



Easter Sermon, Sunday April 4, 2021, “Jesus’ Promise”

SCRIPTURE: Mark 16:1-8 ¹When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” ⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Introduction: From Palm Sunday to Easter

Palm Sunday is the day when Jesus entered Jerusalem. Jesus did many things during the week before he took up the cross. On Monday, Jesus cursed the fig tree. On Tuesday, Jesus discussed in the temple. On Wednesday, while Jesus was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it over his head. On Thursday, Jesus washed the disciples' feet. On Friday, Jesus died on the cross. Saturday is the day when Jesus rested in the tomb, and it is a day of sorrow for us. However, the women who followed Jesus from Galilee on this day were not just sad. They prepared burial spices so they could anoint Jesus' body and wait for the Sabbath.

Body: People's First Response to the Resurrection

It was the morning of the resurrection. The women went to the tomb to anoint burial spices to Jesus' body and they went back to Galilee for their livelihood. However, when they arrived at the tomb, something completely unexpected happened. The door of the tomb was open, and they saw a young man clothed in a white robe. The women were shocked. But the angel said, **“Don't be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He isn't here! He is risen from the dead. Look, this is where they laid his body. Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died.”**(Mark 16:6-7)

Would the women who heard the angel's story rejoice? Would they praise the Lord? Let's look at today's text **Mark 16:8**. **“And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid.”**

What is easy for these women to accept is the death of Jesus. Death is so sad, but it always happens. Therefore, it is easier to admit death than to admit that Jesus has risen. Even today it is easier to accept the dead Christ than the living Lord. The dead Christ gives us a sense of security, but the living Christ gives us constant controversy. So, why would it be hard to believe that Jesus had arisen again?

First, it was a first in human history. There had been no such thing in human history. Those who are new to it always lack confidence in whether this is true or not.



Second, the reason why it is difficult to accept Jesus' resurrection is because the grief was so great. The crucifixion is a tremendous event. Women had seen Jesus long suffer on the cross. The way Jesus suffered filled their minds and thoughts. We are similar to these women. While meditating on the cross during Passion Week, our hearts do not change easily by rejoicing in the Resurrection of Jesus. Because we still have the suffering of Jesus.

However, as in today's text, it is not only these women who do not believe in the Resurrection of Jesus and are surprised. So were the disciples. **Let's look at Mark 16:11. "When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it." Mark 16:13 also says, which follows. "These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either."** So Jesus appeared to His disciples and rebuked them for their lack of faith.

However, the disciples who were not sure about the Resurrection of Jesus changed. The disciples cried out that Jesus, who was crucified, has risen. And they suffer and die for Jesus. **Why did the disciples change like this?** This is because the Lord often appeared to His disciples after His Resurrection, spent time with them, and gave them confidence. So we too have a few things to do to be sure of the Resurrection.

First, we must have time with the Lord. When the Lord wants to spend time with us, we should take it with joy. **So, Revelation 3:20 say. "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."** The Lord enters our hearts and wants to be with us. May our abundant fellowship with the Lord be made day by day. What is the second thing we must strive for to be sure of the Resurrection?

Second, we must strive to be together. There are times when Jesus appears to his disciples. It is when the disciples are gathered together. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus first appeared to his disciples when they came together. **Let's look at Mark 16:14. "Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating."** Even in the Gospel of John, Jesus appeared when the disciples were gathered. **"On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you!"(John 20: 19)**

But at this time, Thomas, a disciple of Jesus, was not there. **"Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came."**(John 20:24) So Thomas speaks differently from the disciples.

"So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.'"(John 20:25)

But Thomas also meets Jesus. When Thomas is with other disciples, he meets Jesus. And Thomas makes a famous confession. Thomas said to Jesus, **"My Lord and my God!"**(John 20:28)

I hope we remember! Jesus has promised us. **"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them"** (Matthew 18:20). So, believers should gather together to pray, worship, praise, and do their best to serve their neighbors. Finally, what should we strive for to be sure of the Resurrection?



Third, we must tell the world that Jesus is alive. We must preach the Gospel to the world. **Mark 16:20** says. **“Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.”**

As we obey the Lord's words and preach the gospel to the world, we experience the Lord's presence and become more convinced that He lives. **So Matthew 28:17** says. **“When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.”** The way we get rid of this doubt is by the Lord's command, go and make disciples of all nations. Then we have confidence in the Resurrection as we experience the Lord's presence with us.

Conclusion: Where we can meet the risen Jesus?

Now let's summarize today's sermon. Jesus' tomb is empty when the women arrive at the tomb to anoint Jesus with spices. As the angel said, Jesus is risen.

So where can we meet the Lord? Today's text **Mark 16:7** says. **“There you will see Him, just as He told you.”**

We meet the Lord in the place He promised us, not the tomb where Jesus was buried.

Jesus has promised us. **He said that if we open the door of our hearts, the Lord will come in and eat with us.**

Jesus has promised us. **Where two or three people gather, the Lord will also be among them.**

Jesus has promised us. **He said that when we do what the Lord has entrusted us to, the Lord will be with us.**

As we do this, we will know the Lord better than ever, love the Lord better, follow Him better, and become all those who bear the fruit the Lord desires.

