

Introduction:

- 1 Cor 15:20-23
- We are celebrating Resurrection Sunday today! He is Risen! He is risen indeed!
- I want to answer this question this morning: Why all the fuss about Easter, why does it matter whether or not Jesus arose bodily from the tomb? You may say, "I try to live a good life; I am a responsible member of this community and an ethical person. Why get overly excited about an event that is centuries old?" Because it matters.
 - If it does matter, if it's essential to my faith then what is it about the resurrection that offers me purpose, hope, and a future?
 - All your answers can be found in an empty tomb.
 - Three things we will look at today. The empty tombs proclamation, the empty tombs provision, the empty tombs promise. Let's look at the first thing we find in the empty tomb.

I. The Empty Tomb's Proclamation

A. In the empty tomb are several proclamations. A proclamation is a public, official announcement. It says, "This is no secret. It is not meant to be kept quiet. It is something that everyone needs to know. The first thing that the grave of Jesus Christ proclaims is:

B. Jesus is Alive!

1. In Luke 24 the angels said to the women who were looking for Jesus body, "*Why are you looking among the dead for someone who is alive?*" Luke 24:5 "*He is not here. He is risen, remember what He told you?*"
2. Because He lives we to live. *Just as death came in the world through the first Adam, now the resurrection of the dead has begun through another man!* 1 Cor 15:21 The first Adam's disobedience enslaved us in sin and condemned us all to die eternally. But the second Adam, Jesus through His resurrection brings us life!
3. Because He lives, informs me that there is life after death. That is actually the point of 1 Cor 15.
4. Because Jesus is alive, all who belong to Christ will be raised to everlasting life when He comes back. Because he has been raised from the dead, He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died. If you believe in God and are a follower of Christ this is great news!

C. Second proclamation from the empty tomb: Jesus is the Son of God!

1. Christ's resurrection proves He was God, and not an imposter. In John 2 Jesus chased out the money changers in the Temple because they'd turned God's Temple into a marketing venture. The Jews asked Him, "*What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?*" This is what Jesus told them: "*Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.*" (John 2:19)
2. They thought he was referring to the Temple building they were in. But verse 21 tells us He was referring to His body. He delivered on His miraculous sign, thus proving who He was.
3. Paul opened the letter to the Romans like this: "*Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.*" Romans 1:1-4

- D. The third proclamation of the empty tomb: Death has lost its sting. *O death where is your sting?* 1 Cor 15:55
1. To those who know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, death has lost its sting – it is no longer something to be feared. Ie. Honey Bee
 2. What fear is there when we have the promise that one day we will live forever with Him in Heaven?
 3. The power of sin is death. And Jesus through the resurrection has supremacy over death, sin and the grave!
- E. The fourth proclamation from the empty tomb: The grave has lost its victory. *O Hades where is your victory.* 1 Cor 15:55
1. Hades was the realm of the dead. Another way it can be translated is grave. Place of death. In fact some Bibles translate it death in both parts of this scripture.
 2. Nikos/Nike - Gr word for victory. Nike: to overcome. This is not just a victory word. It speaks of supremacy! Complete “thrashing” of one's opponent! No chance of coming back to influence.

