

Sermon Outline

Sermon Text: Mark 15:16-20;31-34;37 John 19:28-30; Luke 23:50;52-53; Matthew 27:62-63

Sermon Title: Why are the followers of Jesus the most hopeful people because of the Resurrection?

Mark 15:16-20 ¹⁶“The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷They put a **purple robe on him**, then **twisted together a crown of thorns** and set it on him. ¹⁸And they began to **call out to him**, “Hail, king of the Jews!” ¹⁹Again and again they **struck him on the head** with a staff and **spit on him**. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰And when they had **mocked him**, they **took off the purple robe** and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.” (NIV)

Mark 15:31-34;37 ³¹In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law **mocked him among themselves**. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! ³²Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also **heaped insults on him**. ³³At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (NIV)

John 19:28-30 ²⁸Later, knowing that everything had **now been finished**, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, **“I am thirsty.”** ²⁹A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. ³⁰When he had received the drink, Jesus said, **“It is finished.”** With that, he bowed his head and **gave up his spirit.**” (NIV)

Luke 23:50;52-53 ⁵⁰Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man,. ⁵²Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body. ⁵³Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in **a tomb cut in the rock**, one in which no one had yet been laid.” (NIV)

Matthew 27:62-63 ⁶²The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³“Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive **that deceiver** said, ‘After three days I will **rise again**.’” (NIV) (Silly Rabbits did you really believe you block him)

Introduction

1. When Jesus Christ was crucified in 33 AD, there were only about 120 followers that were true to his message at that time. They were meeting in an upper room a small intimate place as the New Testament tells us. Only about 120 followers. Today, over 2,000 years later, 2.3 billion people in the world claim to be a follower of Christ.
2. The Christian Church is by far, the largest organization on planet earth. Nothing else comes close to the size of the Christian Church..
3. How in the world did that happen? Why did Christianity spread so far and so fast? Luke 24:1-8 ¹“On the first day of the week, **very early in the morning**, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ²They found the **stone rolled away from the tomb**. ³but when they entered, **they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus**. ⁴While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, **“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”** ⁶**He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you**, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷“The Son of Man **must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again**.” ⁸Then they remembered his words.” (NIV) **His Death Certificate** became our Birth Certificate! **It is not over until God says it is over.**
4. So, Why did Christianity spread so far and so fast? In a word, **the resurrection**. Resurrection changed everything. Resurrection is the single **most significant event** in history because Jesus was resurrected.

Only Jesus Christ has done that. **Nothing comes close.** Nor Buddha, Nor Mohammad, no savior in religion has that testimony but Christianity. Only Jesus Christ has done that.

WHY DO THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS HAVE MORE HOPE THAN ANYONE ELSE

1. WE'VE BEEN COMPLETELY FORGIVEN!

a. Jesus repeatedly said, I'm going to die on the cross to pay for all your sins. And then he said, "And then I'm **going to come back to life three days** later to prove that I am who I say I am." (Ex. Matthew 17:22-23) Now, if he hadn't done the second part, then the first part doesn't really matter... If he **didn't come back to life**, then you have every reason to doubt that he **died for your sins**. The two go together.

c. Ephesians 1:7 "In Him we have redemption (we are set free) through His blood, **the forgiveness of sins**, according to the riches of His grace." (NKJV)

1. Many people live depressed, and self-destructive lives because they struggle with **forgiving themselves, forgiving others** or they struggle believing that God has **forgiven them**.

2. We're **all imperfect**. We **all have sins** and things that we feel bad about and guilty about, **but** God doesn't want you carrying guilt throughout your life. God doesn't want you carrying a load of shame throughout life. The whole reason he died on the cross was so that **you could be free from all of that guilt**.

3. Guilt wastes an awful lot of energy. It fatigues you, it tires you, it robs you of peace of mind. But Jesus said, "I came to die for your sins, so **you don't have to die for them**. He forgives YOU, so **Forgive yourself**."

