



He is Risen

Kicking It Off

What is something you were completely convinced was true that turned out to be wrong? How did you find out?

Read

Luke 24:1-12

Summary

If you pay close enough attention to the world, it will make you cynical. There's just too much that goes wrong, too many things that don't work out, too many situations where you did everything right and still lost. That kind of thinking starts to settle in, and before long your default reaction to anything is a kind of tired skepticism and that's exactly where the disciples were after the crucifixion. They had gone all in on Jesus, believed he was going to change everything, and then watched him get killed. They were done. Defeated. Not even willing to go to the tomb.

But the women went. They weren't going in hope, they were going to do the last kind thing they could think of for someone they had loved. And what they found there completely wrecked their expectations. The tomb was empty. And two messengers told them something they had actually heard before but somehow forgotten: he said he was going to rise on the third day. He told you this. Remember?

And they did remember and it shifted their worldview.

The resurrection didn't make their problems disappear. The Romans were still in charge. Life was still hard. But now they had a completely different framework for understanding their problems. It wasn't, "Things are terrible and there's no hope." It was, "Things are hard, and the God who raised Jesus from the dead is still at work."

That's the difference the resurrection makes. Not that everything gets fixed, but that grief doesn't get the last word. And when they ran to tell everyone, most people didn't believe them. But Peter got curious enough to go check for himself and that's all it takes. A little curiosity. Go look.

Discussion Questions

1. Was there anything from the sermon or the passage that stuck out to you?
2. Our circumstances don't have to change for our perspective to change. What is one situation in your life right now where you need a shift in perspective more than a change in circumstances?
3. Cynicism often develops gradually and feels like honesty rather than hopelessness. Where do you notice cynicism starting to shape the way you see the world, and what do you think is driving it?
4. The women acted faithfully in their grief before they had any reason for joy. What does obedience look like for you in a season where you're not feeling hopeful?
5. Sharing something you genuinely believe is very different from delivering a message you're supposed to believe. What would it look like for you to talk about your faith from a place of real conviction rather than obligation?
6. Curiosity can be the first step toward genuine faith. What question about God or the resurrection, if you sat with it honestly, might actually move you somewhere new?

Significant Quotes from Sermon

"Being a Christian doesn't solve your problems. It changes your perspective. It's no longer: I have problems and it's toil, I have problems and it's meaningless, I have problems and it's hopeless. No. I have problems and I'm going to live out the will of God. I have problems and He has a plan for me."

"There is nothing in this world that can change your grief into joy. But that's why the resurrection is so beautiful, because it's not of this world. The resurrection is the Lord, a supernatural God, the one who is able to do abundantly more than we can ever expect."

"The measure of what makes a good evangelist is not whether thousands of people believe what you say. A good evangelist is one who believes the message. It doesn't matter how many people believe them. It matters that they actually believe the words they are sharing."

"These women were obeying in their grief, and the Lord turned their mourning into dancing. The Lord is the one who changed their worldview from grief, where they expected the dead body of Jesus, and he was the one who sent angels, messengers, to proclaim the truth to them: he is not dead. He is alive. Jesus is alive."

Sermon Notes**Luke 24:1-12**

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. 5 And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." 8 And they remembered his words, 9 and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, 11 but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

Outline

1. From Grief to Joy

- a. Peter and the disciples after the crucifixion: loss of purpose, vocation, and hope
- b. The women go to the tomb in grief, expecting a decaying body, acting in obedience despite sorrow
- c. Angels announce the resurrection: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen" (Luke 24:5-6)
- d. They remember Jesus's own prophecy (Luke 24:7-8)
- e. A materialistic worldview, left unchecked, produces grief; the resurrection reframes, not removes, our problems
- f. Being a Christian does not solve your problems; it changes your perspective

2. From Silence to Witness

- a. The women return and tell the eleven and all the rest (Luke 24:9-10)
- b. They share not out of obligation but organically, because the news is too large to hold
- c. The first evangelists in history were women, and they were not believed
- d. The measure of faithful witness is not whether people believe; it is whether the witness actually believes
- e. Evangelism sparks curiosity and reexamines worldview; conversion is not the only metric
- f. The church often needs to evangelize one another, calling each other out of corporate grief

3. From Disbelief to Investigation

- a. The disciples dismiss the women's report as an idle tale (Luke 24:11)
- b. Peter rises and runs to the tomb anyway; curiosity moves him despite doubt and shame (Luke 24:12)
- c. He sees the linen cloths, and goes home marveling
- d. Investigation is the proper response to the resurrection claim, not passive acceptance or dismissal
- e. Honest prayer is part of the investigation: bringing real doubts, griefs, and questions to God
- f. The resurrection is not about false optimism; it is a supernatural reality that sustains genuine hope

Notes

There is a particular kind of heaviness that settles over a person when the world refuses to cooperate with their hopes. It is not merely sadness. It is something closer to a settled conviction that the world is broken beyond recovery, that the problems are too large, and that any optimism about the future is either naive or dishonest. This is the worldview of cynicism, and it is remarkably easy to arrive at, especially in a world that offers so many legitimate reasons for despair.

The ancient world was no different. When Jesus of Nazareth was executed on a Roman cross, the people who had staked everything on him were left holding the wreckage of their expectations. Peter, the fisherman who had abandoned his livelihood to follow this teacher, who had walked on water and called Jesus the Messiah, was now sitting somewhere in Jerusalem wondering what any of it had been for. His rabbi was dead. His career was gone. His reputation was in ruins. And perhaps most painfully, he had publicly denied knowing Jesus in the hours before the crucifixion. By any measure, Saturday after the crucifixion was a day of pure, unqualified defeat.

