

He left with a prognosis from Jesus...and a healing from God Almighty.

*"Jesus said: "For **if** you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But **if** you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Matthew 6:14-15,*

THERE ARE TWO (2) CHARACTERS IN THE BIBLE WHO USED THE LITTLE WORD "IF" MORE THAN ANY OTHER!

WHO? GOD THE FATHER AND JESUS, HIS SON!

*Jesus said: "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, **if** you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." **Matthew 17:20***

*Jesus said: "**If** you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." **Matthew 21:22***

*Jesus said: "**If** you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." **Luke 17:6***

*Jesus said: "**If** you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples." **John 8:31***

*Jesus said: "I tell you the truth, **if** anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." **John 8:51***

*Jesus said: "Did I not tell you that **if** you believed, you would see the glory of God?" **John 11:40***

*Jesus said: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, **if** you love one another." **John 13:35***

Jesus said: "**If you love me, you will obey what I command."** **John 14:15**

Jesus said: "**If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."** **John 15:6-7**

Jesus said: "**If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love."** **John 15:10**

Jesus said: "**You are my friends if you do what I command."** **John 15:14**

Paul used the work "IF" many times:

"**If God is for us, who can be against us?"** **Romans 8:31**

"...**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."** **Romans 10:9**

"By this gospel you are saved, **if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain."** **1 Corinthians 15:2**

"**If anyone does not love the Lord – a curse be on him."** **1 Corinthians 16:22**

"Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"** **2 Corinthians 5:17**

John, the Apostle, used the "IF" equation many times in his written Word:

Quoting Jesus, "I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.** **Revelation 22:18-19**

As you read and meditate on how important the "IFs" are in the Word of God, will you adjust your "iffy" situations to a statement of faith:

"I will use this Easter to let my light shine." "I will use this Easter to accept my responsibilities as a 'born-again' Christian and use my time on earth wisely... 'knowing' without a shadow of doubt... that Jesus is my friend and my Lord."

I will resurrect my desire to follow Him passed the grave and into His loving arms.

RESURRECTION SUNDAY... "EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS!"
