

EASTER OPENED THE DOOR TO LIFE!

Easter Sunday

April 9, 2023

Pastor Brian

*“Saturday evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went out and purchased burial spices so they could anoint Jesus’ body. Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they went to the tomb. On the way they were asking each other, **“Who will roll away the stone for us** from the entrance to the tomb?” But as they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled aside. When they entered the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a white robe sitting on the right side. 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!**”
(Mark 16:1–6, NLT)*

HOW EASTER OPENED THE DOOR

1. Before Jesus, the door to God had been **SHUT TIGHT SINCE THE GARDEN.**

“So GOD expelled them from the Garden of Eden...He threw them out of the garden and stationed angel-cherubim and a revolving sword of fire east of it, guarding the path to the Tree-of-Life.” (Genesis 3:23–24, The Message)

2. Jesus’ death **UNLOCKED** the door, and the resurrection **BLEW IT OPEN!**

*“God paid a ransom to save you from the **impossible road to heaven** which your fathers tried to take...he paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.” (1 Peter 1:18–19, The Living Bible)*

“And the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.” (Mark 15:38, NLT)

*“And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, **Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place.**” (Hebrews 10:19–20, NLT)*

*“We have been made right in God’s sight **by the blood of Christ**...” (Romans 5:9, NLT)*

3. Jesus’ ongoing mission is to **FREE THE FREED!**

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to **[those hiding in fear]**; he has sent me to **heal the brokenhearted** and to announce that **[prisoners] shall be released** and the **blind shall see**, that the **downtrodden shall be freed** from their oppressors...” (Luke 4:18, The Living Bible)*

What Keeps Us Locked In?

FEAR

“That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were AFRAID...” (John 20:19, NLT)

What Are We Afraid of:

- Fear of how much I’VE MESSED UP.

“For troubles surround me— too many to count! My sins pile up so high I can’t see my way out...” (Psalm 40:12, NLT)

- Fear of what I might have to GIVE UP.

*“To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let **ME FIRST** go and bury my father.”” (Luke 9:59, ESV)*

- Fear that I could never LIVE UP.

“Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord...because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.” (Romans 7:24–25, 8:2 NLT)

“Because of our sins [Jesus] was handed over to die, and he was raised to life in order to put us right with God.” (Romans 4:25, GNB)

*“Through [Jesus] **EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IS SET FREE FROM EVERY SIN...**” (Acts 13:39a, TNIV)*

4. The opportunity to walk through the door WILL NOT LAST FOREVER.

“But while [the foolish bridesmaids] were gone, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. “Later, when the other five returned, they stood outside, calling, ‘Sir, open the door for us!’ “But he called back, ‘Go away! It is too late!’” (Matthew 25:10–12, The Living Bible, Paraphrased)

“People die once, and after that they are judged.” (Hebrews 9:27, GW)

ACTION STEPS

STEP THROUGH THE DOOR OF FAITH.

STEP INTO THE WATER OF REBIRTH.

STEP OUT TO A NEW LIFE!

JESUS: "**I AM THE DOOR**, and the person who enters through me will be saved..." (John 10:9, NCV)

"For we died and were **buried with Christ by baptism**. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, **now we also may live new lives**." (Romans 6:4, NLT)

"It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, **THE DOOR IS OPEN**." (Acts 10:35, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*)