

The Risen King

Luke 24:1-12

This morning we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord, which occurred a little over 2000 years ago. What a wonderful time this is to be a Christian. Jesus has risen and He reigns. Although we do not see Him with our physical eyes by the eyes of faith we know He lives.

This morning we will look at Luke 24:1-12, which is the resurrection of Jesus. As we have journeyed through Luke's Gospel we see Jesus who is the center of everything. Luke wrote so that we may have certainty about the things that have happened. His intention was to make Jesus the center of every event. He told us about the miraculous events at His birth and how He was born of the virgin Mary. We have some stories about His childhood but then Luke moves on to tell us about the main events in Jesus life and ministry. He wanted to show us so that we would know that Jesus was and is the Promised Son of God. Jesus was the center of everything, the healings, the miracles, the casting out of demons, the teaching, the parables and the rebuking of the religious leaders. Jesus calmed the storms and He fed the multitudes. Then Luke told us about the last week of Jesus life and how Jesus was betrayed, arrested, tried, condemned, and crucified. The living presence of Jesus dominates this Gospel.

Then we get to Luke 24:1-12, which is Jesus' resurrection, the most important event in the book but Jesus is not physically present in these verses. After everything He has told us about Jesus, when He tells us about Jesus' resurrection, Jesus is not there. Why? Because He is risen! Even the structure of the book screams Jesus has risen! We need to understand this. Just because we do not see Jesus does not mean He has not risen. In Luke 24:1-12 we see how the women and the disciples did not understand the empty tomb. If we are not careful, even today, after we have been told ahead of time about the resurrection, we will live as if it never happened. Let's consider what they did not understand and what they had forgotten so we do not make the same mistake.

I. They Did Not Understand Jesus' Resurrection (vv. 1-6a)

In vv. 1-6a, they came to the tomb expecting to find Jesus there. These women were precious disciples of Jesus. They had followed Him from the beginning of His ministry. They had seen the amazing things He had done. They heard Him teach and heard Him say many times that He must go to Jerusalem, be rejected by the religious leaders, be crucified, and then be raised from the dead on the third day.

Jesus told them ahead of time what would happen. Yet, when they came to the tomb and found it empty, they were perplexed. They were confused. They did not understand why the tomb was empty. They did not understand that the tomb was empty because the King had risen.

They thought Jesus was dead and they needed to finish the burial process by applying the spices to His dead body. They came to the tomb thinking that Jesus was like any other religious leader that had been killed for His beliefs and teaching. They were wrong.

They made a mistake but let's not be too hard on these women. Women play a prominent role in Luke's Gospel. They were the disciples who were last at the cross and the first at the tomb. They were the first to proclaim the good news of Jesus' resurrection BUT they are like any other person or disciple, they struggled with the fact that Jesus was dead and raised to life.

We are much like these women. We can all make the same mistake when we come to the empty tomb of Jesus Christ. We can all stumble over the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Many people will treat Jesus just like any other dead religious leader. Many people believe Jesus died but that He was not raised from the dead and therefore they simply treat Him with respect they would any other dead religious leader like Buddha or Mohammad. They love His teaching and His wisdom. They respect His way of life and the example He set but they stumble over the resurrection because it is hard to believe. They do not understand it.

I do not know where each one of you are this morning in regard to what you believe about the resurrection of the Son of God from the dead. If you are struggling with it, that is okay. Perhaps you have not thought much about it that is okay or it may be that you have and you simply know people do not come back from the dead. People in ancient

times may believe that but we live in modern times and so we know better. My challenge is for us to not make the same mistake the women did when they arrived at the tomb.

You may be thinking, *"I am a modern person. I don't believe Jesus rose from the dead. I think He was a historical figure. I think He was a good teacher and a good example kind of like Ghandi. I just can't believe He died for my sin and rose from the dead. In ancient times, people believed things like this but that was back then and this is modern times. We have science and we know better."*

Here is what I want you to see in this text and what you need to understand—believing Jesus rose from the dead has always been difficult. Even *"back then"* it was difficult to believe. It is not that they believed those kinds of things *"back then"* and in *modern times* we don't.

