

The Resurrection of Jesus (Resurrection Sunday 2024)

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[0 : 00] Happy Easter, it's great to worship with you all. If you don't have a Bible, please raise your hand. We'd love to give you a Bible that you can use while you're here. We are in Luke chapter 24.

So last Sunday, Good Friday, and today we're out of our Revelation series, which is what we've been doing, so that we can remember more in greater detail the death and resurrection of Jesus. So we're in Luke chapter 24, verses 1 to 12. Let me pray. For the reading and preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, these are your people.

This is your church. And we humble ourselves now before your word. Exalt the name of your son, Jesus.

And impart to us, as we trust in him, the power of his resurrection. So that our daily lives are filled with the hope.

[1 : 15] With the hope that your resurrection brings. Lord, make the dead alive this morning by the power of your word.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you are able, please stand for the reading of God's word from Luke 24, verses 1 to 12.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

But when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel.

And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.

[2 : 29] Remember how he told you while he was still in Galilee that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.

And they remembered his words. And returning from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary, the mother of James, and the other woman with them who told these things to the apostles.

But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb.

Stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves, and he went home marveling at what had happened. This is God's holy and authoritative word.

You may be seated. During World War II, in July 1944, U.S. forces raided the island of Guam as part of their offensive against the Japanese soldiers and their forces in the Pacific.

[3 : 44] And Japanese soldiers, including Shoichi Yokoi, were scattered, and they hid deep inside the jungle of the island in order to avoid being captured as prisoners of war.

Shoichi Yokoi outlasted all of his compatriots and held out hope that one day the Japanese army would return to get him. But eventually, he was discovered by local hunters and dragged out of the jungle.

And as he was being dragged out of the jungle, panic seized him, and he was afraid that he was going to be given up to the U.S. army as a prisoner of war, and he didn't want that, so he started begging them, just kill me now.

But they refused to kill him because they were actually trying to help him. There were no U.S. soldiers looking for him because World War II had been over for 27 years already.

This is a true story. You heard that right. Shoichi Yokoi lived in hiding in the jungle for 28 years. Living in his makeshift underground shelter and surviving on a diet of venomous toads and river

eels and rats.

[4 : 58] All because he never heard the news that the war was over. This man was literally living under a rock. The good news of Jesus' death, his atoning sacrifice for our sins, and his victorious resurrection is an even more consequential news than the end of World War II.

Jesus' life, death, and resurrection single-handedly altered the trajectory of entire human history. Perhaps it might be better to say that entire human history up to that point was leading to Jesus and that the rest of human history flows out of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection because God is the sovereign author of human history.

It changes not only our present life, but our eternal life. And yet, many people in the world are living as business as usual because they have not heard, and if they have heard, they have not believed in the resurrection of Jesus.

And that's the main burden of this passage. And if you hear that message today and you believe it, your life will be changed forever. And this is the main point of this passage, to remember, to tell of, and to believe the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And we're going to talk about those three things in turn, to remember, tell, and believe. It says in verse one, Day is a reference to the woman who had come with Jesus from Galilee and was there when he was dying and saw where Jesus was buried and then made a mental note to go and prepare the spices and come and anoint his body because in those days it was customary to anoint deceased corpses, basically human bodies, so that it doesn't rot too quickly to slow down the process of decomposition.

[7 : 05] And these faithful women expected to find Jesus' body. That's why they were bringing the spices. But there is a delightful surprise waiting for them in verses two and three.

It says, And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. But when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. The repetition of the word find highlights this contrast.

It forms a neat contrast between verse two and verse three and reveals the surprise of the woman. Their expectations are upended in two ways. They expected to find the stone blocking the entrance, but they find that the stone is rolled away.

They expected to find the body of Jesus, but instead, they do not find the body. What could this possibly mean?

Luke is building his suspense here in the narrative. Verse four continues, While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel.

[8 : 08] We learn later in this chapter in verse 23 that these two men were actually two angels. It is not uncommon in scripture for angelic beings to appear in the form of man, in human likeness.

The word dazzling gives it away, the dazzling apparel. That's the word that was used to describe Jesus when he was transfigured on the mountain into his heavenly glory. He became dazzling white.

And so the presence here of the two angels, just as Jesus sent out his disciples two by two in Luke chapter 10 to bear witness to him in all the towns that they went through, is an example of the scriptural precedent of having at least two or three witnesses to bear a credible testimony that can be verified.

And so here, the two angels are giving that testimony so that that message can be transmitted to God's people. And as they were frightened and bowed their face to the ground, the men said to them, why do you seek the living among the dead?