4. Who really killed Jesus, who put Jesus on the cross? The answer is twofold

a. **The first is**, God put Jesus on the Cross? It was his plan from the very beginning. It's why Jesus came to Earth to die for our sins. Isaiah 53:6-10 *⁶All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. ⁷He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. ⁸Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. ⁹He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. ¹⁰But it was the Lord's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, **he will have many descendants**. He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord's good plan will prosper in his hands."* (NLT)

Now notice verse 10 says " *But it was the **Lord's good plan** to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, **he will have many descendants**."* In other words, there'll be people who will follow him. "When his life is made an offering for sin, **he will have many descendants** or **he will have a multitude of children**."

b. **Who else put Jesus on the cross? We did. You did.** If none of us had ever sin, Jesus wouldn't have to die for our sins. Romans 4:25 "He was handed over to die because of **our sins**, and he was raised to life to **make us right with God**." (NLT) This is what Easter is all about. Jesus is raised from the dead to make **us right with God**. Who's included **in us**? **You!** You are made right with God, so you have been completely forgiven. That should give you hope. You are not **facing any judgment**. You have hope because you have been completely forgiven. BUT YOU MUST ACCEPT THAT FORGIVENESS.

2. WE DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID TO DIE!

a. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, one of the things he did is he **broke the power of death**, and he broke the power of **the fear of death**. The fear of death is a universal fear. Everybody has it. All around the world the fear of death is everywhere because **people don't know there can be life after death**.

b. If Jesus Christ **did not** get up from the dead then you wouldn't even know that there's **life after death**. **You would have nothing to prove life after death.**

c. There is greater life after death, and that's good news. That should give hope. John 11:25, Jesus promised, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, **he shall live.**"²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me **shall never die.**" (NKJV) That's a reason for hope. If Jesus Christ had not resurrected on an Easter Sunday, we are all **helpless** and all **hopeless**, death is it. It's over. **Resurrection is not the erasing of suffering.** It is not a reversal of what has been lost. It does not restore the lives taken or remove the weight carried by those who remain. What it does is refuse to let death **have the final word.**

d. Jesus first Disciples were hiding in fear, they were defeated, demoralized, in despair, they were disillusioned, they were depressed, and they were afraid they were going to be executed next as the followers of Jesus. **Three days later when Jesus got up everything change for the disciples.**

1. Acts 1:3 "After his suffering, **he presented himself to them** and **gave many convincing proofs that he was alive.** He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God." (NIV)

2. His disciples had seen Jesus. And not only these original 12 disciples, but a lot of other people did too. Jesus' resurrection turned his first followers from being depressed and disillusioned into **courageous** and **contagious** people **filled with hope.** Why? They are eyewitnesses of resurrection. And they began to spread the **message of hope** everywhere because when they saw Jesus **had come back to life**, it changed everything This is why the church exploded.

3. WE NOW HAVE GOD'S SPIRIT INSIDE US

a. We now have God's Spirit inside of us. His spirit of power. His Holy Spirit is spirit of love.

b. Now, at the end of 40 days after he had been resurrected, Jesus ascends back up to heaven. But before he did, he tells them, he says, "Don't do anything until I send your spirit. Don't try to do anything **on your own power.** Wait for my spirit. He's going to give you power." Acts 1:8 "But you will **receive power** when **the Holy Spirit** comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (NIV) Jesus says this, before he goes back to heaven,

c. Jesus says, I'm going to send my spirit to be **in you** and he's going to give you power to do things you **couldn't do on your own.** So now they've gone from **fearful** to **fearless.** They've gone from **hopeless** to **hopeful.** Nothing is going to stop them now, They've seen Jesus alive.