When the women got to the tomb, they didn't look in and think, *"Wow! Jesus rose from the dead just like He said He would. That makes sense. Isn't this wonderful!"* They didn't think that nor did they say that.

The angels had to tell them what happened and they were still in amazement. They went and told Jesus' disciples and what did they say, *"Really . . . that is awesome! People come back to life all the time. I thought this might happen just like He said."* Nope! The disciples thought they were crazy! They called it *idle talk*. You see it was hard to believe even *"back then."*

Acts 17 tells us that when the Apostle Paul was preaching at the Areopagus in Athens he was moving right along in His sermon and the crowd was tracking with him when he got to Jesus' resurrection from the dead and they went nuts. They said he was crazy. The resurrection of Jesus has always been difficult to understand and hard to believe.

Think about this way. If you are going to start a new religion and try to get as many followers as you possibly can to join your religious movement, you don't develop doctrines that cause the gears in people's minds to jam. You don't develop the doctrine of the Trinity where you have one God but three persons in One God. You don't have one of those persons to be the Son of God, who came from heaven to earth to die on the cross for the sin of His people and then rise from the dead on the third day. These are not components for a successful religious movement. Unless . . . they are true and they are.

Many people want to say that Jesus' resurrection from the dead is a myth or legend. The Pharisees and the religious leaders denied that Jesus rose from the dead but they could not produce a body. People began to talk about Jesus rising from the dead and many people saw Jesus and 1 Corinthians 15 tells us that He appeared to over 500 at one time.

1 Corinthians was written just 20 years after Jesus died. The Gospels were being written some 50 years after Jesus had ascended back into Heaven. Here is my point. Myths and false legends do not begin this quickly after the event because they are people still alive who can debunk the myth or legend or, if it is true, verify the facts.

If Jesus resurrection were not true someone could have gone back and sought out the people who said they had seen Jesus to either prove or disprove it. Here is the fact, they did do this and it was verified that it was true. Not only did the people who saw Jesus verify He rose from the dead they died defending what they believed to be true about the resurrection.

Think about it this way, this past Monday a dear friend of mine died and Stacy and I went to a funeral this past Friday. Now suppose that 20 years later I begin to hear that my friend had risen from the dead and had actually ascended to heaven. Should I believe that? What can I do to verify if this rumor is true? It has only been 20 years. All I need to do is drive back down to Texas to find out.

Finally, you don't die for a lie. If you know you are lying and you are going to be put to death for it you then back off. You say, *"just kidding."* That was not what the disciples did they all died defending the truth of Jesus resurrection. You don't die for a lie.

Friends do you live as if Jesus rose from the dead or as if He is still in the tomb? If you are not a Christian, you need to think about Jesus' resurrection, you need to understand it because He is alive. Brothers and sisters in Christ, do you live as if Jesus is alive? I believe that we may often live as if Jesus is still dead. Oh . . . we make verbal ascent to the

resurrection but we go through our days perplexed and confused as if Jesus is not alive and we have no hope. We need to understand that Jesus is alive.

II. They Did Not Understand Jesus' Death (vv. 6b-7)

Well not only did they not understand Jesus' resurrection but they did not understand His death. They did not understand that when Jesus died on the cross He died as their and our substitute on the cross.

- Verse 6b: God sent angels to remind them to remember the gospel. The first thing they did was to tell them to "remember" what Jesus had taught them.

Are you like these women and you often forget what Jesus has taught you in God's word? I do. It seems like over and over in my life God is constantly reminding me of what He has taught me in His word. It seems like the one thing I am most often called to remember is how the person and work of Christ applies to my everyday life.

