



# EASTER

AT MESA CHURCH

## Easter: Resurrection Sunday

### Matthew 28:1-7

I need a fresh start!→**Anyone need a fresh start?**

I've discovered...life happens. What matters more is what i do back to life that matters more. But sometimes...we can't make it happen.

Easter Sunday reminds that no matter how broken or burdened we may feel, through Christ's death and resurrection, we have the opportunity to have a fresh start and embrace the abundant life that God has for us. Jesus desires to bring healing, help, and a renewed hope to our lives. He raises dead people back to life!

→Jesus spent three years preaching, teaching, and performing miracles in Galilee and Judea. He demonstrated compassion by feeding, healing, & releasing people from spiritual oppression. His teachings on forgiveness, love, & justice challenged the status quo. And He infuriated the religious leaders for his divine claims and his critique of their religiosity.

In his final week before being crucified, Jesus entered Jerusalem to the cheers of the crowd as they believed their Messiah was finally here! Would He be the one to help them shake the shackles of Rome? After a good meal with his closest followers, one of his best friends, betrayed him to the religious leaders. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death by crucifixion. The devastated disciples had expected him to be the savior of Israel, but his death shattered their hopes. On Sunday morning...everyone expected Jesus to be...DEAD.

**Mt. 28:1-7:** *28 Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb. 2 Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. 3 His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow.*

*4 The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.5 Then the angel spoke to the women. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. 7 And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember what I have told you."*

**Jesus rose from death to life.**→I believe: historicity of the resurrection.→1 Cor. 15:17-18

- **JESUS:** The only person EVER to predict his own death & resurrection...& do it.→Mt. 17:22-23
- **EMPTY TOMB:** "There is no body! Why is there no body?"
  - **Wrong tomb?** = Too many people knew where Joseph of Arimathea's tomb.
  - **Stolen Body?** = This is undisputed. There is no tomb for Jesus.
    - The religious leaders paid the soldiers off (Mt. 28:12-15)→Opposite motivation!
    - Disciples? = Motivation? Power & riches?→or...The disciples were persecution →**Colson Quote**
- **EYE WITNESSES** of the resurrected Jesus: "Who actually saw the resurrected Jesus?"

- **Women:** If this was a lie...who would use the eye witness testimony of amen IN THIS CULTURE?!
- **Disciples:** They struggled to believe...they needed to SEE.→Thomas!
- **The 500:** 1 Cor. [15:3-8] dates to within 25 years after this moment.
- **CHANGED BEHAVIOR** of the disciples...the church grew under the harshest of persecutions.
- **CONVERSION OF SKEPTICS:** James, Jude, Paul, Ian Hutchison, MIT scientist (nuclear science & engineering)

→TRANSITION: Belief in a historical resurrection leads to a bigger question...what does the resurrection offer us?

Story of Greg Laurie's Dad: Oscar Laurie

**Jesus has the power to give you LIFE, too.**→Is this relevant?→God wants to HEAL, HELP, and give you HOPE.

- **Jesus wants to bring resurrection power to the following areas of my life...but it starts with HONESTY.**
- VISION: We welcome you to the Table...where we are all working on our stuff.
  - **HEALING you of your past.**→Mistakes. Trauma. Full of shame and guilt.
    - Jesus promises a fresh start through forgiveness.→The Paralytic: Mathew 9:1-2
    - Acknowledge. Let go. Forgive. Empathize with other strugglers.
  - **HELP you in your present.**→Addiction. Circumstances. Relationship. Fear. Exhaustion.
    - Jesus promises freedom from oppression, His Presence in our struggle.
    - Ask God for help. Seek community of support. Get a mentor. Celebrate small victories. Rest.
    - Mullins on Hypocrisy.
  - **HOPE for your future.**→Fear. Anxiety. Hopeless.
    - Jesus promises to give you something BIGGER to live for...HIS KINGDOM.
    - Pray. Rewire your neural pathways through Godly affirmations. Praise. Share your faith. Serve others.
- **Jesus wants to bring resurrection power to the following areas of my life...but it starts with HONESTY.**
- Prayer: God, we ADMIT that we need you. We BELIEVE in Jesus' forgiveness. And we COMMIT our lives to Him.
- VISION: We welcome you to the Table...where we are all working on our stuff.

→TRANSITION: Jesus has the power to HEAL, to HELP, and to bring HOPE!

→**Jesus offers than a fresh start. He raises dead people back to life!**

**TALK ABOUT IT - Questions to GROW through with family, friends, & myself.**

1. What Easter traditions does my family celebrate? How do they help us understand the resurrection of Jesus?
2. Why is the resurrection of Jesus so important in the Christian faith? Why is it important to me?
3. What is the "evidence" that convinced me of the historicity of the resurrection? What keeps me believing?
4. How does faith factor into my belief about Christianity? How does it factor into my belief concerning the resurrection?
5. **PRAYER:** "Father, I admit that I need Jesus. I believe Jesus died for me. I commit my life to following Jesus!"

## QUOTES / SONGS:

- *"I never understood why going to church made you a hypocrite either, because nobody goes to church because they're perfect. If you've got it all together, you don't need to go. You can go jogging with all the other perfect people on Sunday morning. Every time you go to church, you're confessing again to yourself, to your family, to the people you pass on the way there, to the people who will greet you there, that you don't have it all together. And that you need their support. You need their direction. You need some accountability, you need some help."* - **Rich Mullins**
- *"I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Every one was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world-and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible."* - **Chuck Colson**

## ARTICLES / BOOKS:

- "The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus," by Lee Strobel
- "The Case for Easter: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for the Resurrection," by Lee Strobel

## VIDEO LINKS:

- **Greg Laurie Tells Stunning, Miraculous Story About His Adoptive Dad:** [Click HERE!](#)
- **Dr. Francis Collins:** Dr. Francis Collins (Former Director of the National Institutes of Health) shares his journey from atheism to faith and answers the question, "Are science and faith consistent ways of seeing the world?" | California Institute of Technology , 2009



- **Dr. Ian Hutchinson:** Dr. Ian Hutchinson, a nuclear engineer and physicist at MIT, discusses the sometimes tense relationship between faith and science while challenging scientism. The Veritas Forum at the University of Virginia: Can Science and Faith Coexist?



## SCRIPTURES: New Living Translation unless otherwise noted.

- **1 Corinthians 15:17-18** - 17 And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. 18 In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost!
- **Matthew 28:12-15** - A meeting with the elders was called, and they decided to give the soldiers a large bribe. 13 They told the soldiers, "You must say, 'Jesus' disciples came during the night while we were sleeping, and they stole his body.'

14If the governor hears about it, we'll stand up for you so you won't get in trouble." 15So the guards accepted the bribe and said what they were told to say. Their story spread widely among the Jews, and they still tell it today.

- **1 Corinthians 15:3-8** - I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. 4He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. 5He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.
- **Matthew 17:22-23**: After they gathered again in Galilee, Jesus told them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of his enemies. 23 He will be killed, but on the third day he will be raised from the dead." And the disciples were filled with grief.
- **Matthew 9:1-2**: Jesus climbed into a boat and went back across the lake to his own town. 2 Some people brought to him a paralyzed man on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Be encouraged, my child! Your sins are forgiven."

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