

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 4.9.2023

## EASTER - RESURRECTION HOPE

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### MATTHEW 28:1-10

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. **2** And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. **4** And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. **5** But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. **6** He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." **8** So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. **9** And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

### II. THE WOMEN AT THE EMPTY TOMB

#### THE SABBATH DAY

- "After the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week..."
- The resurrection marked the foundation for the Church's selection of meeting on Sunday as the new day of worship.
- The women: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, this was the mother of James and Joseph (27:56).
- It is extraordinary that women are listed among the first eyewitnesses of the empty tomb and the risen Christ.
- The culture of the time did not value the testimony of women.
- Celsus, a 2nd century Greek philosopher, argued against the resurrection because women were the eyewitnesses of Christ's resurrection.
- The only reason that all four gospel writers would do this was that they were reporting what actually happened—these are the names of the people who saw the risen Christ.
- And it was these women who became Jesus's first messengers. This reflects the gospel's power to transcend cultural norms. Jesus revealing himself first to these women has a profoundly theological purpose. The gospel is for all—men and women—Jew and Gentile. He came to save all kinds of people.
- It's also the pattern of what God does in choosing the foolish, weak, and despised things in the world to shame those who consider themselves wise and strong. (1 Cor 1:26-29)
- There is no room for boasting.
- If God used these women who would be mocked by many because their testimony wasn't considered believable and valuable, he can use you.
- All the glory belongs to Him and Him alone!

#### ARRIVING AT THE TOMB

- These women were going to the tomb not because they thought Jesus had risen as he said he would, they were going because they thought he was dead.
- Now several times in Matthew's gospel, we find Jesus predicting his death and resurrection. (Math. 16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19)
- He told his disciples what was going to take place.
- If they had really believed Jesus, they would have all been expecting an empty tomb.
- But they don't show up. They're in hiding.
- What we find at the cemetery is a handful of women, going to anoint a body with spices.
- They were coming in a state of grief and mourning.
- And now that the Sabbath had passed, they could now perform the necessary rites of burial preparation.

#### THE ANGEL AND HIS GOOD NEWS

- To their astonishment and complete surprise, the heavy stone that was covering the tomb had been rolled back.
- We get a flashback to tell us what happened. Matthew notes that it was a supernatural event— it was an angel of the Lord, a heavenly messenger, sent from the Almighty, who was the cause of the earthquake that rolled the stone back.
- The stone was rolled away so that there would be witnesses to its unoccupied state.
- The appearance of this brilliant and magnificent being causes the guards to tremble and cower in fear.
- When the women arrive, they are also terrified.
- But the angel says to the women, “Do not be afraid.”
- And he tells them why they don’t need to be afraid.
- The angelic message has three parts:
- First, the angel reminds them of Jesus’s prophetic claim. Jesus said this would happen, and it did.
- Second, the angel addresses the evidence. They were shown undeniable proof, the tomb was empty.
- Third, the angel commissions them to announce the resurrection to Jesus’s disciples.

### III. AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE RISEN CHRIST

- The angel tells them that Jesus had gone on ahead into Galilee.
- Galilee was the place where Jesus had called most his disciples.
- Just three days earlier, while he was at Passover with his disciples he told them, “After I am raised upon, I will go before you to Galilee.” (Math 26:32) This is just another reminder that Jesus is sovereignly in control of every detail of all of the events surrounding his death and resurrection.

#### JESUS MEETS THEM

- The encounter with Jesus on the way is so profound.
- Jesus met them. Those three words are a summary of the glorious power and pattern of the gospel.
- It is the grace of our Lord, he comes to meet us.
- He takes the initiative. If he doesn’t meet us we will never meet him.
- This is the hope and comfort and foundation of the church. Jesus meets his people.
- The emphasis in Matthew’s account is on Christ and what he is doing.
- This is the ministry of Jesus Christ, he came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19:10)
- We don’t find Jesus, he isn’t the one who is lost, we are.
- He is a Savior who meets sinners in the way.

#### JESUS GREETES THEM

- The Greek greeting was a customary greeting of wishing a person wellbeing, health and happiness.
- It was a common expression, like when you say, “*I wish you well!*” or “*I wish you good health!*”
- This is Jesus, the resurrection and the life saying, “*I wish you well!*”
- Only he has the power to actually make them well.
- These women who were previously overcome with deep sorrow, now hear this greeting, “Be well!”
- Their sorrow is turned into joy by one word from Jesus!
- And one Word from Jesus is all you need!
- Sorrow and despair turns into rejoicing and worship.
- Christ’s resurrection is proof positive that a word from Jesus can bring about our very justification, sanctification, and future glorification.
- Because he lives, every word of Christ, is sure and true and we can stake our life on his word.
- The response of the two Marys should be the response of every one whom Jesus meets and speaks a word of life over—they cling to Jesus and worship him.
- Because Jesus has a real, physical body, it was a literal physical resurrection from the dead, they cling to him, they don’t want to let him go.
- We must cling to Jesus with this same devotion and tenacity.
- We cling to him by continuing to look to him and trusting in his work on our behalf.
- We cling to the hope of the gospel, salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone for the glory of God alone.
- But here is a promise of immense importance to us—whereas our grip on Christ is weak and frail —his grip on us is unrelenting.
- Cling to him in faith and worship our all-wise and Sovereign, risen Lord!

#### JESUS COMMISSIONS THEM

- Jesus says to them, “Do not be afraid.”
- The command, “fear not” or “do not be afraid”, is one of the most often repeated commands in Scripture.
- And we need to hear those words often because we are prone to fear.

- Jesus says that also to reassure them.
  - We need to be reassured so that we know that we are in Christ, and we are secure in him, we belong to him, and that he can't lose us. When we trust in that, we are freed from the tyranny of fear.
  - And he tells them, "Do not be afraid," because they have a task to accomplish.
  - *"Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."*
  - We also have a task to go and tell others about Jesus!
- 
- He says, "go and tell, MY BROTHERS"
  - This is the first time in the gospel account he directly calls them brothers. He calls brothers those who denied and abandoned him.
  - The brotherhood cannot be destroyed because the grace of God is anchored at the cross and the empty tomb.
- 
- Has Jesus met you? Have you met him?
  - Do you believe he is the risen Lord and Savior?
  - I implore you today, be reconciled to God! Trust in Christ alone for your salvation.
  - The resurrection ensures that everything God has promised to us in Christ is and will be ours.

#### **APPLICATION AND REFLECTION**

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?