

## **Almont Vineyard Church**

### **Week 3 Resurrection Series- The Tree of Life- Eden to Eternity**

April 4, 2026

#### **Opening Monologue**

Welcome to the AVC APP! Many of you are regulars, but I want to extend a warm welcome to everyone who is joining us for the first time. There's never enough time to cover everything in a sermon, which is why I started this APP several years ago. FYI, we also have a large archive of past sermons along with extensive APP notes that include deeper research. Just go into the APP and select "Sermon & Study Notes," and you'll find all of it there.

Welcome to "The Tree of Life – Eden to Eternity." We are concluding our Resurrection Series this Sunday. If you have missed any messages in this series, take this link; <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch> or you can find them right here in this APP.

The Garden of Eden was a piece of paradise. Everything was great until Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God plainly told them both: "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Genesis 2:17). Friends... nothing has changed. When we don't follow God's commands, we hurt ourselves and others – that's SIN!

In the first act of grace, God banished them from the Garden of Eden so they would not live in an eternal state of sin and shame. Think about that: one bite inflicted sin on all of humanity, creating separation from God, and ushering in eternal death. Mankind needed a Savior, and so our Lord sent His Son, Jesus, to restore what was lost. "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

The Good News of the Gospels is that Christ's resurrection has opened the doors of the Garden of Eden once again to all who put their hope and faith in Jesus Christ. This Sunday we are going to flesh this out in depth, so we can understand the beautiful biblical thread running through Scripture: Adam ate from the wrong tree and death entered... Jesus died and resurrected, and life returned.

Do you know Jesus? The gates to the Garden are wide open.

Join us as we celebrate the Risen Lord!

"Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And

the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. And Jesus said: Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy written in this scroll.” (Revelation 22:1-2 & 7)

In Christ,  
Rev. Pastor Brad

---

**To Listen to this week’s Sermon: “Wk 3 Resurrection Series- The Tree of Life: Eden to Eternity”  
Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel  
where you can also listen to our Sermons:**

**Web:** <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

**You Tube:** <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

---

### **Key Sermon Text**

#### **1 Corinthians 15:20-22**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2015%3A20-22%20&version=NIV>

#### **Genesis 3:22-23**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%203%3A22-23&version=NIV>

#### **1 Peter 2:24**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Peter%202%3A24&version=NIV>

#### **Galatians**

**3:13** <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%203%3A13&version=NIV>

#### **John 19:41-42**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2019%3A41-42&version=NIV>

#### **Matthew 28:1-10**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2028%3A1-10%20&version=NIV>

#### **Revelation 2:7 & 22:1-2 & 7**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%202%3A7%20&version=NIV>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022%3A1-2&version=NIV>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation%2022%3A7&version=NIV>

---

## **Commentary, Spiritual Applications, and Theological Reflections**

### **The Garden: Death to Life**

The garden at the site of Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection carries rich theological and symbolic meaning in John's Gospel. John intentionally connects these events to the garden where Jesus was arrested, portraying it as a new Eden. Here, the cross becomes a tree of eternal life—contrasting sharply with the original Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve lost access to the tree of life through sin.

This garden setting, along with the tomb's newness and unused condition, contributes to John's portrayal of Jesus' burial as part of his continuing glorification. Aesthetically and spiritually, the garden was the last sight to impress itself on Jesus' eyes before his death, allowing him to close them upon the earth while viewing a place of beauty and life. This stands in stark contrast to the brutality of Calvary itself.

The connection between Eden and the resurrection garden is deliberate. Genesis presents the primordial garden where God walked with humanity in intimate fellowship, symbolizing divine power and God's original intention for creation. In that first garden, Adam and Eve sinned and fell from grace—introducing death, separation, and corruption into the world.

When Jesus is laid in a new tomb within a garden, he emerges as the second Adam. His resurrection ushers in a brand new creation. What was undone in the Garden of Eden is now redeemed and restored through the second Adam. Jesus stands risen in God's garden—the new Eden—where creation is finally as it ought to be.

