

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



Because He Lives

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 24:1-12 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 5:13-16; 6:26-33; 7:7-8; 16:21-23 | Luke 11:9-10
John 3:3; 14:3, 16, 18, 27 | Acts 1:4; 2:21 | Romans 10:9-10 | 2 Corinthians 5:8 | Ephesians 2:8-9
Hebrews 1:3; 9:27; 13:5; 1 John 5:14-15

SUMMARY

After Jesus' crucifixion, no one expected Him to rise from the dead.

Multitudes of people had been crucified, and none of them came back to life. Why would the people of that time even consider such a possibility? Today, those who don't believe in Christ's resurrection can't understand why Christians gather in churches to celebrate what to them appears to be foolishness. Yet this event is the foundation of our faith, not only because the Word of God speaks of it, but because believers all over the world know with certainty that Christ lives within their hearts.

SERMON POINTS

Those who knew and believed in Jesus didn't think He could come to life after being crucified.

Joseph, who was a member of the Council, asked Pilate for His body, prepared it for burial, and placed Him in a tomb. Early on Sunday morning, some women came to the tomb with more spices for His body. If either Joseph or the women had expected Jesus to come to life, they wouldn't have made all these preparations for His burial.

Even Jesus' own disciples who had walked with Him for three years, heard Him teach, witnessed His miracles, and watched Him raise the dead didn't expect His resurrection. Earlier in His ministry, when He first revealed that He was going to be killed and rise on the third day, Peter denied that this would ever happen to Him and was strongly rebuked by Jesus (Matt. 16:21-23).

But just as He had said, Jesus died on a cross, and when the women returned to the tomb, they discovered it was empty. Two angels told them that Jesus had risen. Only then did they remember His words about His resurrection. However, when they told the disciples, they thought the women were speaking nonsense (Luke 24:11-12). But Peter and John got up, ran to the tomb, and discovered it was true: Jesus was no longer dead.

What does Jesus' resurrection mean to us today?

Although many people still don't believe Jesus rose from the dead, for those of us who have trusted in Him as our Savior, His resurrection is not only true but also relevant and very personal.

Because He lives . . .

■ **We don't have to live with loneliness of heart.**

We have absolute assurance that Christ is alive and living within us just as He promised. He did not leave us as orphans. Instead, He sent the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity, to indwell our hearts (John 14:16-18). Since Jesus now lives inside believers through His Spirit, we are never truly alone.

■ **We don't have to worry whether God will**

provide for us. Early in His ministry, Jesus told His followers that His Father, who takes care of birds, grass, and flowers, would also provide for their needs. This promise would have meant nothing had Jesus been just a man, but because He is the Son of God who overcame death, we know we can trust His word. No situation or need is too large for His almighty, sovereign hands. In His perfect time and way, He will provide whatever we need.

- **We can pray with confidence.** After His resurrection, Jesus ascended to the Father's right hand, where He intercedes for us. Knowing this assures us that He will answer our requests. And 1 John 5:14-15 says, "If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" and will grant us our requests. Instead of doubting, we should wait expectantly and look for His answer.
- **We can have a godly, powerful influence in others' lives.** In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told us that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16). Through the power of His indwelling Spirit, we can be an influential light in this dark world and a preserving flavor in our society.
- **We experience the Holy Spirit within us.** Although the disciples had been with Jesus for three years, they were not equipped to complete the work He'd given them until the Holy Spirit came to indwell and empower them. That's why Christ told them to stay in Jerusalem until they received the promised Spirit (Acts 1:4). This same Spirit who came to them also lives within every person who has trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. He's the one who opens our eyes, helping us understand that Jesus died in our place so our sins could be forgiven, and we could be saved. When we repent and believe in Christ, His Holy Spirit seals us as children of God, and no one can ever break that seal. Jesus' resurrection makes our salvation certain, secure, and unbreakable.
- **We can have peace in the midst of the most difficult times.** Before His crucifixion, Jesus told His disciples, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" (John 14:27). Christ's peace is like an anchor that sustains us in life's storms. Although we may cry out to Him in confusion, He never forsakes us but sits at the Father's right hand working on our behalf. Jesus understands our weakness and is always with us to take us through our difficulties and help us become the people He desires us to be.

- **We can face death courageously, boldly, and confidently.** Jesus is alive and is the source of our eternal life. If He is our Savior, we will enter immediately into His holy presence when we die (2 Cor. 5:8). Because Jesus lives, we never truly die but live forever with Him.

There is no hope without Jesus and all hope for eternity with Him.

When we trust Christ as our Savior, the gift of eternal life becomes ours.

- **Romans 10:9** "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Two things are essential for salvation: Confessing Jesus as Lord and believing in His resurrection.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." Salvation is wrapped up in God's awesome love and power and not in our good works. We must admit that we are sinners and believe that Jesus is the only one who can forgive us and make us acceptable to God.

RESPONSE

- What would you say to someone who doesn't believe in Jesus' resurrection? Which do you think would be more convincing--your testimony or a discussion about the possibility of His resurrection?
- Which of the benefits of having a risen Savior are the most precious to you? Why?

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