

Title: He Is Risen!

Text: Luke 24:1-12

Take your Bibles and turn to Luke chapter 24. This is an exciting chapter. A chapter on the resurrection. HE IS RISEN! That is the good news of the Gospel. Even fellowshiping on this day, Sunday, and every Sunday ought to be a resurrection day to the Christian.

The early church practiced on Sunday because of the following two reasons:
 (1) Because Pentecost, the birthday of the church happened on Sunday.
 (2) But the major reason is that Jesus arose from the dead on Sunday. And we celebrate that every time we come together and have what we call church. We are praising and worshipping the Lord who has arisen from the dead.

So, today we are going to talk about that. And in preparation I just went through our hymn book, and other hymn books, and I discovered something. In every age of the church they have written about the resurrection. As a matter of fact, even songs that are not in our section of resurrection songs, but are found in other sections of our hymn book, still have verses or stanzas on the resurrection.

And just stepping back into history, I was struck again by George Frederick Handel. Who wrote these words:

Thy is the Glory, risen conquering Son,
 Endless is the victory, Thou over death have won
 Angels in bright raiment, rolled the stone away
 Kept the folded grave clothes, where the body lay.
 Now Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb.
 Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom
 Let His church with gladness hymns of triumphant sing
 For her Lord now liveth, death has lost its sting
 No more we doubt thee, glorious prince of ~~light~~ Life
 Life is not without thee, aid us in our strife
 Make us more than conquerors, though thy deathless love
 Bring us safe through Jordan to ~~the~~ home above.

Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son
Endless is the victory, Thou over death has wone

--AMEN?

Boy, I will tell you there is so much. Do you want a blessing? Just read our hymn book . The wonderful songs and verses about the resurrecton.

And modern writers have shared much with us about the resurrection. The Gaithers and some of their songs. Dallas Homes and "Rise Again". Don Francisco "He Is Alive, And I am forevern. And the gates of heaven are op'ned wide."

Lots of songs. WHY?.....Because the resurrection, my friends, is our hope. Everything we believe as Christians is centered in what we are reading about today.

Take your Bibles and look at Luke chapter 24. And we will read the first twelve verses.....(READ VS 1-12)

PRAYER

Father, how thankful we are for that marilous day, 1900 years ago, when Jesus Christ arose from the dead. Our lives are so different because of it. And shall be even more in the future when we, also, shall be raised from the dead in His likeness. Bodyies that will be changed. No more hunger or thirst. no more tears nor pain. "For the lamb in the center of the throne, shall be our shepherd and shall guide us to springs of the watrer of life, and God shall wipe every tear from our eyes."

Oh, God, we pray that you would deepen our understanding and our love for Jesus, our resurrected Lord. May we go out rejoicing today. Remember again that he is alive. And that makes all the difference in the world. And we thank you in Jesus wonderful name.....Amen

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In looking at the impacked of the resurrection there is so much that we need to talk about, but just a few priinciples this morrowing. I want to share just four things.

In a great book by Frank Morrison, called "WHO MOVED THE STONE," y u have point number one.

You see, when those women came to the tomb they were were concerned about it. There was no time to prepare the spices in the normal routine for someone who had died. And the real question in their mind is HOW ARE WE GOING TO REMOVE THE STONE. How are we going to move that huge stone from in front of the tomb/? That was a great concern for those woman coming to the tomb that morning with all those spices.

And that is why they wvre startled to find the stone already rolled away. (1)And the first thing that I want to share with you this morrowing a fasinating point that is brought out by Rrank Mossison. He says that the very moving of the stone, itself, is a .proof of the miracleous ressurectoon of Jesus Christ. I simply want to state this point. That an angel of the Lord according to the Bible, rolled away the stone. And established right away the super-natural intervention of God. This is no nature explanation. There is no way of getting around the problem. And believe me, there have been those who have tried. It is a matter of court record.

One of thegreatest legal cases in all of history happened in Great Britian in the last century. All rooted in the resurrection to disprove its facts. And all Brishish history records that it is the most attested fact of all of history. There is nothing that can equal it. And the evidence is there. And yet people still question: DID JESUS REALLY ARISE FROM THE DEAD.

