

## **MISSING JESUS** (Virtual Easter Sunday)

### **THE STORY OF EASTER HAS ALWAYS FOCUSED ON JESUS**

- A. A harder story for the world to grasp - compared to Christmas
  - 1. Babies and births more embraceable than crosses and death
  - 2. Christmas gifts far better than Easter gifts
  - 3. The Easter bunny is a pretty second rate icon
  - 4. Quick - think of your favorite Easter song
- B. Easter starts as a dark story with a powerful ending
  - 1. Jesus died a horrific death on the cross for our sins
  - 2. He was buried in a sealed tomb and rose again on the third day
  - 3. He offers eternal salvation and a life with God to anyone who believes **(1 Peter 1:3 NIV)**
- C. With everything happening due to this virus crisis - easy to miss Jesus

### **FOUR PEOPLE WHO MISSED JESUS**

- A. Pilate **(Matthew 27:22-24 NKJV)**
  - 1. He was conflicted about Jesus - knew He was innocent
  - 2. He had the power to make the right choice
- B. One of the two thieves crucified beside Jesus **(Luke 23:39 NIV)**
  - 1. Challenged the legitimacy of Jesus - aren't you the Messiah?
  - 2. Could have made a different decision
- C. Two men on the road to Emmaus **(Luke 24:21 NKJV)**
  - 1. Encountered the resurrected Jesus and didn't know it
  - 2. Disappointment with how things turned out caused them to miss Jesus

### **WE DON'T WANT TO MISS HIM - HOW DO WE FIND JESUS IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES**

- A. Don't give into the increased pressure around us
  - 1. We, as Pilate, have the ability to make the right choice
  - 2. Pressure from mockers, doubters, reasoners and the majority
  - 3. A response to pressure is often the easiest path of least resistance - easiest not usually best **(Philippians 4:13 NKJV)**
- B. We don't lash out in our pain like the thief on the cross
  - 1. This virus situation has compounded the pain in our lives - some of it pre-existing
  - 2. Pain rarely brings out the best in us - we can lash out at others and even God
  - 3. We respectfully reach out to the One who understands and heals our pains **(Isaiah 53:4-5 NIV)**
- C. Open our hearts to the Hope that is with us
  - 1. Many are disappointed now with how things have turned out
  - 2. The two men on the road to Emmaus responded from their hearts even in their disappointment
  - 3. We don't demand to see or feel we open our hearts to Him **(Revelation 3:20 NKJV)**