

“Resurrection Faith: Come & See --- Go & Tell”

Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.’” Matthew 28:10

Matthew 28:1-10

*“After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. **Come, see the place where he lay.** 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.” ⁸ So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; **go and tell** my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.” Matthew 28:1-10*

Mark 16:1-8

*When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. **Look, there is the place they laid him.** ⁷ **But go, tell his** disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” ⁸ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. Mark 16:1-8*

Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in, they did not find the body. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵ The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. ⁶ Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” ⁸ Then they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹ But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² 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.”

John 20:18

*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes. ¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But **go to my brothers and say to them**, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.”ⁱ*

He is risen! He is risen, indeed! The tomb is empty! Christ is risen! Today is Easter—the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus! Praise the Lord! The news of the empty tomb and the resurrection of Christ changed the world. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single greatest event in the history of the world!

In “*Christian Leadership*,” a monthly magazine I receive, I recently saw a cartoon of husband and wife exiting the church on Easter Sunday morning. The captions showed the man saying to the pastor, “Pastor, you sure are in a rut. Every time I come to church you are talking about the resurrection.”ⁱⁱⁱ The picture shows the wife being really embarrassed and hitting her husband in the arm.

Over this past Holy Week, I have reflected on that cartoon. I surely don’t want to be in a rut! What can I say about the resurrection that you have not already heard? What should I say? What needs to be said? How much time do we have?

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John gives us different, yet distinct, details of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. There’s so much we could talk about. We could talk about the women at the tomb. How many were there? Matthew tells us that Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary went to the tomb. Mark mentions Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome going to the tomb that first resurrection day.

Luke adds Joanna to the list with Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and then he adds “the other women.” John only lists Mary Magdalene at the tomb. Maybe, we should spend a few minutes asking, “Why did Jesus first appear to women?” It’s a significant question.

How about spending some time on the angels? Scripture tells us that angels are God’s messengers. Matthew states that “an angel of the Lord descended” and rolled back the stone. The angel also tells the women not to be afraid but to “go and tell” the disciples—and that this is the message he was given to proclaim. Mark’s says the women encountered one man dressed in a white robe offering words of comfort. Luke mentions “two men in dazzling clothes” standing beside the women. John states that two angels in white were sitting at the head and feet of the empty linens. “Woman, why are you weeping?” We could spend some time on angels—God’s own messengers. Angels were there when Jesus was born in Bethlehem...and they are there when the tomb is empty. When Jesus is born, they sing, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace!” When Jesus is missing from the tomb, they say, “Come and see— go and tell!”

Let’s see what else? Matthew mentions an earthquake, and guards frozen in fear. Luke tells us that Peter ran to the tomb, while John adds that both Peter and John saw the empty tomb and abandoned grave clothes. What all of these accounts have in common is that they tell us of the single, greatest event in the history of the world; and all of these writers were willing to give their life for this story.

COME & SEE!

I was struck by the angel’s words in the Gospel of Matthew to the two Mary’s. Listen again to these words --- *But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. **Come, see the place where he lay.** 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.”* (Matthew 28:5-7)

The Greek word used here for “come” is “**δεῦτε** [*deute /dyoo-teh/*]ⁱⁱⁱ It is an interjection, which is like an imperative that implies action with strong emotion. It can be translated “come now,” “come quickly,” “come here,” or “come and follow!” I believe that our English translations loses some of the meaning of this powerful, emotionally-charged word. The angel calls the women to come and see. The word used here for “see” is not the common word for “see”—meaning to use your eyes to view something. What Matthew is telling us is that the women were called to see not only with their eyes, they were to see with their minds, their hearts, with all of their being! **COME AND SEE** --- take it all in! He is not here --- he has been raised!

I remember growing up and hearing my mom shout, “David James Peters, come here right now.” I knew I was in for something special! It’s like the day I spotted a double rainbow out my backporch and I went to get my wife saying, “You have to come and see this.” That double rainbow was perched out my doorstep for over 15 minutes. We just sat there on the swing and took it all in. Can you identify with the angels now? They are saying, “Come in here right this instant...Come and SEE...don’t miss this...it is

absolutely incredible—Jesus is not here! Look! Here’s his grave clothes but He is not here! He has risen!”

GO QUICKLY!

The angel of the Lord tells the women to go quickly and tell the other learners --- “Christ has risen! The tomb is empty!”

Going quickly! It seems as if everyone is in a hurry lately! Everyone has someplace to go! Lately, I have been watching people. Everyone is going, going, and going quickly!

