

Isaiah 65:17-19,24-25 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress... 24 Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the LORD.

1 Corinthians 15:19-26 If in Christ, we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. 20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order; Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

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.

Introduction

Easter is a celebration after a funeral. This year's gospel reading comes from the book of Luke. Matthew's gospel shakes the world with an earthquake. Mark shakes people with confusion and grief. Luke is the only gospel to record the question in verse 5 "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" Do we seek the living among the dead? What do you need to hear this morning from Luke to be able to celebrate with joy all that Easter offers?

Background

1) **What the Women Do**

- The women are seeking to deal with death with no real workable plan. They are doing whatever they can to still be close to Jesus and to deal with their grief. They are there early on Sunday morning with spices but have no plan to deal with the stone.
- We do the same with small comforts: ways to hold on to some shred of closeness to those we have lost. We know what it's like to seek the living among the dead; it's utterly common and completely understandable.
- There are also dangerous ways to seek the living among the dead.
 - Glittering Vices (Seven Deadly Sins) - ways in which we seek life in and through things that can only bring about death. They slowly kill us from the inside out and rob us of joy.

2) **What Christ Always Does**

- Luke 23:39 "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!"
- In the book of Luke, three times people shout at him to save himself to prove his identity and power through self preservation. Luke is emphatic about the fact that Jesus couldn't save himself and us so he didn't save himself. He died under the judgment of God so that we wouldn't.
- You don't have to be overwhelmed or crushed right now - God is not angry with you. Isaiah 65:19- God will "rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people."

Discuss

- 1) What are you seeking in life right now that only brings death?
- 2) Who or what have you lost this year?
- 3) What do you need to hear this morning from Luke to be able to celebrate with joy all that Easter offers?

Conclusion/Application

Ultimately, God will restore to make good on the promise that He will make all things new. In the resurrection, we have the proof of the promise. Death cannot last because Jesus entered death. Just as Jesus was raised, so too will you be raised and you are not owned by anything sad or dark. Jesus is the gift; He has risen! You've always had what you have always sought. Rejoice on Easter and every day!