The garden also carries profound eschatological weight. Since Jesus' burial in a garden, every grave can be seen as situated in a garden rather than a desolate wilderness. This transforms burial into a form of sowing that awaits resurrection, turning cemeteries into gardens and promising an eternal spring beyond the grave. Just as the first Adam sowed death in the Garden of Eden through sin, Christ—the Seed—was sown in a garden to bear fruit in immortal life. Death was conquered by sinlessness where sin had once brought death.

This restoration extends beyond the resurrection into eternity. The postexilic prophet Ezekiel envisioned water pouring from the Holy City, watering the garden of the end of time—the “garden of God” where divinity dwells. The original garden of perfection and innocence becomes the end-time garden of perfection. Revelation's vision of the New Jerusalem possesses paradisaic features: a river with the tree of life on either side, yielding fruit for the healing of the nations.

Thus, the garden frames both the beginning and the end of God's purposes in creation. Just as things began in purity and innocence in Eden, they now end in the new garden brought to perfection through Jesus' resurrection. Paradise lost becomes paradise regained and ultimately

paradise perfected—a cosmic restoration that encompasses all creation and reveals the deep theological connection between creation, the cross, resurrection, and the end of time.

The garden's presence elevates Jesus' burial from a place of shameful execution to something dignified and redemptive, embedding his death and resurrection within the grand narrative arc that moves from creation's garden, through sin and death, and onward toward full restoration and eternal life.

[LOGOS Bible Commentaries 1-5]

### **Why Blood**

God's nature as the holy Creator stands at the foundation of why blood sacrifice became necessary. God takes no pleasure in iniquity and abhors all who practice wrongdoing (Ps 5:4–6). His eyes are too pure to look on evil, and He cannot tolerate wrongdoing (Hab 1:13). The critical distinction lies in the difference between human forgiveness and divine justice. We forgive one another easily because we are all sinners who expect reciprocal forgiveness. God operates under no such constraint. For God to overlook sin would constitute moral indifference to wrongdoing, and without judgment and punishment of transgression, no moral standards could exist in creation.

This is where blood sacrifice enters the picture. God takes sin with utmost seriousness and cannot simply disregard it—His justice demands satisfaction. Yet in mercy, God permits substitutionary animal sacrifices. The life of the flesh is in the blood, and God has given it for making atonement on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement by means of the life (Lev 17:11). Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb 9:22). Atoning blood is God's gift, not something humans merit or devise to appease Him. Rather, God Himself set forth Christ as a propitiation through His blood to demonstrate His righteousness (Rom 3:25).

The Old Testament animal sacrifices functioned as types and shadows pointing forward to Christ's singular, perfect sacrifice. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to remove sins (Heb 10:4). But when Christ entered the heavenly Holy of Holies once for all by His own blood, He obtained eternal redemption (Heb 9:12–14). Unlike the high priests who offered sacrifices daily, Christ offered Himself once for all (Heb 7:27). At the culmination of the ages, He manifested Himself once to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb 9:26). The blood of Christ, offered through the eternal Spirit without blemish to God, purifies our consciences from dead works to serve the living God (Heb 9:12–14). When Christ offered His own blood on the cross and declared, "It is finished," He fulfilled and surpassed every previous sacrifice, making future offerings unnecessary.

The result transforms believers eternally. Justified by His blood, we are saved from God's wrath (Rom 5:9). Through His blood, Christ has freed us from our sins (Rev 1:5). By one offering He has

perfected forever those who are being sanctified (Heb 10:10–14).

[LOGOS Bible Commentaries 7-9]

### **Jesus became the curse leading to Humanities Victory**

The scriptural narrative presents Christ's work as addressing the dual curse humanity inherited—guilt before a holy God and the sentence of death itself. Sin entered the world through one person, bringing death in its wake, and death spread to all humanity because everyone has sinned (Rom 5:12–21). The wages of sin is death, yet God offers eternal life as a free gift through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 6:23). The curse operates on two levels: the legal condemnation of the law and the physical reality of mortality.