This is not an abstract theological backdrop. It is the emotional texture of a real moment, experienced by real people who had genuinely believed something and watched it fall apart. The disciples were not simply sad. They were in the grip of a worldview shift, one that was moving them from hope into something darker, a grinding certainty that there was no reason to expect things to turn out well.

Into this grief walked the women. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and others went to the tomb early on the first day of the week, carrying spices to prepare the body of Jesus for proper burial. They were not going in hope. They were going in grief, doing the last act of care they could offer to someone they had loved. Their expectations were entirely in keeping with what any rational person would expect: a dead body, a sealed tomb, and the practical necessities of burial preparation.

What they found instead collapsed their framework entirely.

The stone was rolled away. The body was gone. And two men in dazzling white confronted them with a question that cut to the heart of the matter: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." And then the reminder, the thing that suddenly unlocked a whole set of teachings they had heard but not yet truly understood: "Remember how he told you while he was still in Galilee that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."

They remembered. And everything changed.

This is the movement from grief to joy, and it is worth pausing over carefully, because it is not the same as false optimism. The women's earthly circumstances had not

improved. The Romans still occupied Judea. The same religious establishment that had orchestrated Jesus's execution was still in power. The problems of the world had not dissolved in the light of the empty tomb. What had changed was something more fundamental: the framework through which they interpreted all of those problems.

A worldview built entirely on the material and the visible will, given enough time, produce grief. This is not a pessimistic observation; it is simply an honest one. Everyone ages. Everyone suffers. Everyone encounters the limits of their own strength. Solomon wrote an entire book, Ecclesiastes, cataloging this experience, returning again and again to the conclusion that life without a transcendent frame of reference is vapor, meaningless and empty. The resurrection offers a different frame. It does not deny the problems. It recontextualizes them within a story where death is not the final word and where the suffering of the present is not the whole picture.

Being a Christian does not solve your problems. It changes your perspective. The problems remain, but they are no longer evidence of a hopeless universe. They are, instead, the backdrop against which a resurrected Lord continues to work. The same God who raised Jesus from the dead is the God who holds every suffering person. That is the shift from grief to joy, not a denial of difficulty, but a reorientation of what difficulty means.

The women did not sit with this discovery privately. Luke records that they returned from the tomb and told all of these things to the eleven disciples and to all the rest. This was not a calculated act of evangelism. It was not the result of a strategy or a program. They told people because what they had encountered was too large to hold silently. The news that Jesus was alive was not information to be filed away. It was a reality that demanded to be shared.

This moment reveals something important about what authentic witness actually looks like. The women were not believed. Luke notes, matter of factly, that their words seemed to the disciples like an idle tale, and they did not believe them. By any conventional metric of effectiveness, the first evangelists in history failed. They shared the most important news in human history and were dismissed.

And yet the message spread. It spread because it was true, and because the women had believed it deeply enough to share it regardless of how it was received. This is a different standard than the one typically applied to evangelism. The measure of faithful witness is not whether people believe the message. It is whether the person sharing the message actually believes it themselves.

Evangelism is often imagined as a performance, a script to be delivered correctly so that the listener will accept the conclusion. But the women at the tomb were not performing. They were witnesses in the most literal sense: people who had seen

something and could not stop talking about it. And the impact of their witness was not zero, even when it was met with disbelief. It planted something in Peter. It created a question. It introduced a possibility that he could not entirely dismiss.

There is also something worth noting in the direction of this witness. The women were telling other believers. The disciples were already followers of Jesus, and yet they were grief stricken, heads down, living as though the story was over. Witness is not only something that moves from believer to unbeliever. It is something the community of faith practices with one another, continually calling each other back to what is actually true: the Lord is risen. The story is not over.

Peter's response to the women's report is the most instructive moment in the passage. He did not simply accept what they said. He did not dismiss it entirely either. He got up and ran to the tomb.

This is the movement from disbelief to investigation, and it is a movement available to anyone willing to make it. Peter was carrying an enormous weight: the grief of loss, the shame of denial, the practical collapse of everything he had built his life around for three years. He had every reason to stay where he was. But there was, apparently, enough curiosity, enough of an inkling that maybe this was not an idle tale, to pull him to his feet and out the door.

He arrived at the tomb. He stooped down and looked in. He saw the linen cloths lying there, the burial wrappings without a body inside them. Luke records simply that he went home marveling at what had happened. He did not yet understand it fully. He was not yet preaching. He was somewhere in the space between confusion and dawning wonder, standing at the edge of a mystery that would, in time, become the center of his life and the message he would preach to thousands.

This is where many people find themselves: not yet believing, but curious. Not certain, but not able to entirely dismiss the question either. The invitation of the resurrection is not first an invitation to full theological certainty. It is an invitation to investigate. To get up and go. To look at the evidence, to sit with the questions honestly, to pray with more honesty than polish. To say, plainly, I don't know if this is true, but I want to find out.

Peter ran to the tomb. He looked for himself. He marveled. And that marveling was the beginning of something.

The resurrection of Jesus is not primarily an argument to be won. It is a claim to be investigated, personally and honestly, by anyone willing to take it seriously. What the women discovered at the empty tomb, what Peter began to process when he saw the linen cloths, is that death had not won. The man who had been killed was alive. And if that is true, it changes everything, not because it removes the problems, but because it

reframes them entirely within a story where the one who suffered most also rose first, and where his rising is the promise of what is coming for everyone who trusts him.

The worldview that begins in grief does not have to end there. The tomb is empty. He is risen.