

Bible Readings

Luke 24:1-12

Jesus Has Risen

24 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. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In 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.'" ⁸ Then they remembered his words.

⁹ When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹ But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. ¹² Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Romans 6:1-14

Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Sermon - Dead to Sin and Alive in Christ - 04-Apr-21 (Easter Sunday)

Intro

A **little boy** named **Philip**, born with **Down's Syndrome**, attended **Sunday School** with several primary school boys and girls.

The **other children** didn't readily accept Philip with his differences. But because of a **creative Sunday School teacher**, they began to care about Philip and accept him as part of the group, though not fully.

The **Sunday after Easter Sunday**, the **teacher brought some plastic egg containers** and asked the children to go outside and **find some symbol of new life** and **put it in the plastic egg container.**

After running around the church property in wild confusion for a while, they came back to class to share what they'd found. They **placed the egg containers** on the **table**. Surrounded by the children, the **teacher began to open them one by one.** After each one, whether it was a **flower, a butterfly, or a leaf**, the **class would go** - ooh and ahh.

Then **one egg container** was **opened**, revealing **nothing inside**. The children shouted, "That's stupid. That's not fair. Somebody didn't do what they were told."

Young **Philip spoke up**, "That's mine."

One of his classmates said "Philip, you never do things right – there's nothing in your container"

"I did so do it," Philip insisted. "I did do it right. It's empty! the tomb was **empty!**"

Silence followed. From then on Philip became a full member of the class.

Not long after that Sunday, Philip died from an infection most children would have shrugged off.

At his funeral the children from his Sunday School marched up to the front of the church - not with flowers - but with their Sunday school teacher - each to lay on it an empty plastic egg container.

(pause)

Today is Easter Sunday!

Young Philip was right the tomb where our Lord Jesus was laid on Good Friday - is empty.

He is Risen (Luke 24:1-12)

[Please turn to Luke 24:1-12]

[PowerPoint 1-Empty Tomb]



- V1 - tells us the **women** (friends of Jesus) **came to the tomb**, on the first day of the week (Sunday)

- They brought spices to anoint Jesus' body and properly complete the job that had been started on Good Friday - when Jesus' body was hurriedly placed in the tomb before the Sabbath day started at 6pm on Friday
- The body of Jesus had been hastily prepared for burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (John 19:38-41).
- But what a surprise they find in v2-3
- The stone was rolled away from the tomb.
- Jesus' dead body was not in the tomb.
- Matthew's Gospel tells us that the tomb was being guarded by soldiers.
- Matthew also tells us that an angel rolled away the stone.
- **Note:** the stone was rolled away so people could see the empty tomb - not so Jesus could get out of the tomb.
- V4 - There were two angels at the tomb. Just as angels announced Jesus' birth; so, they announce His resurrection.
- The angels ask the women why they are looking for the living amongst the dead?
- You see Jesus is risen - He's alive!
- The penny drops for the women
- They remember what Jesus had said when He was alive
- Matt 16:21 says: From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

- Jesus fulfils His own prophecy about rising from the dead
- That's not the only prophecy about Jesus' resurrection
- OT Psalms 16:10 - says - you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay.
- Jesus himself says this in Matt 12:40 - For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth
- No one should have been surprised that Jesus is risen
- After all - Jesus always did what He said He would do
- The women leave the tomb and go to tell the Eleven Apostles (Judas of course is not there)
- The Eleven didn't believe them
- Peter is not sure what to believe - He wants to check out the tomb himself
- Peter finds only the strips of linen that had been wrapped around Jesus' body
- Peter's reaction? - He wondered to himself what might have happened!
- Why the doubt?
- It would be fair to say - for Jesus' close followers the last 3 years had been an amazing revelation - Jesus taught the most amazing things - He stood up to the religious leaders and at times made them look hard hearted - even stupid - Jesus wasn't scared like most people in Israel were - AND of course He performed the most amazing miracles - even raising people

from the dead - like the widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11-17) - and of course
his close friend Lazarus

- His close followers could barely keep up with all Jesus did - and **now He'd died** - they'd thought perhaps He'd be with them for much longer - even forever!
- But **Jesus had told them what would happen**
- But **sometimes we hear** - only what we want to hear - **even when the evidence is staring us in the face**

- Here this morning, we don't need any evidence
- **We can simply have faith** - that what the Bible says happened - actually happened
- To help us with our faith
- The **Bible** has a **great deal of evidence** - about Jesus' resurrection
 - Matthew 28:9-10 - **The women came face to face with Jesus.**
They **clasped his feet** and **worshipped Him.** Jesus told them not to be afraid, and to **go and tell the disciples to meet Jesus at Galilee.**

 - John 20:11-18 - When **Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb**, she **saw 2 angels seated where Jesus should have been - at his head and foot.** She met Jesus, and thought **He was a gardener.** Jesus

told her to go and tell the disciples that Jesus is alive and ascending to the Father.

- Luke 24:36-49 - Jesus appeared to His disciples. He showed them His hands and feet. He ate with them. He says He is fulfilling prophecy by being alive! He gives them understanding of the scriptures. He gives them the job of sharing the Gospel. He tells them to stay where they are until the Father sends the Holy Spirit.