We start with the fact that an angel moved away the stone. Luke does not say that. It is recorded in Matthew chapter 28. Luke simple says that when they came to the tomb the stone had been rolled away.

How big is that stone? How significant is that stone? People ask that question. All we know is what history tells us. There is nne record that says it took 20 men to move the stone down an include. Now, what they did is they had built out of the rock in front of the family tomb a ledge. AND the stone would in front of the opening on that ledge. And it was on a .incline. Going down hill to the door. And then there was a rock base. So this huge stone would be stopped by this rock base and then one could move it.

It was hard to push it down the incline, let alone push it up.

It is interesting that the Bible is clear on that point. Because the Greek words translated "rolled away the stone" are literally "roll up the incline." And that is Just what would have had to happen.

And then there is the Roman guard problem. How in the world could 11 guys, minus Judas, roll that stone up the incline. Let alone overcome those Roman guards. I don't know if you know this or not. But a Roman soldier was trained with his armour and sword to protect 16 square feet against 100 people. They were highly trained soldiers. And I doubt that those disciples could have overpowered them. Especially since all these disciples had forsaken Jesus at the cross. And also because they did not believe the women that Jesus was not in the tomb.

People try to explain the moving of the stone. But, I read these words in Matthew 28:2 "And behold, a great earthquake. . . . Luke doesn't mention that. "an angel of the Lord descended" . . . and this settles it for all time. . . ."and he rolled away the stone and sat upon it."

So, according to the Bible, an angel of the Lord rolled back the stone. And right away introduces us to the supernatural intervention of God. The whole story of the resurrection is intervention by God Almighty. And there is no other explanation. . .

(2) Now, the second thing that I want you to see is the reaction of the Women. Not only did the angel of the Lord roll away the stone, the women reacted with mixed emotions of confusion and fear and even joy.

According to Luke 24 they brought the spices that they had prepared. Vs 3 says that they went into the tomb and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. "And it happened that they were perplexed about this."

So, their first reaction was confusion. How could this happen?

And then two men stood by them in dazzling garments. And then as they were afraid. . . now we have fear in their hearts. . . they bowed their faces to the ground and the men said, 'why do you seek the living among the dead?'

"He is not here. He has arisen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day...not after three days... but the third day rise again. And they remembered His words."

Now, I look at these women. And I am fascinated by this story. We learned in last message that these are the women standing at the cross watching of that was taking place. They are the ones that went to the tomb and watched as they laid Jesus in the tomb. Knowing that it was the sabbath. Thus they had no time to do what was normally done at a Jewish burial. And that is why they came very early in the morning through not understanding how they are going to get the stone rolled away.

And these women are always there. And we learned last time that these had been touched by the power of Christ. Every last one of them had had evil spirits and illnesses taken from them by the healing power of Jesus. And Oh how they loved Him.

And as was the customs of those time when those caravans would travel the hills, there were lots of people. And the 12 disciples were there. But, there were other disciples that followed that little group where ever Jesus went. And these women were there. And they took care of them out of their sustains. Some of them were quite wealthy.

But, I focused on these women again. Because it was the preciousness of our Lord's work with these women that really hit a note with me. Not only in the fact, as we mentioned in our last message, that it was Jesus who truly liberated women, Church history has done a number on them. But, listen, Jesus always set men and women free. And He loved women. He cared for them. He was willing to be seen with a woman taken in adultery. And to say, "Go and sin no more." It was the feet of Jesus that were wiped with the hair and tears of a woman of the street that had experienced His forgiveness. Jesus loved women and set them free.

And these women were there. And they cared about him. And of course their is confussion in their hearts. Add fear and sorrow and mixed emotions are tremendous. But, they loved Jesus. And don't you miss that. As a mater of fact, I believe the Bible indicates the love of Jesus for these women because Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene. And he also gave the rest of those ladies a private appearance on the road. ISn't that just like our Lord.