II. The Empty Tomb's Provision

- A. So the empty tomb makes four proclamations. And the empty tomb has only one provision. One definition of provision is: (as in a legal clause). That provision is this: you must believe that Jesus has risen from the dead.
1. Remember John 2:19 “*What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?*” This is what Jesus told them: “*Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.*” (John 2:19)
 2. Jesus gave the sign to help them believe after He was raised from the dead. God was trying to help them believe by giving them a sign. Empty tomb!
- B. I love/chuckle at Jesus words in Luke, “*Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures.”* (Luke 24:25, NLT) Things have not changed in 2000 years. It still takes faith to access the things of God... even if they are proclaimed, and demonstrated by God. Faith is required to access the things of God.
- C. To receive what the resurrected Christ provides you must believe. Faith is required to access the Kingdom of God.
1. Jesus came to preach this. “*“The time promised by God has come at last!” he announced. “The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!”*” (Mark 1:15, NLT) Repent: turn from trusting in other things and turning to God. So repentance is to turn from life of sin and to turn to God.
 2. To Jairus, when his servants arrived with bad news of the death of his daughter, Jesus told him, “*“Don't be afraid. Just have faith.”*” (Mark 5:36, NLT) The grace of God comes when we believe. Saving grace, healing grace, delivering grace... all come by faith.
 3. Jesus says to so many people in the Gospels, “You faith has made you well.” “Let it be according to your faith.”
 4. “*“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”*” (John 3:16, NLT)
 5. “*“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.”*” (Ephesians 2:8, NLT)

D. Faith gives me access to the things of God! Because Jesus is Alive, death is defeated, and the only provision is believe...I have access to the empty tomb's promises.

III. The Empty Tomb's Promise

- A. For the last three weeks we have been looking at what the resurrection provides us so we can genuinely celebrate today! Because the tomb was empty on the third day we have three very important things given to us when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. A New Life: I have been born again, by faith! When a baby is born we say that is a new life. Jesus says, to be born again is a new life.
1. Jesus in Jn 3 said to Nicodemus "*You must be born again!*" To be born again is to be born a new. A born again person gets a new heart, new nature, new life!
 2. We saw in that message that when a person believes they get a new heart, a new nature and a new life. Who would not want that?
 3. Paul said, "*Everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life.*" 1 Cor 15:22
- C. A New Status: I am no longer guilty but righteous, by faith.
1. When I believe Jesus becomes my advocate before God. In the court of heaven I am declared by God, "NOT GUILTY!" And I am charged with Christ's righteousness!
 2. Any evidence the Accuser brings to me or to God is not permissible in the court of heaven.
 - a) "*For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.*" (2 Corinthians 5:19, NLT)
 - b) "*Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself.*" (Romans 8:33, NLT)
 - c) "*Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin.*" (1 Corinthians 1:30b, NLT)
- D. A New Father: I have been adopted into God's family, by faith.
1. *We were like children; we were slaves to the basic spiritual principles of this world. But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.* (Galatians 4:3b–7, NLT)
 2. A relationship with God. The term Father God speaks of relationship. Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father" He wants us to have relationship with him.
 3. We were slaves to sin. That speaks of bondage and pain. But when we believe we are brought into God's kingdom, as sons and daughters!
- E. The empty tomb gives me the opportunity to received the promises of God that exist because Jesus was not in that tomb on the third.

Conclusion:

- The empty tomb makes a proclamation that Jesus the Son of God is Alive! Because He is alive death has lost its sting. The empty tomb has one provision: that we would believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ. Having believed we receive the promise that empty tomb holds of new life, new status, new Father! What do you believe today?

- In 1 Cor 15:34 Paul exhorts us “*Think carefully about what is right and stop sinning. For to your shame I say some of you do not know God at all.*”
- Remember the old nursery rhyme of Humpty Dumpty? Your life is like Humpty Dumpty’s. Remember, he sat on a wall and fell and all the king horses and all the king’s men couldn’t put him back together again?
 - You and I are broken because of sin. And there’s not a thing anyone can do to fix us. We are utterly helpless and hopeless and stand in judgment before God because of our sin.
 - While you may be broken like Humpty Dumpty because of sin and unfixable by anyone in the world, because that tomb is genuinely empty and Jesus is alive, what He did on the cross paid for your sins and you’ve been given an opportunity to not only be fixed, but to become a new creation and to have fellowship with God.
 - That’s the joy of Resurrection morning. God can fix you spiritually and you can have the hope that He will one day complete your redemption by redeeming your body to be like Jesus’ body! Hallelujah! Will you accept His salvation this morning? Wouldn’t you be a fool not to? Do you see how relevant the resurrection is to your life? Without it you have no life.