- Acts 1:1-11 - Jesus appeared to the disciples over a period of 40 days (6 weeks) and spoke about the Kingdom of God. He promised the gift of the Holy Spirit so they can be His witnesses.
Then Jesus ascended into the clouds and into Heaven.

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 - Jesus appeared to Peter; to the twelve apostles; to 500 brothers and sisters at the same time, most still living and so can verify that fact; then appeared to James, then to all the apostles and last of all to Paul.

That's an amazing amount of evidence - isn't it?

What Jesus' resurrection means for us (Romans 6:1-11)

But what exactly does Jesus' resurrection mean for us?

The **simple answer** is the verse - **John 3:16**

[PowerPoint 2 - John 3:16]

God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.

(John 3:16)

God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.

For **more detail** on what that actually means for us - as we live out our remaining time on Earth...

The **Apostle Paul** explains it in **Romans 6:1-11**

[Please turn to Romans 6:1-11]

V1 - Paul begins with a rhetorical question

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?

He's saying because **Jesus has died on the cross on Good Friday for our sins to be forgiven - and Jesus did this in His Grace - as a free gift to us - which we didn't deserve**

Should we just keep sinning - so God keeps forgiving us - and we can just do whatever we like - God will forgive us.

The answer to that question is in v2 - **by no means!** Of course not! - We shouldn't just do whatever we want and keep sinning!

Then from verses 3 to 10 - Paul explains that something happens to us -when we believe in Jesus' death for our sins on Good Friday and when we believe He rose from the dead on Easter Sunday.

A process takes place like this:

[PowerPoint 3-Process]

Dead to Sin – Alive in Christ Jesus

		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jesus died - We die to sin - We repent - We believe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jesus buried - Our sin buried - Baptized into His death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jesus rose - Old life gone - We have new life in Jesus

- **Jesus was crucified on Good Friday and died**

- If we believe Jesus died for our sins - we are joined to Him in His death
- Our sinful life dies on the cross
- This means we have repented - done a U-turn - we now believe and follow Jesus
- Then Jesus was buried
- Again, because we are united to Jesus in our belief
- We have a spiritual baptism
- Our sins get buried under water - baptism literally means getting covered over with water - so our sins are left buried under water
- Then Jesus rose on Easter Sunday
- So, it's like we rise up out of the water from this Spiritual baptism
- We leave our old sinful life behind
- And we get a new life in Jesus
- And we receive the Holy Spirit living inside us to help us with this new life in Jesus

So, in v11 - Paul says we have a new status

we count ourselves **dead to sin** but **alive to God in Christ Jesus.**

Now that we have this new life what should this new life look like?

Our Response to New Life in Jesus (Romans 6:12-14)

Paul gives us 3 responses as we live this new life in Jesus:

[PowerPoint 4-Response]

Response to New Life in Jesus

- *Don't give sin the time of day – Repent!*
- *We offer ourselves to serve and honour God and bring glory to Him – Ambassadors!*
- *We live in freedom – sin is not our master. We are not under the law but under grace!*

1st response is in v12

- It's the opposite of v1 - we don't keep on sinning - instead we don't let sin rule our lives - we don't give sin the time of day.
- It means forgetting our old way of life
- The 1st thing that changed for me when I became a Christian - was my language - I began to watch what I said
- When we see signs of our old ways creeping back in - we repent - turn away from that old life - come back to the new life in Jesus

2nd response is in v13

- We offer all ourselves to serve and honour God and bring glory to God. It will look like asking ourselves - is what I'm about to say or do - bringing glory to God - or dishonour? Will it glorify me - but not Him!
- If it's not going to bring glory to God - then don't say it or do it.

- As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5
- We are a new creation
- We're ambassadors for Jesus - an ambassador represents the country that sent them - we are ambassadors representing Heaven - our job is to attract others into a relationship with Jesus - by being like Jesus - so people go - Wow! I'd like to join in that!

3rd response is in v14

- Sin is not our master anymore, Paul says
- Because you are not under the law, but under grace.
- What does that mean?
- It means **God's Law can't save us - because none of us can obey the law completely, only Jesus can.**
- The purpose of God's Law - is not to save us - it is to show us our sin (just like road signs show the road rules) - and to show us why we need Jesus!
- God's Law can't give us freedom from sin - but the grace of Jesus does give us freedom - as Romans 8:1 says - there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- The grace of Jesus means we are justified (found not guilty of our sins) - "just as if we'd never sinned"
- The great Charles Spurgeon puts it this way - and I'll finish with this:

- God has **so changed your nature** by his grace **that when you sin you shall be like a fish on dry land, you shall be out of your element, and long to get into a right state again.** You cannot sin, for you love God. The sinner may drink sin down as the ox drinks down water, but to you it shall be as the brine of the sea. You may become so foolish as to try the pleasures of the world, but they shall be no pleasures to you." (Spurgeon)

I pray we can all live this new life in Jesus - through the Holy Spirit

Thank you, Jesus, for your gift of grace.

Let's pray...