

- I) V1-12 INTRO: Now on the first day of the week very early in the morning
AS WE BEGIN
- II) We have gathered this morning to celebrate **the resurrection of Jesus**
It is **the fact** of His resurrection that is the **foundation** of our Christian faith
SOMEONE ONCE SAID
- III) The **resurrection** of Jesus is **central** to Christianity, serving as the cornerstone of faith. It validates **Jesus' teachings** and **reinforces the promise** that those who put their faith in Him can have eternal life.
- IV) It is **His resurrection** that gives us **encouragement** as well as **hope**
The fact that Jesus overcame **death and the grave**, gives us strength
- V) The **fear of death** is something every living thing experiences
It is the **uncertainty** and **finality** of death that creates such anxiety
EXAMPLE
- VI) In 1964, Sam Cooke brought out the song A Change is Gonna Come
It's been **too hard** livin but I'm afraid to die
'Cause **I don't know** what's up there, beyond the sky
- VII) We celebrate today because Jesus defeated death
Because Jesus was raised from the dead we can live without fear of death
Heb 2:14-15 since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity, so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil **and free those** who all their lives were held in slavery **by their fear of death.**
BILLY GRAHAM
- VIII) I do not fear death. I may fear a little bit about the process, **but not death itself**, because I think **the moment** that my spirit leaves this body, I will be in the presence of the Lord.
- IX) This is why Paul could write
1 Co 15:55 O death where **is your victory?** O death where **is your sting?**
Sting can be used to refer to **the sting of a serpent**
- X) This points to the **first announcement** of the sacrificial death of the Messiah
After Adam and Eve fell, God cursed the devil and made a declaration
Gen 3:15 I will put enmity (hatred) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her **Seed**; he shall bruise (crush) your head, and you shall bruise His heel

- I) This foretells Jesus' death on the cross and His victory over sin and death
Though there will be constant hostility, the Seed of the woman will triumph
He will crush the serpent's head, though it wounds Him as He does so
- II) Jesus crushed the **serpent's head** and the serpent wounded Him when He died
Though He gave His life, God raised Him from the dead
- III) God raised Jesus from the dead, and He will also raise us from the dead
2 Co 4:14 He who raised the Lord Jesus **will also raise us** with Jesus and present us to God together with you.
- IV) The resurrection of Jesus is the center of our faith
If you remove the resurrection, then our faith is worthless
1 Co 15:13-17 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is **vain** (useless) and your faith is also vain. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!
- V) Notice what Paul told the Corinthians
If He was not resurrected: Our **preaching** is worthless, those **who believe** He was resurrected would be trusting **in empty promises**, those **declaring** His resurrection are **liars**, and those who **believe** He was resurrected are deceived and **still in their sins**
- VI) **Everything we are** and **do** is built on the Jesus' **death, burial, and resurrection**
- VII) If you **remove the resurrection**, then the church is reduced to **a club**
A club of liars and deluded sinners (which is what people already think of us)
- VIII) With this in mind, Paul made it clear that **Christianity rests** on His resurrection
His resurrection gives us **purpose**, and it gives us **hope** for our future
Job 19:25-27 I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!
- IX) **Christianity** rests on whether Jesus was actually resurrected
There are several reasons why this is true
FIRST

- I) Jesus made consistent statements that He would be raised from the dead
It was not developed when He saw opposition gathering against Him
- II) He made it clear He would die and be resurrected from the beginning
Jn 2:19-20 Jesus...said...Destroy this temple and in 3 days I will raise it up. Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days? But He was speaking of *the temple of His body*
- III) Various times Jesus made it clear that He would die and be resurrected
In Mt 16, 17, 20, and 26 Jesus spoke about His death and resurrection
His resurrection validates the truthfulness of His claims

SECOND

- IV) Jesus claimed to be God in Human Flesh and His resurrection validates His claim
Ro 1:4 (Jesus was) *declared to be the Son of God* with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

THIRD

- V) The Lordship of Jesus depends on His resurrection
Recognizing Jesus as your Lord by faith evidences genuine salvation
Ro 14:9 To this end Christ both died, and rose, and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living.

FOURTH

- VI) We believe that Jesus *was resurrected* and our lives are built on this belief
This is what provides salvation for us
Ro 10:9 If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that *God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

FIFTH

- VII) Our own resurrection rests on whether or not Jesus was raised from the dead
Ro 8:11 If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he who raised up Christ from the dead shall also make alive your mortal bodies by his Spirit who dwells in you.

SIXTH

- VIII) It inspires us to *live righteous lives*, anticipating seeing Jesus
Titus 2:11-13 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. It instructs us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live sensible, upright, and godly lives in the present age, as we await the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

SEVENTH

- I) It **gives us comfort** when we grieve the loss of a loved one: we will reunite!
1 Th 4:14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him.