d. Do you know that God never **intended for you to go through life just on your own power?** God wants to have a **personal connection** with you. He wants to put his love, his power, and his spirit inside you. That gives you a supernatural advantage. It gives you **additional power** that you don't have on your own. When you don't have that power, you say things like this: "I'm at the end of my rope or I'm out of gas." Why? Because you were never meant to live your life just **on your own power.**

e. God wants you to be plugged into His power 24 hours. Until you are plugged into power, **you cannot fulfill your purpose.** Here's the amazing thing. The same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, That same power is available to you on a daily basis. Ephesians 1:19-20 "I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is **the same mighty power**"²⁰ that **raised Christ from the dead** and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms." **What is this power?** It's the power of God's spirit in your life.

f. **What does that mean for you?** If God's spirit can **raise a dead Jesus**, he can raise any dead thing in your life! He can raise a **dead marriage**, a **dead career**, **dead dreams**, and a **dead church!** **But What is this power?** It's the power **to be free from your past.** It's the power **to break those memories that have been holding you back.** It's the power **to start over when you feel like giving up.** That power is available to you. That is the resurrection power that gave them hope. It's the reason we have hope today.

4. WE HAVE AN ETERNAL HOME WAITING FOR US!

a. We have an eternal home waiting for us. We know as followers of Jesus, **that death is not the end.** It's just a transition to better things.

b. 1 Peter 1:3-4 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,** ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is **kept in heaven for you,**” (NIV)*

c. What is heaven going to be like? It is indescribable. It's going to be amazing! Why? Because look at the earth. This is a broken planet. This is a fallen planet. Nothing works perfectly on this planet, and yet there's still a lot of beauty, but it still is an imperfect planet.

1. 1 Corinthians 2:9 *“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has **imagined** what God has prepared for those who love him.” (NLT)*

2. Revelation 21:4 says *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be **no more death**’ or **mourning** or **crying or pain,** for the old order of things has passed away.” (NIV)*

3. **If you were to die tonight,** are you certain you would go to heaven? If you say, I hope so. **Hope isn't good enough.** You need to be certain. You need to be certain, and God wants you to be certain.

4. If Jesus didn't need to die on the cross for you, then it was a total waste of his blood. **There's only one way.** Before Jesus went back to heaven, he said to his followers:

a. John 14:1-3 *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.² My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back** and take you to **be with me** that you also may be **where I am.**” (NIV)*

b. John 14:4-5 ⁴ *Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”⁵ Jesus answered, **I am the way** and **the truth** and **the life.** No one comes to the Father except through me.” (NIV)*

1. My prayer for you is that you will simply open your eyes, that you will today have a moment of clarity that maybe you have never ever seen before. Paul prayer to the people of Ephesus in Ephesians 1:18 is my prayer for you **“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be OPENED so that you may see and understand the HOPE to which God has called you!”**

2. God would say to you this day: "I have known everything about you from the moment you were conceived. I saw you formed in your mother's womb, and I've loved you every day of your life. There's never been a moment of your life when I was not paying attention to what was going on. I've seen the ups and downs, the highs and lows, the good, the bad, and the ugly. **I want a friendship and a relationship with you.**"

3. **What do you need to do?:** Romans 10:9-10 ⁹ *If you **declare with your mouth,** “Jesus is Lord,” and **believe in your heart** that God raised him **from the dead,** you will be saved.¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.” (NIV) **Confess with your mouth** and **believe in your heart** that Jesus is Lord. What does it mean to say, Jesus is Lord? It means that he's God and I'm not. Lord means you have a right to lead me because **you are my creator.** He becomes a CEO of my life. Jesus is my Lord. He is God in my life.*

4. If you want Jesus to be Lord over your life then pray **this simple prayer.** What really matters is the attitude of your heart. If you mean it, it's important. If you don't mean it, it doesn't mean anything. **Pray:** Dear God, today I accept all that Jesus did for me on the cross. Thank you for forgiving everything I've done wrong. I confess my sins to you. I accept you as my Lord and Savior. Thank you that I don't have to fear death. Please put your spirit of love and power in me. I trust you to take me to heaven when I die.-Amen

Now, if you didn't mean that, it didn't mean anything. But if you sincerely mean it, this is a big deal. This is called **the moment of salvation for you.**