

“Are You Living Like Jesus Is Still in The Tomb? Delivered by E A Terry 4-8-18
Ezekiel 37: 1 – 14; Matthew 16: 21 – 28; 1st Thessalonians 4: 13 – 18; **Luke 24: 1 – 12 (Sermon)**

The women came to the tomb with spices on that first Easter morning to give Jesus a proper Jewish burial.

As you know Jesus died on the cross at 3:00 p.m. on Friday and His followers had to hurry to bury Jesus’ body before the Sabbath began at sunset.

These women came to the tomb on that first Easter morning to honor a dead savior.

All of Jesus’ disciples expected Jesus to overthrow the Roman Government.

But now all of their thoughts, feelings, and behavior were focused on a dead savior.

Jesus had told his apostles and followers over and over that He was going to Jerusalem to die **but** that He would rise from the dead on the third day.

In verse 5 we read that the angels asked the women, ***“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”***

There was rebuke in this question and this question stopped the women in their tracks.

Then the angels jogged the women’s memories by saying, ***“He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee”*** (Luke 24:6).

We all need reminders, gentle rebukes, and questions that make us stop and think.

You see, the angels’ question to the women is the question that is before each one of us this morning. ***“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”***

Or to put that question another way, ***“Why are you living like your savior is still in the tomb?”***

We all are often just like these women.

We often carry heavy burdens of grief and guilt around that we should have put down by giving them to Jesus.

Jesus said, ***“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light”*** (Matthew 11:28-30).

We all are often just like these women.

We forget Jesus’ promises.

In Matthew 16:21 we read, ***“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”***

When Jesus said these words they were more than a prophecy; they were also Jesus' promise.

But the women had forgotten them or they did not believe them? Jesus had predicted his betrayal, his suffering, his death, and resurrection.

However, the women and his disciples had not wanted to hear anything about Jesus dying, so they had not paid enough attention to the part about Him living again.

After the angels reminded them of Jesus' promise to rise from the grave these women had a reason to believe that Jesus' was alive.

Jesus had promised to rise from the grave on the third day and when God makes a promise, God keeps it.

The good news is not **just** that God had said Jesus would rise from the dead, but Jesus' rising from the dead guarantees **our** resurrection.

That is our reason for believing Jesus' promise of eternal life in heaven to all who put their faith in Him for their salvation.

Christ's resurrection proves that God is serious about saving us and that God can and will deliver on all of His promises to us.

This morning that one simple question "*Are you living like your savior is still in the tomb*" should cause us to stop and think.

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we come to church without any expectation of God speaking to us through His Word.

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we do not expect God to provide for our needs, or to protect us, or to intervene in our daily lives.

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we do not recognize Jesus working in our lives or in the life of our church.

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we are not sure a Christian loved one will go to heaven when they die. People often say; "*they were such a good person, I know God will honor that.*"

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we ask the pastor to pray for someone who experienced physical death. We forget Jesus' words to the thief on the cross. "***Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.***"

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we question our salvation by saying, "*I know Jesus died for my sins, but it is up to me to live a life good enough to get into heaven.*"

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we say a departed loved one "*is no more*". We have forgotten Jesus said, "***I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die***" (John 11:25).

Grief is real but Jesus' resurrection assures us that separation from a Christian loved one is only temporary.

Jesus promised eternal life in heaven to all believers.

In 1st Thessalonians 4:16-18 we read, ***“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.”***

We act like Jesus is still in the tomb when we mope around with long faces and are unhappy most of the time.

Jesus promised His indwelling Holy Spirit to all believers, (John 14:16) Jesus promised His peace to all believers (John 14:27) and in John 15:11 Jesus promised complete joy to all believers.

Jesus said ***“I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me shall live even though he dies.”*** (John 11:25)

Jesus also said ***“Because I live you will live.”*** (John 14:19)

Those are the most wonderful promises we can imagine.

Those promises give us the assurance that the grave is not the final end but that physical death is only the beginning of eternal life in heaven with Jesus and with all of our loved ones who were Christians.

They are wonderful promises because The Lord Himself made those promises and God is faithful and God always keeps His promises!

You see we love, we worship, we believe, and we serve a risen Savior Jesus The Christ.

The dry bones in Ezekiel 37 are a graphic picture of the discouraged state of the people of Israel.

When we are discouraged and feel like everything that can go wrong has gone wrong, we are living like Jesus is still in the tomb.

We have forgotten God's wonderful promise in Romans 8:28. ***“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”***

God told Ezekiel to prophesy to dead bones, to tell them the word of The Lord and that He would cause them to live.

This is our call today to tell the unsaved people around us that God cares about them, God loves them, Jesus came save them from spending eternity in hell, and Jesus came to give them eternal life.

When we keep the good news of Jesus to ourselves we are acting like Jesus is still in the tomb.

Jesus' resurrection gives us victory of over death and victory over sin which leads to death.

Thanks be to God for allowing Jesus' righteousness to be credited to us.

The Heidelberg Catechism put it this way; *"by His power we too are already resurrected to a new life."*

If we are to make any progress along our spiritual journey we cannot be living as though Jesus is still in the tomb.

The **living** Jesus is no longer confined to time and space.

The living Jesus **is** ready and available to walk along with each of us as we make our journey through this life.

Our spiritual journey begins when we accept Jesus as our savior and we continue our journey by searching for the **living** Jesus in the events of our every day to day activities.

God's word to us challenges each of us to ask ourselves; *"Am I living like my savior is still in the tomb?"*

If you have not accepted God's free gift of eternal life with Him in heaven, won't you bow your head right now and admit to God that you are a sinner and admit that you cannot save yourself from going to hell.

Accept Jesus' death on the cross as payment for your sins.

Pray that God will clothe you with the righteousness of Jesus Christ?

Will you claim the victory of Jesus' resurrection for yourself today?

The Lord has risen! He has risen indeed. Alleluia

AMEN!