* The CHURCH, the COLLECTIVE BODY OF SAINTS WORLDWIDE, have been entrusted by God to share the GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST with a world that hasn't CONNECTED THE DOTS about Him!
  - They see Christ as a GREAT TEACHER in the ranks of BUDDHAH and CONFUCIUS
  - They see Christ as a RELIGIOUS LEADERS by which truth has been revealed like MOHAMMED
  - They see Christ as a SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY like GHANDI promoting PEACE and LOVE

* When we connect the dots revealed by God's Word and His Spirit, we see that Jesus GOD'S OWN SON who came to DIE a SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH to SAVE all those who would TRUST and BELIEVE in Him
  - We must not ASSUME that people have CONNECTED THOSE DOTS and see that God has sent a PERSONAL SAVIOR for our PERSONAL SINS
  - Even the first disciples failed to CONNECT THE DOTS of what Jesus said would happen
    - Mark 8:31-32
    - Mark 9:31-32
    - Mark 10:32-34

* The first disciples are a picture of SADNESS and FINALITY after Jesus dies
  - Women CRYING
  - Disciples SCATTERING
  - Concentration on BURIAL

* Mark makes sure that readers know that Jesus DIED
  - vs 43...Joseph asks for the body
  - vs 44...Pilate surprised that Jesus is already dead
  - vs 45...Centurion confirms the official death
  - vs 45...Pilate grants a "corpse"

* Joseph of Arimathea secures the body of Jesus and then wraps Jesus in a cloth and lays Him in a tomb (vs. 46)
  - Joseph and Nicodemus bring 75 pounds of myrrh and aloe for the burial (John 19:38-40)

* After the Sabbath passes, some of the women who witnessed the crucifixion come to finish preparing Jesus
  - They fully expected a body to be present
    - Brought spices to anoint the body (Mark 16:1)
    - Wondered who would roll the stone away (Mark 16:3)
    - Alarmed to see that Jesus is gone (Mark 16:5)
    - Told by an angel that Jesus is RISEN (Mark 16:6)

* Though they failed to see it at first, Mark 16:7 reminds us that Jesus had already told them this would happen
  - This is not a "new" happening that had not been predicted

* Without the RESURRECTION...
  ...Jesus IS just one of the world's GREAT TEACHERS!
  ...He IS just one of many great SOCIAL ACTIVISTS!
  ...He IS just another great MORAL EXAMPLE!
  THE RESURRECTION SEPARATES JESUS FROM ALL THE OTHERS!!!

* The GOSPEL is not that Jesus CAME TO THIS WORLD, but that Jesus CAME TO THIS WORLD TO DIE AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE SINS OF ALL WHO WOULD REPENT AND TRUST AND BELIEVE IN HIM and that He has RISEN FROM THE DEAD!

* This truth separates Jesus from every other religious leader and why He is the only way to God (John 14:6)
1) Why do you think so many people see Jesus as just one of many religious leaders that have come to the world?

- What percentage of people in GEORGIA do you think see Jesus as SEPARATE and UNIQUE?
- In the UNITED STATES?
- In the WORLD?

2) How would describe to someone the UNIQUENESS of Christ and why He is different from other religious leaders?

- What scripture would you use to back this up?

3) Why was it important for us to see that Jesus was really dead as described in Mark 15:43-45?

- What would change if Jesus did not really die?

4) Why is it important for us to see that Jesus really rose from the dead as described in Mark 16:6?

- What would change if Jesus had not risen from the dead?

5) Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-17 and explain why the resurrection was essential to the Apostle Paul?

- Based on these verses, what difference would it make in your life?

6) Why do you think it is easier for many to believe in the "baby" Jesus in a manger, than the "sacrificial" Jesus of the Cross?

- Read 1 Corinthians 1:17-18 and relate it to our call to "connect the dots" of who Jesus is.