He's not here, but has risen. Why do you seek the living among the dead? He has risen. That's actually in the passive, and that means, it could be translated, he has been raised.

[9 : 21] It's the divine passive referring to the fact that God the Father is the one who raised Jesus from the dead. This is the way Luke typically refers to the resurrection. So because God has raised his son, Jesus, from the dead, the women should not be searching for him among the dead, in the tombs, but rather they should be seeking him among the living.

Jesus was raised 2,000 years ago now already, but even today, so many of us still seek the living among the dead. Jesus is not a mere historical figure.

He is a current figure, a living person. Do we listen to Jesus? Do we talk with Jesus? Do we spend time with Jesus?

Jesus' resurrection has extensive implications for our lives, and Jesus' resurrection power is available to us as God's people, but are we living in light of those realities, or are we still seeking

the living among the dead?

The angels remind the woman in verses 5 to 9 of the necessity and the significance of the resurrection. Remember how he told you while he was still in Galilee that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified on the third day rise.

[10:46] Jesus had specifically in the Gospels predicted his death and resurrection to his disciples, and so the woman and the apostles should have known that this would happen, but it was so far beyond their culture and their expectation that they didn't see it coming.

They had forgotten what Jesus had told them. The angel's exhortation to remember jogs the woman's memory, and this produces a pattern of the angel's word and then the woman's response, and that forms this structure called chiasm, which is literally a device where the first half mirrors the second half, highlighting what's in the middle, which stands alone.

So verses 5 to 6 are matched by verses 8 to 9. In verses 5 to 6, the woman, the angels ask the woman, why do you seek the living among the dead? And then tells them to remember.

And then in verses 8 to 9, the woman remember the words of Jesus, and then they return from the tomb now to the land of the living. Sandwiched between those two matching sections is verse 7, which is the focal point of the entire passage.

That the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise. That is the very heart of Christianity.

[12:08] Note that it doesn't merely say the Son of Man will be delivered. It's not just a prediction. It says the Son of Man must be delivered. What happened to Jesus, his betrayal, his sentence, his execution, and his resurrection, they were all necessary.

And this is the way Luke describes what God has sovereignly foreordained. It was God's sovereign plan that these things happened. Why? Because Jesus needed to die.

As Romans 6.23 teaches us, the wages of sin is death. And therefore, as Hebrews 9.22 says, without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.

Shedding of blood represents the pouring out of Jesus' life. It symbolizes death. In order to deliver sinners from death, Jesus had to be delivered into the hands of sinful men and die.

In order to secure our forgiveness of sins, Jesus had to pay the penalty for sins, which is death. Jesus also needed to be crucified.

[13:17] Or as different parts of the Bible describe it, hanged on a tree. As I mentioned on Good Friday, Deuteronomy 21.23 taught that those who are hanged on a tree are cursed by God.

And that's precisely the language that Luke uses in Luke 23.39, in Acts 5.30, in Acts 10.39, to describe Jesus' crucifixion. He was killed by being hanged on a tree.

Jesus had to die that way because he had to bear the curse of sin as our substitute. As Galatians 3.13 says, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

That's the injustice of the cross. The blessed one, the holy one, becomes the accursed one for our sake. 2 Corinthians 5.21, for our sake, God made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Again, the injustice of the cross. That he who knew no sin carries all of our sins and pays the penalty for all the sins of his people.

[14:43] But Jesus' death alone isn't sufficient for our atonement. Paul corrects that misbelief in 1 Corinthians 15.17 where he writes, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

The death of Christ and the resurrection of Christ are inseparable. Christ was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

It says in Romans 4.25, if we were, while we were enemies, reconciled to God by the death of his son, then how much more now that we are reconciled to him shall we be saved by his life?

There is no justification of sinners without the resurrection of Jesus Christ. there is no salvation in eternal life apart from the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If Christ had not been raised, it would mean that he was swallowed up by death. If Jesus had not been raised, it would mean that he was overcome by the curse of sin.

[15:51] If Christ has not been raised, then it would mean that he was defeated by Satan and that we would still be in our sins. but Christ was raised.

And his resurrection is proof that his death on our behalf was accepted by the Father. You can think of it this way. Our sins were like an insurmountable debt.

We could never hope to repay. But our master, our Lord, God, because he is gracious and because he loves us, writes a check to repay all of our debt.

And it seems too good to be true. We go to the bank.

We hand over the check. And it does not bounce. It clears. That's like the resurrection.