A report in the USA Today said, “Posted speed limits are now thought of by many people as minimums ... not maximums. They analyzed 1.2 million tickets on interstate highways in 18 states, comparing them to similar tickets from a decade ago, they came to the conclusion that we’re speeding faster than ever, and that we’re speeding further above the new, higher speed limits than we used to speed above the old, lower speed limits.”^{iv}

I suppose the time is right, then, for us to go quickly and tell the other learners—Christ has risen! The tomb is empty!

GO TELL!

So What? *Go quickly*, says the angel. So the women hit the road, they are hightailing it out of there! And as they “hurried *on their way*,” they run smack-dab into Jesus. “**Greetings!** Slow down. Catch your breath. Don’t race right past me. I need you to make a connection with me (28:8-9).” Mary one and Mary two hit the brakes! They fall to the ground, grab onto His feet and worship Him!

The fact that they take hold of his feet shows us that this is a real person they are holding on to-- not a ghost or a spirit. Jesus is someone they can see, hear, touch, and connect with. And...He is alive! The women have witnessed Christ’s crucifixion, they saw his lifeless body on the cross. They spent the sabbath behind closed doors. Everyone trying to figure out their next move. Living in fear of a knock on the door. Early on Sunday, the first day of their week, they go to the tomb with their spices. Jesus was buried just before sundown on the sabbath. The sabbath had to be obeyed, no work done until sunrise on Sunday. Here they are, face to face with the risen, very alive, Jesus!

In the Netherlands, there is a little Dutch city of Delft that wanted to slow down their problem of fast traffic, so they came up with a solution. They moved furniture into the streets — planters, chairs, tables and sofas. Cars can still maneuver around, but barely, and only if they slowed down. The furniture acted as a speed bump in a parking lot!

God has the same plan to slow people down! God rolled a stone in front of us! On Easter Sunday, God tosses out one, huge resurrection stone, so that all who pass by cannot help but slow down. The two women fall at Jesus’ feet and worship Him! And what does Jesus say? “Don’t be afraid. Go and tell!”

I remember Easter Sunday of 1993. I was laying on the couch that Sunday afternoon and my wife came and sat on the floor by me. She started crying. I sat up and asked her what was wrong, between deep sobs she said, “you are going to die.” She had a dream that she was going to be a pastor’s wife. She was crying because she thought that meant I was going to die. I rolled off the couch and explained to her that for the past two years I had been visiting seminaries, praying for God’s direction in my life. At the time, I was working full-time in the family business and working part-time as the youth director of our Presbyterian church. I had started to feel the call of full-time ministry but had not shared it with my wife yet. She was going to be a pastor’s wife—and I am still learning how to die to myself!

That Easter, my wife and I slowed down and grasped the reality of the resurrection. We took hold of Jesus’ feet and worshiped him--trusting that He would guide and provide for us as a family. He has. Following Christ, and slowing down long enough to grasp the reality of the resurrection has changed not only us but our whole family. All of our children have been missionaries. During their teen-age years, we took them on youth, mission trips. Our oldest daughter and her husband have served as missionaries in Honduras, India, and Mexico during the past ten years. Our son has been to Tanzania, Africa, twice; to Sri Lanka after the Tsunami, and two years ago his wife and two sons went to Mongolia--where they helped run a business and start a church. Our youngest daughter served in Zambia, Africa, and helped to start an orphanage. I have been to Peru and Ecuador to share the reality of the resurrection. I am not sharing these things to have you think great things about me or my family. I am sharing this with you to tell you that when we truly slow down and grasp the reality of the resurrection, we will be called to “go and tell.”

Only you know what Jesus is calling you to go and do with the resurrection life you’ve been given. A Resurrection Rock lies right here today in the middle of the journey of your life. What are you going to do with the resurrected Jesus? Will you drive faster and speed away thinking, “that sure was a beautiful Easter day.” Or...will you..Come and see—come... right here, right away, right now...come! And see—not just with your eyes but with your heart, with your mind, with your soul! Take it all in—the tomb is empty! Jesus is alive.

Now, you’re ready for the “so what?” So what does the Resurrection mean? So what am I supposed to do? Come...and see...now let’s GO...and TELL!!!

Let’s pray!

Round Rock Presbyterian Church
Round Rock, Texas 78681
April 4, 2010 Easter Sunday
Reverend David Peters

ⁱ *The Holy Bible : New Revised Standard Version. 1989, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.*

ⁱⁱ *Adapted from an original cartoon by Wendell Simons, The Best Cartoons from Leadership Journal, Volume 1 (Broadman & Holman, 1999)*

ⁱⁱⁱ Strong, J. (1996). *The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the test of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order.* (electronic ed.) (G1205). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.

^{iv} Hampson, Rick and Paul Overberg. "Speeders outgun new limits." *USA Today*, usatoday.com. February 23, 2004,