EIGHTH

- II) It is His resurrection that is the motivation for our **spreading the gospel**
It challenges us to live out our faith and to share the message of hope
- III) The resurrection is the core of everything that Jesus taught concerning Himself
His entire ministry rests on whether or not He was raised from the dead
- IV) Because this is true, Satan has worked to undermine the reality of the event
- AS WE BEGIN**
- V) Jesus had been crucified and had died
John and a few of the women who followed Him had been there, **at the cross**
They saw Him suffer, heard the mocking, and they heard His last words
- VI) **They heard** His victorious cry when He said **It is finished**
They heard His last words: **Father** into Your hands I commit My Spirit (Ps 31:5)
- VII) This was a psalm that was part of the evening prayers recited before going to bed
- VIII) The **cross became His pillow** as He laid down His head **one last time**
- IX) They heard this final prayer, and they silently watched Him dismiss His Spirit
- X) John and these women would have experienced deep pain and intense grief
They saw the **Light of the World** extinguished
They saw the **Truth** silenced
They saw the **resurrection** and **the Life** die at the hands of evil men
- XI) As far as they could see, **death was victorious**, and **Life was defeated**
All they saw was a **lifeless body** that deserved a **proper burial**
Their **faith** was shattered, their **hope** was gone, and **love itself** had died
TWO DISCIPLES HAD ASKED FOR HIS BODY
- XII) Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took His body, to bury it (Jn 19:38-39)
He and Nicodemus were **secret followers** of Jesus, but not anymore
They now made an open confession of their faith in Jesus

- I) Normally, only family members would claim a body
Joseph was not a family member, but was wealthy and well known
This gave him access to Pilate, and it gained the needed permission
- II) By doing this, they placed themselves in danger but did it anyway
They took His dead body and gently and tenderly placed it in a tomb
- III) When Jesus' body was taken down, the women noted where He was buried
Though Joseph and Nicodemus gave Him a king's burial, it was not enough
Lu 23:56 The (women) returned to prepare **spices** and **perfumes**. And they rested on the Sabbath, according to the commandment
- IV) V1 Now on the first day of the week very early in the morning they and certain
It is now Sunday morning: The Sabbath has come and gone
- V) According to the Jewish method of calculation, three days have passed
Jews considered a reference to **a day** as meaning **any part** of that day
He was buried Fri. afternoon, was in the tomb all Sat., and into Su AM: 3 days
- VI) They had completely forgotten Jesus repeatedly taught them that He would arise
Often deep grief will challenge your faith and even cause you to question it
This is totally understandable
- VII) In **all human experience**, death is absolutely final!
Job 14:1-2 Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; he flees like a shadow and does not continue
- VIII) There are few things that speak with the authority and finality of a funeral
This is something Solomon said
Eccl 7:2 Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, **for that is the end of all men**; and the living **will take it to heart**.
- IX) In grief we might forget what we have been taught about resurrection
The **reality of death** can challenge you about **all you thought you** believed
- X) It is **early Sunday morning** and women brought spices to anoint His body
They have come to finish the proper burial rites for Jesus

I) V10 Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the apostle James the Less, Salome (the mother of James and John), Joanna and other women are there

II) They had come to anoint **a dead body**, but were completely surprised
Standing at His tomb, they forgot Jesus had said He would rise from the dead
Mt 20:18-19 Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge **and to crucify**. And the third day **He will rise again**.

INCIDENTALLY

III) This provides proof that the death and burial of Jesus was **not a hoax**
There are those that teach that the death of Jesus didn't really happen

I WILL DEVELOP THIS

IV) There is something called the **swoon theory** (late 18th, early 19th century)
This theory proposed that Jesus didn't die, but **fell into a coma** and later revived

V) in 1965 Hugh J. Schonfield wrote **The Passover Plot**, popularizing this theory
The book postulated that Jesus was a political figure who planned His crucifixion by taking a drug that would simulate death. After His unconscious body was placed in the tomb, a political group called the Zealots stole His body from the tomb and spread the rumor that He had risen, thus fulfilling Biblical prophecy.
In 1976 a movie came out based on the book

VI) Indian philosopher Rajneesh (1931-1990) said Jesus survived the crucifixion

VII) In the Koran, Islam teaches that **Jesus did not die**
Sura 4:157 they neither **killed** nor **crucified** him—it was only made **to appear** so. Even those who argue **for this crucifixion** are in doubt. They have no knowledge whatsoever—only making assumptions. **They certainly did not kill him**.