[16:59] Jesus dying, his blood, his payment is like the check being written and then his, and the check actually clearing. That's like the resurrection. It's the proof, the receipt that the payment for our sins has been received.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, do you live as if your debt really has been paid in full? Or do you still live in fear as if the loan sharks will come by any day now just knocking on your door?

To drag you to jail. We cannot repay God and we don't need to because it's the gift that God has given to us in Jesus Christ.

It's also necessary that this resurrection happens on the third day. I can't get, don't have the time to get into all of that, but there are many, over 30, references in scripture where God delivers his people on the third day.

It's following that pattern. There's an expectation that God would deliver on the third day. And this third day after Jesus' death also happens to be the first day of the week, Sunday, like today, as it says in verse 1.

[18:17] And this is no coincidence either. Every one of the four gospels, as Luke does here, notes that Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week. The first day conveys a note of hope and renewal, just like people have all these hopes and resolutions for the new year.

And this is why the early Christians, though they were mostly Jews who faithfully worshipped and observed the Sabbath, which is on Saturday, after Jesus' resurrection, they began to worship on what they call the Lord's Day, which is Sunday.

Jesus is not only raised from the dead on the first day of the week, but also at early dawn, it says in verse 1. The time reference early dawn is also not extraneous.

It's not irrelevant because dawn is also frequently associated in Scripture with God's help and deliverance. When the Israelites are crossing the Red Sea, it says in Exodus 14, 27, that the Lord got through the Egyptian forces into a panic and then a pillar of fire and cloud descended upon them and caused the Red Sea to return to its normal course to engulf the Egyptians.

And it says that that happened when the morning appeared or when the morning dawned. That phrase is taken up then in Psalm 46, where it says that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

[19:52] God will help her, talking about the people of God, when morning dawns. Throughout the Gospel of Luke, Luke makes this repeated use of this light, darkness motif.

When Jesus is born, Zachariah, his uncle, or just before he's born, Zachariah prophesies in Luke 1, 78 to 79, that because of the tender mercy of our God, the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace.

In contrast, just when Jesus is being delivered into the hands of sinful men, Jesus says in Luke 22, 53, when I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me, but this is your hour and the power of darkness.

And as we saw on Good Friday after Jesus dies on the cross, it says in Luke 23, 44 to 45, that there was darkness over the whole land and that the sun's light failed.

This is not a solar eclipse. Some of you guys are probably planning on going to visit to see the totality, the solar eclipse coming up, I think it's next week.

[21:08] And if you've been planning it, then you know solar eclipses last like three minutes. Doesn't last three hours like it does in the gospel accounts. And it also happens during new moon.

Doesn't happen during full moon, which would be what this would have been when Jews celebrated the Passover and following that. It's as if the sun itself recognizes the death of the one by whom it was created and cloaks itself in darkness.

And so Jesus' birth is associated with the sunrise and his death is associated with darkness and his resurrection is once again associated with the sunrise at dawn.

Linguists debate the origin of the name Easter, but the most plausible theory is that it comes from an old high German word, Easterum, which comes then from a Latin word that means dawn.

In many ancient languages like Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic, the word east either means or is related to the word that means sunrise because the sun rises from the east.

[22 : 25] And that's an apt representation of the resurrection because at the end of each day, at night, when the sun sets, it seems like a sword of death but in the morning it rises again.

And that's why Easter is a fitting alternate name for resurrection Sunday. And there's hope for us in this that no matter how long and hard your week might be, the first day of the week always comes around.

No matter how dark your night might be, sun always rises at dawn. That's the hope that the resurrection of Jesus offers his people because his resurrection guarantees our future deliverance and bodily resurrection.

Our God raises the dead and that means there is no situation in life that is so bleak as to be without hope. when your chronic illness is crippling, when the pain and hardship of your work is overwhelming, when you feel crushed by grief, sorrow, and loneliness, when your dream seems dead and buried.

Remember the hope of the resurrection. even though in this life we are grieved by various trials, we have a hope that no trial in life can extinguish because, as it says, as we read in the assurance of pardon this morning from 1 Peter 1, we have been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for us who, by God's power, are being guarded through faith for salvation to be revealed in the last time.

[24 : 32] Similarly, in 2 Corinthians 1, 8-9, Paul and Timothy write about how much they were suffering and how they were afflicted and how they were so utterly burdened beyond their strength that they despaired of life itself.

They felt that they had received the sentence of death, they say. That's about as low you can get in life to despair of life itself, to feel like you've received the death sentence which seems so final and irreversible.