Mary Magdalene acording to the Bible in Mark 16:9, had seven demons cast out of her. Mary is the one that went with the women back to the disciples and said, "they have taken away our Lord, and we don't know where they have laid him." It was Mary who followed when Peter and John ran to the tomb. And she was still there. And Jesus appeared to her, first, after Peter and John left.

Turn to John chapter 20 and let's read about it. In John 20 Mary Magdalene experieced the tender love of the Lord Jesus in powerful ways in her life. As demons were cast out of her life, she was forgiven, healed and in a marelous way came to Love Jesus. And then Jesus appeared to her, first, before anyone else after he arose from the dead.

In JOhn 20 it says in Vs 11. (Read Vs 11 down to Vs 16 and the word Mary) It must have been something about the way He said here name. YOu know, I have a tendency to read into the Bible, I know I do that at times. I like to live the Bible and live the characters. And I always have to rmaind myself when I am teaching, what is scripture and what is just my opinion. But, this is one of those times.

When Jesus said "Mary"..and she knew who he was...I just love to connect passages together. Like, the passage that says that Jesus knows all the stars by name. I think he knews who you are. Have you ever wondered if Jedsus knows who you are? Hay! listen He knews who you are. And I just picture Him saying to me.."BILL...Bill it is a miracle you are here."(Ha)

You know, I can hardly wait to hear Jesus call my name. Listen, he knows you by name. The Bible says that he knews every hair on your head. He knews all about you.

MARY! She knew immediately. And she turns around and said.. "TEACHER."
"Rabboni"...And do you know what she did? She threw her arms around Him and
wouldn't let him go.

He said, "Stop clinging to me; for I have not yet ascended to the Father
But go to my brethren."

By the way, some people make a big theological issue out of this. This
is no big dark theological issue. He just says stop clinging to me. Do you
know what she was doing? She wasn't going to ever let him go again. He said.
"Hay, I haven't gone yet. I will be here for a little while. But I am going to
ascend. And then I will be gone. But, first I have some things to do. So,
would you stop hanging on to me.

And when I read that, I just had to say, "Man, there is love." How
much do you love the Lord Jesus?

What would you do if Jesus came and appeared to you? The resurrected
Lord. She love him. She clinged to him.

You know, it is the same thing the women did when Jesus appeared to
them on the road. They threw their arms around him and they were not going
to let him go. You went away once..you are not going to get away again.

Boy they loved Him. Do You?

Can heaven be any sweeter then meeting the Lord, Jesus? And have Him
recognize you?

Have you ever been gone from someone a long time and then you come
home and hear them call out your name. Man, you fell so good. It is great
to hear your name from a loved one. (example: coming home from Vietnam)

Can you imagine getting to heaven and Jesus saying.. "Let's see.. Ah...'
MacArthue church.....Ah..2301 Rumrill...Ah..I think you were in our plan..."

Are you kidding. He knows you..He knows your name. Praise the Lord.

Well turn over to Matthew chapter 28. Let me show you something that
happened to these women. They reacted not only with confussion and fear. But
also with great joy.

There was Mary Magdalen, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna. And Vs 10 says "the other women." We don't know how many. At least 4 or five came with the spices.

In Matthew 28: 8 it says "and they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples."

If you want to know what the basic attitude of every church service that meets on the resurrection day, namely Sunday, it is JOY..not sorrow... Hay, ~~and~~ we come with pains and hurts...YES, WE DO. ..Do we come with some sorrow and questions and hurts in our life?..YES, WE DO..But, we do not come to hear of sorrow. We come to hear the joy of the gospel. Listen, we serve the resurrected Christ. And we are going to get bain new bodies. Adnd the older we get, the more thrilling that truth becomes..RIGHT?)HA)

They had great joy. Now, back to Luke, again, chatper 24

(3) There isa third thing we have to mention and it is sort of a ~~disapointment~~ disappointment. We started by saying that an angel of the Lord rolled away the stone and indicated the super natural intervention of God, Almighty in the events of the resurrection. And secondly, the women reacted with confussion and fear and great joy. They had mixed emotions. But, (3) third, the disciple refused to believe it. The same guys that lived with him for three and a half years. The same men who heard him say, "the third day I will arise again" are the very guys who do not believe it,

And that deminstrates to me, once and for all, the real problem , dear friends, is not a course on apoloics, to prove to you that Jesus arose from the dead, the real problem is the sinfulness and blindness of our own hearts. You can have all the evidence presented to you...and all the facts..There is no other event in history so will doctu documented as the resurrection. If you want to know, it is there. You can study it. There have been countless books written about it. But, Hay! I have discovered that people have a heart problem. The Bible says that the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, least the light of the gospel of Christ shine in

Them.