THE BIBLE TEACHES

VIII) He did not **faint**, and He did not **pretend** to be dead and then roll away the stone
He died: Their coming to the tomb to finish His anointing proves this

IX) As they walked to the tomb, they had a concern
Mk 16:3 They asked each other **Who will roll the stone away** from the entrance of the tomb?

The stone weighed 1½--2 tons and was on an incline, sealed with a metal bar

- I) Their **unbelief** had created a need that was impossible to meet
I can (he can) never change! I can't overcome this sin! Nothing can help me!
- II) Who would help them to **roll away** the stone?
As they would see, they didn't have to worry about it: God can take care of it
- III) V2 But **they found** the stone rolled away from the tomb
How did God take care of it? By an earthquake and an angel
Mt 28:2 Behold there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it
- IV) V3 Then **they went in** and **did not find** the body of the Lord Jesus
Notice how Luke records **what they found** and what **they did not find**
- V) **They found** an empty tomb, but **they did not find** the body of Jesus
- VI) Later Peter and John went to the tomb and saw **the same thing**
Jn 20:6-7 Simon Peter came following him (John) and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself
WHAT HAD HAPPENED?
- VII) Jesus' body had been **reanimated**, had instantly been **glorified**, had passed through the **grave clothes** (leaving them flat), **passed** through the solid stone, and had left the tomb **completely empty**
KEY
- VIII) This wasn't done to allow Jesus **to leave** the tomb
This was done to allow the women **to enter** the tomb
- IX) V4 And it happened as they were greatly perplexed about this that behold
What happened? Who removed His body? Where is His body?
They **had the appearance** of men (not babies!)
- X) Only one speaks on behalf of both of them
- XI) V5 As they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth they said to them Why
The women were afraid In the presence of such glorious beings, the natural response was great fear

- I) Matthew gives us more details
HE DESCRIBES THE ANGELS
- II) Mt 28:3 His countenance **was like lightning** and his clothing as white as snow
They were radiant with God's glory, which is a picture of purity and holiness
Ps. 104:4 (God) makes his angels spirits; his ministers **a flaming fire**
- III) Mt 28:5 says The angel answered and said to the women Do not be afraid for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified
- IV) At the sight of such glory they immediately had begun to tremble
They were startled and needed to be comforted
- V) Mt 28:5 I know you seek Jesus
They obviously thought Jesus' body would still be in the Tomb
- VI) Lu 24:5 They were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth
This is the normal response
- VII) When Isaiah saw the seraphim, he said Woe is me! I am ruined (Is 6:5)
When Gabriel appeared to John the Baptist's father, **he was afraid** (Lu 1:12)
When Gabriel visited Mary, he told her **Do not be afraid**, Mary (Lu 1:30)
When the angel spoke to the shepherds, **they were greatly afraid** (Lu 2:9-10)
- VIII) They needed to **calm down** so they could report what they were seeing
This would make them **accurate witnesses** to proclaim what they saw
- IX) V5 the (angels) said to them, Why do you seek **the living** among the dead?
This is what makes Christianity different from **all religions** of the world
The founders of all world religions have one thing in common: **they are all dead**
HOW DOES HE COMFORT THEM
- X) V6-7 Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee
He comforts them by reminding them of **Jesus' words**: He is risen as He said
- XI) You can always trust what God has to say in His word, the bible
Jn 17 records the High Priestly prayer of Jesus
Jn 17:17 (In His prayer He said) Sanctify them by Your truth. **Your word is truth.**

- I) This is what saves us
We believe what God has said, and this faith in Him has saved us
Ro 10:9-10 If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in **your heart that you are made right with God**, and it is by openly declaring your faith that **you are saved**
- II) Lu 24:6-7 He reminds them of His words and gives them physical proof
- III) Mt 28:6-8 He is not here; for He is risen, **as He said. Come see** the place where the Lord lay. Go quickly and tell His disciples that **He is risen from the dead** and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you. So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.
- IV) Mt 26:7 And go quickly and tell his disciples: **They must proclaim this**
Why did the women receive word, first?
By woman (Eve) death entered the world, and by woman life is proclaimed
They went and told others, **Jesus is alive**
- VI) The church has been preaching the resurrection of Jesus for 2,000 years
It is the supreme role of the witness of the Church
- VII) We **proclaim** that all men have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
We **proclaim** that the wages of sin is death
We **proclaim** that it is appointed unto men to die once and after this, judgment
We **proclaim** that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son
We **proclaim** that men everywhere should **repent**
We **proclaim** the promise that if we confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness
We **proclaim** His promise: if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away, behold! All things have become new!
- VIII) **We answer the question What must I do** to be saved by saying Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and **you will be saved**
1 Pe. 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**