Christ addresses the legal dimension through substitutionary sacrifice. He ransomed us from the law's curse by becoming a curse for us (Gal 3:13–14). The sinless One was made sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor 5:21). In Christ Jesus there is now no condemnation for those who walk according to the Spirit rather than the flesh (Rom 8:1–4).

Christ simultaneously conquers death itself. By becoming human and taking on flesh and blood, He was able to destroy the one who has the power of death—that is, the devil—through His own death, and thereby liberate those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death (Heb 2:14–15). As death came through one man, Adam, so resurrection from the dead comes through one man, Christ. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive (1 Cor 15:21–22). When the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality, then death will be swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:54–57).

The transfer of guilt and the defeat of death converge in Christ's singular offering. He manifested once at the culmination of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Having been offered once to bear the sins of many, He will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him (Heb 9:26–28). God made us alive together with Christ, having forgiven us all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross, and disarmed the powers and principalities, triumphing over them through the cross (Col 2:13–15).

Those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ (Rom 5:12–21). In the final consummation, no curse will remain (Rev 22:3). Sin's penalty has been fully paid, death's sting has been removed, and eternal communion with God has been gloriously restored.

[LOGOS Bible Commentaries 7-9]

## **Resurrection Facts**

### **1. Suffering makes sense only with the resurrection**

The only way we ultimately make sense of suffering in our lives is through the resurrection. As Paul writes in Romans 8:18, “All the sufferings I endure now cannot compare with the glory that will be revealed to us someday.” Suffering doesn’t make sense without it. This is his number one reason.

### **2. Jesus foretold (predicted) His own resurrection**

Jesus repeatedly called it — He constantly predicted His death, burial, and resurrection (e.g., Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:33-34). He used the phrase “Son of Man” 69 times in this context. One-third of the Gospels focuses on the death, burial, and resurrection. He compares it to Babe Ruth “calling his shot.”

### **3. Jesus demonstrated power over death beforehand**

Before His own resurrection, Jesus showed He had authority over death by raising others: the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5), the widow of Nain’s son (Luke 7), and Lazarus (John 11). Johnston mentions having been in Lazarus’s tomb and even calling out the words himself.

### **4. Textual and archaeological evidence strongly authenticates the Gospel accounts**

All the textual and archaeological evidence supports the resurrection narratives in the Gospels. Even atheist archaeologists (like Jodi Magness) affirm that the Gospels get the details right about the historical and cultural setting.

### **5. There was no psychological or cultural reason in Judaism to invent the story**

First-century Jews had no expectation or motivation to fabricate a crucified-and-risen Messiah. It was the opposite of what they anticipated (e.g., a conquering figure). Dead Sea Scroll fragments like 4Q285 show expectations of a Messiah who would defeat enemies, not die shamefully. The story only makes sense if it actually happened.

### **6. The conversion of hostile or skeptical witnesses**

You cannot explain the dramatic conversions of people who were not followers — or who were even opposed to Jesus — apart from a real resurrection appearance. Examples include James (Jesus’ brother, initially skeptical) and especially Saul/Paul (a persecutor who became an apostle). Jesus appeared to those who loved Him, were indifferent, and who hated Him.

### **7. The gospel transforms and rehumanizes societies wherever it spreads**

Everywhere the gospel goes, it brings freedom and rehumanizes people. Galatians 3:28 declares equality in Christ (neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male nor female). It elevated the status of women and children in a culture where, for example, a papyrus fragment (P.Oxy. 744)

casually instructed to keep a boy but discard a girl. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." This societal impact is unique and points back to the reality of the risen Christ.