Without the Holy Spirit, we stand, as it were, as dead corpses. Have you ever seen people who look like death warmed over? I have seen people who have been torn apart by sickness and disease. Yet, they have been touched by the forgiveness of Christ. And their only hope is the resurrection of the body. And the passages that we read in the Bible, like: "the outward man decaying, but the inward man is being renewed day by day" all of a sudden became more powerful.

Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it. Redeemed, by the blood of the lamb. Set free, inside. And one day we shall have brand new bodies in His likeness. It is amazing that the disciples did not believe.

According to Luke 24:9 these gals returned from the tomb and "reported all these things to the eleven and all the rest". There were some others there. And it was "Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James who told these things to the apostles." And vs 11 --so sad--say, "And these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them."

It is hard to imagine, isn't it?

But, I ask you..even those who say they believe..Just listen for a moment. DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE?

Christianity is nothing with the resurrection. Nothing..It is zero.. Nothing to it. Don't go to church another day in your life, if Jesus has not been raised from the dead.

That is what Paul said in I Cor. 15 "All preaching is a waste of time, unless Jesus is alive." Every thing about your faith is zero, there is nothing to it, if Jesus did not arise from the dead. Paul, also said that. You are yet in your sins and under the penalty and consequences of your sin. And we face death and eternal separation of Almighty God because of sin.

My friend, everything we believe is based upon the resurrection of Jesus. He is either alive...or He is dead. It is one or the other.

The disciples did not believe.

Turn back to Mark 16. Do you know that Jesus had to rebuke them because of this lack of faith? The same words that Jesus used when he rebuked the storm on the sea of Galilee, when he rebuked the demon. This is no little quiet talk with his disciples. This is no gential touch of rebuke. Jesus is laying it on them. And letting them know what He thinks about the hardness of heart and unbelief.

Mark 16:14 it says: "Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and he rebuked their unbelief and their hardness of hearts because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen."

My belief is:..First of all Thomas is not there. Eight days later Thomas see the Lord. Judas is not there. And you start asking your questions about the eleven who were at the table. But, you know, there were others who were there. It is possible that the two who were on the road to Emmanus are there. Because Luke 24 indicates that they went there and were there when Jesus appeared to them the first night. I don't know which eleven it was. But there are eleven of them at the table, O.K.

Now, it is interesting to me that Peter and John are excepts to this. And I will show you that in a moment.

John has already come to believe that Jesus is alive. Yet, he has not seen Him yet. And Peter, I believe, has come to believe because of something that happened that afternoon.

Now, first of all, I want you to know that when Jesus meat them at the table He rebuked thier h unbelief and hardness of heart because they did not believe those who had seen him after He had risen.

Now, come back to Luke, again, chapter 24. We said there were four things about this passage. One, is that an angel of the Lord rolled away the stone and indicated the neccessity of super natural intervention in all the events of the resurrection. And secondly, the women reacted with mixed emotions. There was confussion and fear and great joy.

And third, that the disciples refused to believe the resurrection

(4) And fourth, Peter responded by going to the tomb to see for himself.

And God reward him for it. You ask, "How did He reward him?" He rewarded Peter by giving Him a private appearance. You ask; "How do you know that? Because the Bible tells me so.

In I Cor 15:5 it says that Jesus appeared "first to Cephas, then to the twelve." Cephas of course Hebrew for Peter.

And according to Luke 24 verse 34 the two on the road to Emmaus are talking and they said "the Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon." He appeared to Mary Magdenlen privately. He appeared to the women on the road. He, also, appeared to Simon.