But, they continue, that was to make them rely not on themselves but on God who raises the dead. Even when you're despairing of life itself, if you're counting on the God who raises the dead, then you are not without hope.

Many of you have already put your faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. And if that's you, it is your responsibility to remember this truth. The word remember is repeated twice in this passage and the command to remember is an important word throughout the scriptures.

The verb remember by itself occurs 222 times throughout the Old Testament and that's not counting different forms of that word. Remembrance, memorial, these other words.

[25 : 53] In the Bible, remembering the redemptive acts of God in order to freshly apply those truths to our lives is a central act of Christian worship.

We cannot rightly worship God if we don't rightly remember what he has done for us. That's why in Luke 22, 19, when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, he says, this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me? Easter and really every Sunday when we gather to worship every first day of the week is a day of remembering because we are a forgetful people.

Do you remember the resurrection of Jesus as you wrestle with your own sins, your setbacks in life, your sorrows and the sufferings of your life?

weeping may tarry for the night but joy comes with the morning. This is Psalm 35, 30 verse 5.

[26 : 58] When you see the sunrise each morning, remember the resurrection of Jesus and those who remember the resurrection of Jesus must tell of the resurrection of Jesus also.

There's a transmission of the testimony from first the angels to the woman and then from the woman to the apostles in verse 9. It says in verse 9 that they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

And then later we see that transmission happening again in verse 14 when the two of the disciples start talking amongst themselves about all these things that they had heard. Christians are by definition witnesses of Jesus Christ.

we bear witness to his death and resurrection and transmission therefore is essential because unless we tell of the resurrection of Jesus Christ no one will hear and believe the news.

Notice how Luke emphasizes this in this text. It's not when the women see the empty tomb that they believe. It's when they are told by the angel to remember what Jesus told you.

[28 : 08] That's when they believe. this is consistent with Luke 11 29 to 32 where Jesus says that no sign will be given to this generation except for the sign of Jonah.

There are multiple ways that the gospel writers apply that sign of Jonah. Matthew used the sign of Jonah to refer to the fact that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days which is like a death and then he came out and they said that that foreshadows that story foreshadows or parallels Jesus being buried in his tomb for three days and then being raised from the dead.

But that's not the way Luke mentions the sign of Jonah. The sign of Jonah that Luke mentions in Luke 11 is not the fish part but the fact that Jonah came out and then preached to the people of Nineveh.

It's Jonah's preaching that's the sign that people of Nineveh saw or heard and came to faith in. And likewise then the parallel here is that the sign that Jesus says this is the only sign I will give to this generation because no one's going to see Jesus' empty tomb.

No one's going to see the risen Jesus in the flesh anymore. The sign that is given to this generation is not to see but to hear from the people of God that Jesus is raised from the dead.

[29 : 37] As Romans 10 14, 17 says how then will they call on him whom they not believed? How can they believe in someone whom they have not heard? And how can they hear unless someone preaches to them?

And how can they preach unless they are sent? So faith comes from hearing not from seeing and hearing through the word of Christ.

Saving faith comes by hearing the word of Christ and that means brothers and sisters we must tell of Jesus. It's as simple as that.

If you feel that you are not qualified to tell people about Jesus and his resurrection then I want to ask you to consider who Jesus' first witnesses are. It says in verse 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other woman with them who told these things to the apostles.

All of the gospels record that the first report of the resurrection was by these women. And this is a remarkable fact considering the status of women in the ancient world.

[30 : 56] To illustrate the first century Jewish historian Josephus writes in his book Against Apian but let not the testimony of women be admitted on account of the levity and boldness of their sex since it is probable that they may not speak truth either out of hope of gain or fear of punishment.

Similarly the Talmud which is the compilation of Jewish rabbinical oral traditions and commentary stipulates that women may not be a valid witness in legal Jewish proceedings Jewish legal proceedings.