## **8. The Shroud of Turin**

The eighth reason is the Shroud of Turin, which Johnston describes as scientific proof of the physical, bodily resurrection. He went from being its biggest skeptic to believing based on extensive study (102 academic disciplines, over 600,000 research hours). He views it as a "resurrection cloth" capturing the moment of resurrection through an intense burst of energy, with forensic details matching Roman crucifixion, including wounds from flogging, crown of thorns, and more. It uniquely ties together the death, burial, and resurrection in one artifact.

Facts on The Shroud of Turin

THIS IS NOT A PROMOTION FOR TCN, its historical evidence presented by Christian Scholar Dr. Jeremiah Johnston

[https://youtu.be/rKMQY49py4w?si=vO9agukK4YysJK\\_Y](https://youtu.be/rKMQY49py4w?si=vO9agukK4YysJK_Y)

## **Commentary on Jesus, Rising from the Dead**

### **Matthew 28: 1-10**

#### **JESUS RISES FROM THE DEAD / 28:1-7**

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the central fact of Christian history. On it, the church is built; without it, there would be no Christian church today. Jesus' resurrection is unique. Other religions have strong ethical systems, concepts about paradise and afterlife, and various holy scriptures. Only Christianity has a God who became human, literally died for his people, and was raised again in power and glory to rule his church forever.

#### **Why is the Resurrection so important?**

- Because Christ was raised from the dead, we know that the kingdom of heaven has broken into earth's history. Our world is now headed for redemption, not disaster. God's mighty power is at work destroying sin, creating new lives, and preparing us for Jesus' second coming.
- Because of the Resurrection, we know that death has been conquered and that we, too, will be raised from the dead to live forever with Christ.
- The Resurrection gives authority to the church's witness in the world. Look at the early evangelistic sermons in the book of Acts: The apostles' most important message was the proclamation that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead!
- The Resurrection gives meaning to the church's regular feast, the Lord's Supper. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we break bread with our risen Lord.
- The Resurrection helps us find meaning even in great tragedy. No matter what happens to us

as we walk with the Lord, the Resurrection gives us hope for the future.

- The Resurrection assures us that Christ is alive and ruling his kingdom. He is not legend; he is alive and real.
- The power of God that brought Christ's body back from the dead is available to us to bring our morally and spiritually dead selves back to life so that we can change and grow (1 Corinthians 15:12–19).

Christians can look very different from one another, and they can hold widely varying beliefs about politics, lifestyle, and even theology. But one central belief unites and inspires all true Christians—Jesus Christ rose from the dead!

**28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.** The women could not make the trip to the tomb until after the Sabbath. As dawn approached, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. Both of them had been at Jesus' cross and had followed Joseph so they would know where the tomb was located (27:56, 61). Mark also mentioned that Salome was with them; she had also been at the cross and was probably the mother of the disciples James and John. The women went home and kept the Sabbath as the law required, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. In the Jewish reckoning of time, a day included any part of a day; thus, Friday was the first day, Saturday was the second day, and Sunday was the third day. Unlike the Jewish leaders, they certainly had no expectation that the disciples would steal the body (27:62–66). When the women arrived at daybreak on Sunday, the third day, Jesus had already risen.

Mark explained that they had gone back to the tomb to bring spices and perfumes to anoint Jesus' body because they had had no time to do so before the Sabbath (Mark 16:1). Anointing a body was a sign of love, devotion, and respect. Bringing spices to the tomb would be like bringing flowers to a grave today. Since they did not embalm bodies in Israel, they would use perfumes as a normal practice. The women undoubtedly knew that Joseph and Nicodemus had already wrapped the body in linen and spices. They probably were going to do a simple external application of the fragrant spices. Matthew, however, omitted the detail of their visit, explaining only that they came to see the tomb.

**28:2–4 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.** Again a supernatural event took place, probably having occurred before the women arrived at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake (see also 27:51–52) that occurred as the angel of the Lord descended, or it was the means by which the stone was rolled away from the tomb's entrance. The stone was not rolled back so Jesus could get out, but so others could get in and see that Jesus had indeed risen from

the dead, just as he had promised. This is as close a description of the Resurrection as the Bible gives us.