And I read in Luke 24:12 that Peter upon hearing what the women reported, "Peter arose and ran to the tomb; stopping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying by themselves and he went home marveling at what had happened.

And I believe God honored this big fisherman who kept putting his foot in his mouth, I believe God honored that guy by giving Him a private appearance that afternoon.

Now, why do I like this so much? Well, I just get tired of Peter clubing peter over the head. I really do. They are always on his case. O.K. so he acts like a bull in a china shop. I appreciate that. I want you to know that. I go into these chine shops with Shirley. You guys probable know how this is. These shops have all these nice little fancy things made out off chine and procline and what have you. And it makes me Nervous just to walk around the place. And then Shirley always says..."Bill, be careful." (Ha) And that just puts the fear of God in me. You know what I mean. I am trying to be careful walking down those little isles, you know. And man..it is so easy to knock something over and break it.

So, I know something of what Peter must have been like. And I see Peter getting picked on a lot by Commentators and all of that.

But, let me tell you something, The rest of the disciples did nothing.

But, Peter got up and ran to the tomb. And I say, "Hallelujah for Peter."

Of course, Peter is not too fast on his feet. And according to ^{John} ~~matthew~~ John ran right by him. You find that in John chaapter 20. Turn over there, please. John chapter 20. I like the enthusasism of Peter. But, he is not as fast as he thinks he is.

In John 20 when Mary Magdalene comes and tells Peter and the other disciples whom Jesus loved and said to them "They have taken away the Lord and we do not know where they have laid him."

(Read Vs 3-5)

A lot of people point out that John probably with a worshipping heart just couldn't go into the tomb.

Peter, not bound by such protecall went straight in to the tomb.

Vs 6(Read Vs 6-7)

And you put that together with what Luke said...:He marveling" at what he had seen. Man, can you believe it John?

Vs 8.."So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb entered, and he saw--and..what?..believed"

Isn't that great. JOHN SAW AND BELIEVED. And he was looking at an empty tomb. The empty tomb stands today as evidence of the resurrection of Christ. Dear friends, that is the message of the Gospel. Jesus Christ is alive. And that makes all the difference in the world.

What difference does it make? Let me show you what happened to Peter. Acts chapter 2...Here we are just 50 days later. In Acts chapter 2 verse 32, "This Jesus God raised up to which we are all witnesses." Peter and all the disciples are witnesses to the resurrection.

Turn over to chapter 4.Peter has been arrested. And he is standing in front of the Jewish Sanhedrin. And according to Vs 8 Peter is filled with the Holy Spiritsiad "(Read Vs 10-12)

Let me tell you something. Something has happened to Peter.

Look at chapter 5 and verse 29. After being told not to preach the resurrection of Jesus , Peter said.."(Read Vs 29-32)

Let me tell you..something has really happened to Peter.

And one final passage. Turn to I Peter chapter 1. Peter is writing to his Jewish friends who were being persecuted all over the Roman empire. Many of them dying for their faith. You talk about something has happened to Peter. Listen, to what it says.

I Peter 1:3 ----(Read Vs 3-9)

And all of God's people said....Amen

Let me tell you something. Peter's life was changed. WHY? Because He saw the resurrected Lord. And he knew it was real.

Jesus said to Thomas who had seen him and believed, "Thomas you have seen me and believed. But more blessed are those who have not seen, yet believe."

One day, we will receive the end of our faith..Our trials and sorrows of this life will be rewarded..We will have joy ...we will be full of glory... We will see the resurrected Lord.....

Let's close with a word of prayer

Father, I thank you so much for the good news of the Gospel that Jesus is not dead, but that he is alive. And He is coming back again.

Father, I pray for those in our midst today who are not sure of their own relationship to you, help them to understand that we must believe in the resurrection ~~of~~ Jesus ~~to~~ order to have everlasting life. You tell us that if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we would be saved.

God, help us to open up our hearts to you...Help us to believe and accept the resurrected Christ as our lord and saviour.

And we pray this in the name of Jesus....Amen