In fact this was exactly what Christians of the early age were mocked about in the second century Greek philosopher Kelsus mocks Christians on precisely this point arguing that our doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus is based on the testimony of quote half frantic self deceived woman but the Bible betrays no such prejudice despite the fact that it would have been a point of embarrassment in their culture in their cultural context that the first witnesses of Christ's resurrection were women none of the gospel writers try to hide this fact or minimize this reality and I think this is a corroborating evidence of the authenticity of these resurrection accounts and of the integrity of the authors who wrote them it also shows that both men and women can be witnesses of Jesus Christ I mean think about it it's not like the 11 apostles remaining are all that better they're just a bunch of fishermen

God is no respecter of persons and he is not looking for expert witnesses he's looking for true and faithful witnesses you don't have to be a pastor with formal theological training to share the good news of Jesus Christ with your neighbors you just need to believe in Jesus Christ and that brings me to my final point we must believe the resurrection some of you here are not yet followers of Christ and you must first believe in the resurrection before you can remember and tell of the resurrection of Christ in verses 11 to 12 we see that the words of the woman seem to be seem to the apostles an idle tale and they did not believe them but Peter rose and ran to the tomb stooping in looking in he saw the linen cloths by themselves and he went home marveling at what had happened here we see two contrasting responses to the witness of Jesus' resurrection most of the apostles do not believe at first it was hard for people to believe the resurrection back then too but Peter marvels at what had happened the word translated idle tale is a Greek word that's usually to

describe the delirious talk of people who are sick delirium delusion nonsense people's skepticism toward the resurrection of Christ is nothing new to this day many treat our faith in the resurrected Christ as a delusion a delirium but the resurrection is no idle tale you can see in today's passage that Jesus' disciples both men and women were not expecting the resurrection they are surprised the resurrection was not some conspiracy that they were all in on prior to the fact it was rather an unexpected event a surprising reality that they had to reckon with and make sense of what do you make of the empty tomb what do you make of all those disciples who lived and died proclaiming that they saw the risen Jesus according to third century pastor and theologian origin and church historian

Eusebius all of the all of the twelve apostles except for apostle John were killed for bearing witness to Jesus Peter bore witness to Jesus from Jerusalem all the way to modern day Turkey and then he was crucified by Emperor Nero after bearing witness in Rome James bore witness to Christ throughout Judea and was killed by King Herod Agrippa the first John was the only one that made it to old age but he died in exile in Patmos it's possible he did come back from exile but that's where you spend the waning years of his life Andrew bore witness to Jesus as far as modern day Ukraine southern Russia and Kazakhstan and then was crucified in Patras Greece Bartholomew bore witness to Jesus as far as modern day

[36 : 16] India and Armenia where he was then flayed to death for his faith James the son of Alphaeus bore witness to Jesus as far as Egypt where he was crucified for his faith Judas the son of James also known as Jude or Thetius bore witness to Jesus in Iran in Syria and Lebanon where he was beheaded for his faith Matthew bore witness to Jesus as far as modern day Sudan and church tradition holds that he too was martyred Philip bore witness to Jesus as far as modern day Greece Syria and Turkey where he was beheaded for his faith Simon the zealot bore witness to Jesus as far as Mauritania Libya and Britain where he was crucified Thomas bore witness to Jesus as far as India where he too was martyred Matthias the last apostle to be added to replace

Judas the Iscariot who betrayed Jesus bore witness in modern day Azerbaijan and Armenia and Georgia and he was stoned to death and I dare say that there are many in this room right now who would gladly give their lives for Jesus do you really think that they all died to keep a lie Christ really did conquer death he was raised from the dead and that's why Luke calls him the Lord Jesus in verse three Jesus has been called Lord before but by itself sometimes it can just mean something as simple as sir but when you combine the title

Lord with the name Jesus and becomes the Lord Jesus this is the only time he's called the Lord Jesus is after the resurrection here in Luke only happens once in the gospel of Luke but in the sequel in the book of Acts Jesus is called the Lord Jesus 18 times because it's only after the resurrection that we see Jesus as the exalted Lord that we saw only a glimpse of during his transfiguration he is the Lord Jesus who demands our submission who deserves our allegiance who is worthy of our worship Jesus is Lord and Lord over all he reigns over all creation his name is exalted above every other name and Romans 10 9 promises all of us and I want to implore you if you have not yet put your faith in Jesus Christ it says if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that he raised

Jesus from the dead that God raised Jesus from the dead that you will be saved if that's not amazing to you then you do not quite understand what I'm saying to you do you realize what God is offering you free gift of salvation eternal life freedom from the bondage of sin and death forgiveness reconciliation with God we're offering that to you right now and all you need to do confess outwardly the name of Jesus and believe inwardly that God raised him from the dead let's pray father we ask that you would please anyone here who does not yet know you and does not yet belong to you but they are yours you have chosen them won't you now father call them by name won't you father now speak into their heart won't you father now give them the gift of faith that they might be born again to a living hope of the resurrection and lord please comfort my brothers and sisters in christ who already know you their lives are full of disappointments discouragements struggle with sin but lord remind them this morning and comfort them of that hope that we have in the resurrection in Jesus name we pray amen