Mark records that the women were concerned about how they would get into the tomb to anoint Jesus' body (Mark 16:3). They had seen Joseph put the stone at its entrance (27:60–61), although they may have been unaware of the sealing of the stone and of the guards who had been posted. When they arrived at the tomb, they saw that the large stone had already been rolled aside. An angel of the Lord was sitting on the stone. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. The radiance of this angel made him appear like lightning. These words recall Old Testament visions like that of Daniel (see Daniel 7:9; 10:6). The angel's beauty and glory, coming from heaven itself, caused the posted guards to faint with fear and caused great fear for the women as well (28:5, 8). Matthew and Mark wrote that one angel met the women at the tomb, while Luke mentions two angels. Each Gospel writer chose to highlight different details as he explained the same story, just as eyewitnesses to a news story may each highlight a different aspect of that event. Matthew and Mark probably emphasized just the angel who spoke.

**28:5–6 The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”** The angel spoke reassuringly to the frightened women. They were looking for Jesus, the human being who had been crucified on the cross. But Jesus was not there; he had risen. Jesus had given the disciples three predictions of both his death and of his resurrection (16:21–28; 17:22–23; 20:17–19). The angel said to the women, “Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again” (Luke 24:6–7 NRSV).

The angel invited the women to look into the inner burial chamber and see the place where he lay. John records that the linen cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus' body were left as if Jesus had passed right through them. The handkerchief was still rolled up in the shape of a head, and it was at about the right distance from the wrappings that had enveloped Jesus' body (John 20:6–7). A grave robber couldn't possibly have made off with Jesus' body and left the linens as if they were still shaped around it. The best explanation was that Jesus had risen from the dead, just as he said he would.

## **COME AND GO**

The angel who announced the good news of the Resurrection to the women gave them four messages:

1. “Do not be afraid.” The reality of the Resurrection brings joy, not fear. When you are afraid, remember the empty tomb.
2. “He is not here.” Jesus is not dead and is not to be looked for among the dead. He is alive, with his people.
3. “Come and see.” The women could check the evidence themselves. The tomb was empty then, and it is empty today. The Resurrection is a historical fact.
4. “Go quickly and tell.” They were to spread the joy of the Resurrection. We too are to spread the great news about Jesus’ resurrection.

**28:7 “Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.”** The women who had come to anoint a dead body were given another task—proclaiming the Resurrection to the frightened disciples. Mark explained that the angel made special mention of Peter to show that, in spite of Peter’s denials, Jesus had not disowned and deserted him. According to Luke’s account, several women ran to tell the disciples: “Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened” (Luke 24:10–12 NRSV). John, in his personal account, added that he too dashed in amazement to the tomb (John 20:3–5). The disciples had deserted Jesus in the hour of trial, but the angel’s words held hope of renewal and forgiveness. The disciples had deserted, but they were directed to meet Jesus in Galilee. This was exactly what Jesus had told them during the Last Supper, that he would go ahead of them into Galilee after his resurrection (26:32).

#### **JESUS APPEARS TO THE WOMEN 28:8–10**

**28:8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.** The women hurried away from the tomb, realizing that they had seen the results of an awesome miracle in the empty tomb and had been in the presence of an angel. This revelation from God had filled them with a mixture of fear and joy. They obeyed the angel’s command and ran to the eleven disciples with the good news of the empty tomb and Jesus’ resurrection.

**28:9 Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him.** As the women ran from the tomb, in their path appeared Jesus

himself! The women took hold of his feet (a Near Eastern custom for a subject showing obeisance to a king) and worshiped him, giving homage to their Savior, Lord, and King.