- Look in v. 7: What were the women called to remember—the gospel!! The angels had to explain to them again why Jesus came. BUT . . . here is what I want you to see. The angels said the *Son of God MUST be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified*. When we hear angels give this message is it like God Himself speaking it. So . . . this word "must" is a divine must. It was not Jesus enemies saying, "Jesus must die" because they hated Him but this was God's plan from the beginning.

In Genesis 3:15, after Adam and Eve sinned God pronounced His judgment along with a prophetic promise. We hear this promise when God pronounces His judgment on the serpent and tells Him, "*He shall crush your head and you shall bruise His heel.*" This is an allusion to Jesus' death on the cross that would pay for the sins of His people. Jesus death on the cross was the crushing of the serpent's head but His death was like a bruising of the heel of the Son of God. All the way back in the Garden of Eden, the atonement was prophesied.

As the Old Testament unfolds God's plan of redemption for His people we learn more. In Psalm 22, about 1000 years before Christ, King David lamented about His suffering as the King of Judah but it prophetically alluded to the suffering of the Son of God on the cross.

Jesus said Jonah's experience as a prophet was a reference to His death and resurrection. In Matthew 12:40, "*For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*" But where do we see in Jonah? Listen to how Jonah 2:3-6, 9 allude to Jesus death and resurrection, "*For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. ⁴ Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.'*" ⁵ *The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head ⁶ at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God . . . Salvation belongs to the Lord!"*

One of the best texts to help us understand Jesus death in the Old Testament is Isaiah 53. Turn to Isaiah 53. I want to read vv. 3-10:

³ *He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

⁴ *Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*

⁵ *But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.*

⁶ *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

⁷ *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*

⁸ *By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?*

⁹ *And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.*

¹⁰ *Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt.*

The women forgot what Jesus death was about and the angels had to remind them. *They didn't understand Jesus' death on the cross was a divine must.*

Perhaps you need to understand that this morning. Let me help you. Look back at Isaiah 53:5 and put your finger on the verse. Now listen to it again:

- *"But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."*
- Now I want you to put Jesus' name and your name in the place of the appropriate pronouns: *"But [Jesus] was pierced for [Michael's] transgressions; [Jesus] was crushed for [Michael's] iniquities; upon [Jesus] was the chastisement that brought [Michael] peace, and with [Jesus'] wounds [Michael] is healed."*

Jesus death on the cross was for you and me. Let me ask you, have you forgotten Jesus' death was for you? Perhaps you just did not understand that at all. Jesus died for sinners, in the place of and for this sin. His death is your death if you turn from your sin and place your trust in Him as your Lord and Savior.

III. They Did Not Understand Jesus Life (vv. 13-26, 44)

Finally, after the women remembered Jesus words and understood, they went and told the disciples that Jesus was alive. Matthew, Mark, and John record that the women met Jesus as they made it back to tell the disciples. When they got to where the disciples were hiding they told them but they did not believe them. They called their words *idle talk*.

The disciples were just like the women. *They didn't understand Jesus resurrection, His death and now we learn that they did not understand His life.*

Before we look at vv. 8-12, I want us to consider how Jesus appeared to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus but they did not recognize Him in vv. 13-26 of Luke 12. Let me summarize the story. These two disciples were walking along and Jesus joins them but they do not recognize Him. He asked them what they were discussing and they told Him about how they thought Jesus might be the One to redeem Israel but He had been crucified on the cross and died.

Jesus told them the same thing the angels had told the women and then they remembered. He also said the same thing in v. 44, *"These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*

Here is my point: Not only did they not understand His death and resurrection but they did not understand His life. Jesus had to walk them through all of the Old Testament in order to help them see the importance of His life too.

What was it about Jesus' life that they needed to understand? They needed to understand that Jesus came to fulfill the Law, the Covenants, to live a sinless life in order to be the sinless, righteous sacrifice on the cross.

They needed to understand that in Genesis 17 God made a covenant with Abraham and in that covenant, Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. At this point, we begin to learn that those who are in a relationship with God need to have given to them a moral righteousness but this righteousness comes from faith in God and not by what they do.

