

EASTER HANDOUT The Empty Promises of Easter Luke 24:1-12

Easter is the Greatest Promise Ever Made...It began in Genesis 3:15 when God told the serpent that the woman's seed (Christ) would Crush the serpents Head (Anti-Christ) and that Victory was sure for All who chose to accept the Free Gift provided through the Cross.

As I thought About the story of a Son Walking Away from his father because he did not understand the wonderful gift his father had given him...**I Couldn't Help but Wonder, "How many People in this World have Done the Same Thing to God? They've Literally Tossed Aside a Wonderful Promise, Because They Didn't Understand it, Or They Didn't Believe that it was Possible.**

Today, So many of us have been taken in by "Empty Promises," that we are Leery of anything or anyone that tells us we can have something for nothing. Have You ever felt that way about God? Have You ever felt like saying to yourself How can GOD Forgive Me for Doing that Thing Again!?

Here Is What I Want You to Know...The World May Not Work that Way...BUT GOD DOES! God has Never Made a Promise that Was Too Good to Be True.

The World is Full of "Empty Promises". Advertisements tell us that we can be Happy, Sexy, Rich, or Famous, "IF" We Purchase Their Product. It Doesn't take long before we realize *the World's Promises are Full of Emptiness.* **But, God is Different. Instead of Promises Full of Emptiness...On Easter, He Gave Us Emptiness that is Full of Promise.**

I want us to focus on the "3" EMPTY Promises of Easter. Each Promise is Marked by Something Empty: **An Empty Cross...An Empty Tomb... And Empty Burial Clothes.**

- **POINT: Because Each of These are Empty-Assures Us that God's Promises are Real!**

The Empty Cross: Because the Cross was Empty, We have the Promise of Forgiven Sins. Take a Close Look At The One in the Middle...The One that Jesus hung On.

- At the Top are the Bloodstains from the Crown of Thorns that was Pressed Deeply into Jesus' Skull.
- The Stains on the Ends of the Crossbar – Came from the Nails that were Driven Through His Wrists.
- The Main Beam – Was Soaked in Blood from His Back – That Bled Uncontrollably when the Roman Soldiers Beat him with a Cat-of-Nine-Tails.
- **The ground had blood stains that Poured from His Side when another Roman soldier ran a spear through his side to see if he was dead – HE WAS.**

Don't Believe Anyone who tells You Jesus was Just Faking it. There was no Question Jesus Was Dead. *The Soldiers Knew it...The Romans Knew it...The Jews Knew it!*

Together, they Made Up a Lie – Saying the Disciples Stole the Body. Can you Imagine 11 fishermen Overpowering a Company of Roman Soldiers, Then Moving a 2 ton stone and stealing the body of Jesus – just so they could claim he had come back to life – and then willingly die to protect that lie?

Jesus Really Did Die – that is why I want You to See the Cross this morning. It is the place where he died – But Today...It is Empty! Empty of Jesus body, But Full of God's Promises. Full of Hope for You and Me.

The Promise of the Empty Cross is that You and I Stand Forgiven...Because it was On that Cross that Jesus Paid the Penalty for Our Sins.

- **The Simple Fact of the Matter is – We Have All Sinned.** Every one of us, you, me, the person sitting next to you, behind you and in front of you. We have "All Sinned, and Fallen Short of the Glory of God."(Rom 3:23) We Have All Failed to Meet Gods Standard...of Sinless Holiness!
- **The Only person who has ever Lived a Sinless Life is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Everyone else has failed.**

According to God's law - "the Wages of Sin is Death." He says; "The soul that sins will surely die." Because, we have sinned, we deserve God's just punishment...We Deserve Eternal Death,

However, when You Look at that Empty Cross...It is a Reminder of God's Promise which is that, In Christ, We Have Been Forgiven. On that Cross – Jesus Paid the Penalty for Our Sins In Full.

- God Demonstrated His Own Love Toward Us, in that While We Were Still Sinners, (Rom 5:8)
- When Jesus Christ breathed his last, he cried out; **"It is Finished!" The Penalty Was Paid. That Empty Blood-Stained Cross Reminds Us of Our Salvation!**
- **On that day, Across every Name – He wrote – in Jesus blood – "Forgiven! Forgiven!**
- **To everyone who accepts His Free gift of Salvation Now Stands Forgiven! The first "Empty Promise" of Easter is the Empty Cross – Filled with the Promise of Forgiven Sins.**

The Empty Tomb: Listen to the Angels words – "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified. He is not here; He Has Risen!"

- **Jesus had Risen, the Tomb was Empty. What a Tremendous Promise that Holds for Us.**
- Because Jesus was alive – The Angel said; "He is Risen!" And the promise to us is that we too can live even if we die. **That is the Second Promise of Easter.**

Finally Promise, The Empty Burial Clothes:

After the Angel had spoken to the women, they immediately went back to the Apostles and reported what had happened. With this incredible news, Peter and John immediately raced back to the tomb to see for themselves. When they got there...John stopped just outside the tomb, but Peter ran right in. It didn't take them long to discover that the tomb was just the way the women had said it was – Empty!

- **Inside, Peter found the clothes that Jesus had been buried in. They Too Were Empty. This could only mean one thing – Jesus Was Alive!**
- If someone had Stolen his Body, they wouldn't have removed the burial clothes and folded them up neatly and left them where they lay. Truly, Jesus Was Resurrected!
- **After His resurrection, Jesus sat down with them...He walked, talked and ate with them. Over 500 people saw him and *fellowshipped with Him.***

You see, this is the Promise of the Empty Burial Clothes – Jesus is Alive, and Wants to Fellowship with Each of Us...You...Me!

Our JOY This Morning is in the Fact that...The Cross Couldn't Hold Him, the Tomb Could Not Contain Him, the Burial Clothes were Unnecessary, Because Jesus is Alive!

- He talked, touched, loved and healed. He did it Following His resurrection and he does it still today. And – most importantly... He wants to have that same relationship with You!

My Hope for each of You this Year is that You will Desire A Closer Relationship with Jesus Your Living Savior!

- **That You Will Love God with All Your Heart...That You'll Love People and Love Life Together! So that We Can Demonstrate Jesus To All Those Around Us.**
- That We will Love People by Serving them and Coming alongside them when They have Needs
- **That Our Love for Jesus Will Cause Us to Share the Good News that Christ Died and rose again So Their Sins Can Be Forgiven...And They Will Know the Joy and Peace that God Desire for Them!**

LIFE POINT: As We are Thankful for the Empty Promises of Easter Let Us Commit to Sharing This Wondrous Hope Wherever We Go!