**28:10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”** By “brothers,” Jesus meant his disciples. This showed that he had forgiven them, even after they had disowned and deserted him, and that he raised them to a new level of fellowship—from disciples to “brothers” (see John 15:15). Jesus told the women to pass a message on to the disciples—that they should go to Galilee, as he had previously told them (26:32). Galilee was where Jesus had called most of them and where he had said they would become “fishers of men” (4:19 NIV), and it would be where this mission would be restated (John 21). But the disciples, filled with fear, remained behind locked doors in Jerusalem (John 20:19). Jesus met them first in Jerusalem (Luke 24:36) and later in Galilee (John 21). Then he returned to Jerusalem, where he ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:9–12).

[LOGOS Bible Commentary 8]

### **The Four Gospel Accounts of the Resurrection: A Comparative Summary**

The four Gospels present the resurrection through distinct lenses, each emphasizing particular details while maintaining a unified core message: Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, the tomb was empty, and angelic messengers announced this reality to the women who visited the burial site.

#### **The Empty Tomb and Angelic Announcement**

The women arrived at the tomb expecting to anoint Jesus’ body with spices, only to discover the stone had been rolled back and the body was absent. Matthew and Mark record one angel meeting the women, while Luke mentions two, with each Gospel writer highlighting different aspects of the same event, much like eyewitnesses to a news story emphasizing different details. Matthew and John identify these figures as angels who appeared in human form.

The angel’s proclamation— “He isn’t here! He has risen from the dead!”—reminded the women that Jesus had accurately predicted all that had happened to him. The phrase “He is raised” emphasizes that God raised Jesus from the dead, making the Resurrection a vindication of Jesus’ divinity rather than an act of Jesus’ own power.

#### **The Women as Witnesses**

The fact that women carried the resurrection message gives credibility to the accounts, since no ancient person fabricating such a story would have chosen women as official witnesses, as Jewish law prohibited their testimony. Mary Magdalene, a loyal follower from whom Jesus cast

out seven demons, appears in all four Gospels at both the cross and tomb, and received Jesus' first appearance after his resurrection.

### **Evidence of the Physical Resurrection**

John's account reveals that the graveclothes lay as if Jesus had passed through them—the headpiece rolled separately from the body wrappings in neat, orderly fashion, indicating no hasty removal by grave robbers but rather that Jesus arose and left the linens empty.

### **The Resurrection Appearances**

Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, the other women at the tomb, Peter, two travelers on the road, ten disciples behind closed doors, all eleven disciples including Thomas, seven disciples fishing on the Sea of Galilee, eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee, a crowd of 500, his brother James, and those who watched his ascension.

### **The Significance**

The Resurrection demonstrates that Jesus' predictions were true, proves he is God's Son, testifies to the success of his salvation mission, entitles him to a position of glory, and proclaims that Jesus is Lord.

(Logos Bible Commentaries 9-15)

**Resources:** Rev. Brad Standfest, (1) Logos Bible Commentaries: 1-5 [1] Robert H. Gundry, Commentary on the New Testament: Verse-by-Verse Explanations with a Literal Translation (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 455. [2] Joseph S. Exell, The Biblical Illustrator: St. John (London: James Nisbet & Co., n.d.), 3:351. [3] Stephen W. Need, Living Faith: Through the Church's Year (Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications, 2020); and Mark Stibbe, Every Day with the Father: 366 Devotional Readings from John's Gospel (Oxford, England: Monarch Books, 2012). [4] John G. Butler, Jesus Christ: His Crucifixion, Studies of the Savior (Clinton, IA: LBC Publications, 2005), 8:357. [5] Leland Ryken et al., in Dictionary of Biblical Imagery (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 317. [7] Brian A. Russell, Saved by Grace from First to Last: An Explanation of the Sovereignty of God and Our Experience of His Saving Grace, ed. M. J. Adams and D. Crisp (London: Grace Publications Trust, 2012), 65–66.[8] Joe M. Sprinkle, Leviticus and Numbers, ed. Mark L. Strauss and John H. Walton, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2015), 118. [9] Got Questions Ministries, Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013). Dr. Jeremiah Johnston Podcast # 293 - The Shawn Ryan Show and Dr Jeremiah Johnston: Shroud of Turin, Dead sea scrolls & attempts to hide historical proof of Jesus. Barton, Bruce B. 1996. Matthew. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers. [11] Bruce B. Barton et al., Luke, Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997), 553. [12] Bruce B. Barton, Mark, Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale

House Publishers, 1994), 478. [13] Bruce Barton et al., Life Application New Testament Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 359. [14] Bruce B. Barton, John, Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 388. [15] Bruce B. Barton and Grant R. Osborne, Acts, Life Application Bible Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1999).