As the Old Testament unfolds, we see in Jeremiah 33:14-16, *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I will*

cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'"

Here we learn that the Lord is our Righteousness and it is our faith in the Lord that gives us our righteousness. The righteousness we need is a perfection that we cannot earn BUT only the Lord can provide. He must earn it and He must give it but how?

In Matthew 5:17, Jesus tells us that He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets which means He would keep them perfectly and earn the righteousness we need. He said, *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."*

The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 4 & 5 how get the righteousness we need. Listen to the heart of these two chapters, [Romans 4:22-25] *"That is why his [Abraham's] faith was 'counted to him as righteousness.' ²³ But the words 'it was counted to him' were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification [Rom. 5:1] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . . ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." . . . [v. 19] For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience [by Jesus' life] the many will be made righteous."*

2 Corinthians 5:21 gives it to us in a nutshell, *"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin [Jesus was perfect, no sin, completely righteous], so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."*

Friends, we must understand the life of Jesus. He lived a sinless life. He kept the Law of God perfectly. He fulfilled all righteousness and is the righteousness of God. *He is the Lord of Righteousness.* He is *the sinless Son of God* and yet He died in our place and for our sin on the cross so that by our faith in Him we may become the righteousness of God. In other words, God gives us His righteousness. Do you understand that?

Illst: Talking with the woman who thought a particular child quit did not want to be a Christian because he could not keep the rules . . . [tell her story].

She does not understand Jesus' life. She did not understand Jesus was supposed to be her righteousness. You see . . . it is not your rule keeping that earns you righteousness. Jesus earned your righteousness and all you do is trust in Him—the Lord of Righteousness.

V. What we need to understand (vv. 8-12)

First, if you do not understand the empty tomb then you need to do what Peter did after he heard the report of the women about Jesus' resurrection [read vv. 8-12]. You need to do some investigation. You need to read the Scriptures and find the truth. You need to ask hard questions of the Scriptures and Christians so you can find the truth. Christians are not people who are afraid of hard or even offensive questions. Ask them and seek the truth for yourself. I think you will find what Peter found and what I found—Jesus is alive.

Secondly, brothers and sisters we need to remember and understand the resurrection so that we may live in light of the hope that it gives.

Do you ever forget the resurrection and live as the women and the disciples did? Do you forget that Jesus said He would be raised? When you come to moments in your life that are like a tomb, feel like death, are you perplexed and think God has abandoned you?

Because the tomb is empty your life can be filled with hope. He is not in the tomb so He can be with you in your darkest moments in life but you must remember what He has done to save you. He came and lived the perfect life you and I should have lived and died our death on the cross that we deserved and His resurrection is our resurrection. When you hit those moments in your life that seem like death and you stick your head into what seems like a tomb,

remember, you are not alone. He has risen!! We need to remember to preach this gospel to ourselves and to one another in these moments.

Finally, we need to understand the gospel so we can share the good news of the person and work of Jesus with others. After the women and the disciples understood, they began to tell others the good news.

We need to understand that God planned from the beginning to bring good out of this our sin, suffering, pain, and the judgment of His wrath against us by sending Jesus to rescue us by taking our sin, enduring infinite suffering and taking the wrath stored up for us on the cross. He rose from the dead and the curse has been reversed. We need to share the good news of Jesus with others.

Lord's Supper is one of the places where we remember and proclaim the good news of Jesus resurrection.

Remember and Proclaim by Andrew Peterson

*As we gather round this table
We remember and proclaim
Christ has died, Christ is risen
Christ will come again
There's nothing to fear and everything to gain
And so we gather here to remember
To remember and proclaim*

*And every time we break the bread
We drink the wine,
I can hear the song in my heart and my head,
And I sing along...
We remember, we proclaim
His death until he comes again!
We remember, we proclaim
Christ has died, Christ has risen,
Christ will come again!¹*

¹ <http://www.songlyrics.com/andrew-peterson/remember-and-proclaim-lyrics/>