

KEY THOUGHTS

- Resurrection Sunday is LOADED with mysteries:
 - We really believe this man physically rose from the dead?!
 - We really believe God accomplished all this THROUGH Jesus' death ON PURPOSE?!
 - We really believe it still makes a difference?!
- Most of us think Jesus died for average people whose sin isn't overly offensive. That isn't very mysterious to us.
- But what IS mysterious is that Jesus came to reclaim us who are far, far, far away.
- Romans 5:7-8 – He didn't die for good people, but for sinners.
- Today is a message for those who feel far away, who have compromised too many times, who have that one or two sins from the past that they can't move past.
- That message is Jesus shatters barriers!
He did it His whole ministry with those who were outcasts
 - Women – John 8:10-11
 - The Poor and Oppressed – Matthew 25:40
 - Lepers – Matthew 8:1-3
 - The "Outlandish Sinners" – Matthew 9:10-11
- And yet another group was even further removed. The Gentiles. The word Gentile was synonymous with "outsider." (See Matthew 5:47, 6:7, and 20:18-19)
- To the Gentile or "outsider", the offer of gospel is utterly mysterious.
- Ephesians 3:4-6 – These outsiders were now heirs, members of the body, and partakers of the promise – THE UNREACHED HAD BEEN REACHED
- How was this possible? Ephesians 3:11 – it was God's plan ALL ALONG!
- Jesus did more than shatter barriers. He moved beyond those barriers and reached the unreachable.
- There's a great question Jesus asked when he saw a leper among a sea of diseased people. "Do you want to get well?" (John 5:6)
- Rephrased for us all, "Do you want to be reached?"
- We're all born "outsiders." From one outsider to another, "I am that no longer. You don't have to be either."

SCRIPTURES

- Romans 5:7-8
- John 8:10-11
- Matthew 25:40
- Matthew 8:1-3
- Matthew 9:10-11
- Ephesians 3:4-11
- John 5:1-9, esp. v.6

PRACTICAL & REFLECT

- 1. Do you sense that you are an "outsider" in regard to what God wants to do? Do you feel separated, stuck, distanced from the Lord, or that a barrier is there?
- 2. Take some moments to give thanks for God's persistence with us, that He broke down barriers of separation, and reached to us, even in our most unreachable moments.
- 3. Spend some time on that question Jesus asked the leper, "Do you want to get well?"
- 4. Ask the Barrier Breaker to break down the walls in your own life.