---

## **Sermon Notes:**

### **Week 3 Sermon The Tree of Life – Eden to Eternity Resurrection Series**

**Happy Resurrection Sunday, everyone!** And welcome to everyone joining us online.

**He is risen! What a great glorious day!**

#### **The Apostle Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 15:20-22:**

“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.”

This is my 20th year of preaching a Resurrection message — that’s crazy and amazing! What a privilege it is to stand in the pulpit year after year and proclaim that our Savior lives.

Before we dive into the Word today, let me share our AVC Connections: YouTube, App, Facebook / Website

[Let’s Pray]

**Today we conclude our Resurrection Series titled: The Tree of Life – Eden to Eternity.**

**In the beginning**, God created a perfect, sinless place called the Garden of Eden. The Garden was a piece of Paradise. As God looked upon His creation, He declared, “It was very good.” It was desirable and beautiful to behold.

**One scholar comments on that phrase “very good” — I quote:** “When God said creation was ‘exceedingly good’... this was a divine affirmation like a divine grin spread across the face of God.”

**The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shared a heavenly high-five over the beauty and perfection of what Their hands had made.**

**Everything was glorious until Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil .** Friends, nothing has changed. When we refuse to follow God’s commands, we hurt ourselves and those around us. That is what the Bible calls sin.

**It wasn't as though God hadn't warned them. He commanded clearly:**

"You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die." (Genesis 2:17)

**I have a grandson now (and two more on the way).** Let me share a quick story. We have a couch with an automated recliner. He's figured out how the button works — push in and out, in and out. I told him, "All done," and he repeated, "All done." I walked away for a moment, and suddenly I heard screaming. He had pushed the button again and caught his little hand. (Hear story in sermon)

**How did God respond to Adam and Eve's original sin?** He extended grace even in judgment by banishing them from the Garden. The first recorded act of grace and redemption in Scripture includes these words:

"He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever. So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken." (Genesis 3:22-23)

**You see, the problem in Eden wasn't just sin. It was separation from Life itself — separation from God. One bite brought sin upon all humanity, but it also created two gigantic problems:**

1. Separation from God
2. Eternal death

**Humanity desperately needed a Savior who could reverse the curse that began in Eden.**

As we discussed last week, God sent His Son, named Jesus. (And just in case anyone needs the spelling — it's J-E-S-U-S!)

**The Scriptures declare:**

**1 Peter 2:24** — "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."

**Galatians 3:13 says:**

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'"

**Here's the deal: The cross took away sin's guilt. But if Jesus had stayed dead, what would be the true power of forgiveness?**

**(Story notes listen in sermon)** Let me illustrate it this way. Suppose your daddy is super rich and lives in a 20,000-square-foot mansion with a pool, a bowling alley — the whole nine yards. You get into a fight, and he throws you out. Later you ask for forgiveness and he grants it. But when you try to come back inside, he says, "No, sorry — you still can't come in."

**That's what forgiveness without resurrection would be like — pardon without restoration.**

**But here is the good news of the Gospel: Through Christ's resurrection, He has flung open the gates of the Garden once again!**

**Happy Resurrection Sunday — it's about to get exciting in the house of God!**

Did you know that Jesus was laid in a tomb in a garden? And He rose from the dead in that same garden tomb?

**The Holy Scriptures proclaim this truth:**

John 19:41-42 — "At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there."

**It is at the resurrection that Jesus Christ turned eternal death into eternal life and reopened the Garden of Eden forever.**

**Let's read together Matthew 28:1-10** (the account of the empty tomb and the risen Lord appearing to the women).

Understand this profound truth: Jesus has opened Heaven's gates to everyone who puts their faith in Him. In

Heaven, the restored Garden of Eden awaits all who belong to Him.

**My question for everyone today is simple:** Will you choose eternity or eternal death?

**I will close with the glorious picture of Heaven given in the Book of Revelation.**

**Revelation 2:7** — "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

**Revelation 22:1-2** — "Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

And Jesus Himself declares in Revelation 22:7 — "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

**Friends, Jesus is the Tree of Life, from Eden to Eternity.**

**Happy Resurrection Sunday! He has risen!**

Closing Prayer

---

**Devotional Questions:**

- 1. In the Garden of Eden, one bite from the forbidden tree brought sin, separation from God, and the loss of access to the Tree of Life (Genesis 2:17; 3:22-23).** How does the resurrection of Jesus reverse this curse, and what does it mean for your daily walk with God that the gates to eternal life have been flung open again?
- 2. The Apostle Paul writes, “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22).** Reflect on the contrast between the first Adam and the second Adam (Jesus). In what areas of your life do you still feel the effects of Adam’s fall, and how can the power of Christ’s resurrection bring new life to those areas right now?
- 3. Jesus bore our sins “in his body on the tree” so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness (1 Peter 2:24), and He redeemed us from the curse by becoming a curse for us (Galatians 3:13).** If the cross removed sin’s guilt, why is the resurrection essential for true forgiveness and restoration? How does this change the way you view your past failures?
- 4. The tomb where Jesus was laid was in a garden (John 19:41-42), and He rose from that same garden setting.** How does this imagery of a “new Eden” in the resurrection story deepen your understanding of Jesus as the Tree of Life who turns death into life? What “garden moments” in your own life has God used to bring resurrection hope?
- 5. When the women came to the tomb expecting to anoint a dead body, the angel declared, “He is not here; he has risen, just as he said” (Matthew 28:6).** Jesus had repeatedly predicted His death and resurrection. How does the reliability of Jesus’ words strengthen your trust in His promises today, especially when facing grief, fear, or uncertainty?
- 6. The resurrection not only conquered sin’s guilt but defeated death itself, making believers “alive together with Christ” (see Ephesians 2:5 and 1 Corinthians 15:20-22).** How should this truth shape the way you face suffering or the fear of death? What practical difference does it make in how you live this week?
- 7. In Revelation, the Tree of Life reappears in the paradise of God, bearing fruit for the healing of the nations and granting access to all who overcome (Revelation 2:7; 22:1-2).** How does the promise of this restored Eden motivate you to live as an overcomer now? What “leaves for the healing of the nations” might God want to produce through your life?
- 8. The women at the tomb were told, “Do not be afraid... Come and see... Go quickly and tell” (Matthew 28:5-7).** Like them, we are invited to examine the evidence of the empty tomb and then proclaim the risen Lord. What fears hold you back from sharing the resurrection news, and how does the reality of the risen Jesus give you courage to “go and tell”?

**9. Jesus greeted the fearful women with a simple, friendly “Greetings!”** and later called His disciples “my brothers,” showing forgiveness and restored relationship (Matthew 28:9-10). How does encountering the risen Christ personally transform your sense of guilt, shame, or distance from God? Have you experienced Jesus meeting you in a quiet, reassuring way amid your doubts or failures?

**10. Because Christ has been raised as the first fruits, our labor in the Lord is “not in vain”** (1 Corinthians 15:58), and one day we will eat from the Tree of Life in the New Jerusalem where there is no more curse (Revelation 22:3). As you look toward eternity, how does the resurrection give meaning and hope to your present struggles, relationships, and service for the Kingdom? What one step can you take this week to live in the power of this living hope?