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St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
2100 16<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Austin, MN 55912-1749  
Pastor Ted Barthels  
Sermon preached on  
April 16, 2017  
Easter Sunday

Scripture Lessons: Job 19:23-27, 1 Cor. 15:12-23 John 20:1-18  
Hymns: 191; 200; 198; 205; 201; 207:2,6

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord  
and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: Matthew 28:1-10

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. 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. 5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." 8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. 9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me." (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth.  
Amen.

In Christ Jesus, our Crucified and Risen Savior, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Easter Joy!

Easter has to be the most joyous of the church festivals. Yes, there is no doubt that we sing our “Glorias” with gusto at Christmas time, but the joy of new life that we celebrate at Easter as we sing with exuberance our “Alleulias!” it is such joy, pure joy!

What lies at the foundation of that joy? I believe that we all know full well that we are filled with joy because Jesus rose from the dead! That is what we are celebrating.

But did it really happen? Or are we simply perpetuating a happy tale that has about as much to do with reality as the Easter bunny? After all, we all need a nice story to distract us from the problems and distresses of life, and after a long and dreary winter we are ready for the joy of spring with its new life.

We need to **know** --

**THEME: The Truth of Jesus’ Resurrection.**

To this end let us consider the words of the angel.

### I. “Come and See!”

**Matthew 28:1-6** 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. 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. 5 But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. **Come, see** the place where the Lord lay.

We are very familiar with this account. Most of us here this morning have heard these words many times over the years. We

may be so familiar with these words that we no longer hear exactly all that Holy Spirit is telling us. This is important because it speaks to the truth of the situation.

Many of the critics, and most recognized and esteemed theologians are numbered among the critics, state quite certainly that the resurrection of Jesus was not necessarily a physical resurrection. It was more of a resurrection of Jesus' teaching and philosophy of life. However some will acknowledge that the apostle's appear to really believe that Jesus was alive. That is credited to the fact that people often believe what they want to believe. My, but that does sound pretty convincing. In fact that argument has deceived many over the centuries.

What does the record show? What does the Spirit teach us? Mary and the other women did not come out to the tomb to look for a risen Savior. They came out to the tomb in search of a dead body. They didn't know that they would be blocked from entering the tomb by the Roman guard and the governor's seal on the door. In fact they were worried about how they were going to move the huge stone so they could properly anoint Jesus' dead body. They saw Jesus die on the cross. They were looking for Jesus who had been crucified.

What they found was an open and empty tomb, and the two angels who indeed acknowledged that Jesus had been crucified; that He had died and had been buried. The angel declared: **“He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”**

They were invited to see for themselves that Jesus was no longer occupying the tomb. **“Come and see!”** The angel's invitation was given to bring the women away from that which they expected, what indeed they had believed, that Jesus was dead. All their life experience and all they knew and believed was that death is final! And so Jesus had to be dead, as sad and tragic as that was. The hymn writer actually captures the spirit of the women as well as the disciples, and it was gloomy!

“O darkest woe! Ye tears forth flow! Has earth so sad a wonder?  
God the Father’s only Son Now is buried yonder.”

(The Lutheran Hymnal 167:1)

This wasn’t just the women? When the women told the disciples the wondrous news of the resurrection they considered their words to be idle tales. When Mary Magdalene wrongly reported that the body of Jesus had been stolen away, Peter and John checked the tomb and that they believed. Later that afternoon as Jesus walked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus they made it clear that no one believed the women, their report was found to be unreliable. They didn’t believe in Jesus’ resurrection in spite of what He had taught them.

**Come and see!** That is what it came down to. Mary Magdalene had to see Jesus for herself. Peter saw Jesus Himself. Jesus appeared to the women our text, and they held His feet! It was not a dream; He was real and He was alive again!

The truth of the resurrection was established by God demonstrating that truth time and again, with the instruction --

## **II. Go and Tell, Tell the Truth.**

Once the angels had imparted their message to the women they instructed them to share the good news with Jesus’ disciples. We read in our text:

**Matthew 28:7-8** And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” 8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

They were to tell the disciples that Jesus is risen from the dead, and that Jesus was going before them into Galilee. That was the message the disciples were to receive. And it was up to the women to respond, and they did respond according to the truth, Jesus is RISEN! They went quickly, our text says with fear and great joy.

Yes, they had just experienced an overwhelming thing, something that had frightened the Roman guards so badly that those big, armed and dangerous soldiers passed out like dead men. So yes, there was still fear, but they also were filled with joy. Jesus, their Lord, the One whom they loved, was alive again. He had been dead but now He was alive! One can hardly put oneself in their position. However, they were acting in obedience. They did believe the angels. What a fantastic story they had to share, but they proceeded according to faith. They were intent on sharing the good news when, behold, Jesus appeared before them!

Jesus blessed their faith and their obedience of faith by confirming the reality of His resurrection by appearing to them, and allowing them to take hold of His feet. Then Jesus sent them on their way with the same mission, **“Go and tell!”**

**Matthew 28:9-10** And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

Jesus’ greeting was special, and it remains special, **“Rejoice!”** He didn’t greet them with the traditional, “Shalom,” meaning peace, not that Resurrection morning. He declared **“Rejoice!”** Your Savior is alive. **Rejoice!** Then Jesus gets down to the purpose of His appearance. He saw their fear and would quiet their fear as only Jesus can quiet fear with His presence. Knowing Jesus’ presence, knowing His assurance of life and peace fear is dispelled. Then it was back to the task at hand for Resurrection Day; **“Go and tell!”**

They had so much to tell. Tell the disciples *“to go to Galilee and there they will see Me.”*

How sad that the disciples didn’t believe the women. They didn’t find them credible. They were still stuck, not with what they wanted to believe, but what their experience in this sin ensnared world would allow them to believe.

The truth about Jesus is so much greater than what the world would have you believe or even allow you to believe. First of all, we do

know with the disciples that Jesus was crucified, dead and buried. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead doesn't undo Jesus' crucifixion. Thank God for that! What the resurrection demonstrates is that Jesus' crucifixion achieved its goal. God has accepted the crucifixion of His only begotten Son as the payment for the sins of the world. Jesus was crucified once for all, for all men, for all time. That was the significance of the angel's message. Jesus who was crucified for you and me has been raised by God the Father, and **lives forevermore!** This isn't wishful thinking. This is the truth established by the empty tomb, established by Jesus' appearances before many eyewitnesses who were then commissioned by Jesus to **go and tell the good news of a crucified and risen Savior.**

And so it has been told. It has been recorded for us in the gospel. It has been preached to the Gentiles, and the Spirit has worked faith in the hearts of those who are called. The Spirit has entered into our hearts through that wondrous joyous message of a Crucified and Risen Redeemer through whom we are redeemed and justified, for what Paul wrote by inspiration remains true today and forever. **“Jesus was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification”** (Romans 4:25).

**Rejoice!** Jesus lives! He who died for us is **RISEN!** He is risen **INDEED!** This is the truth of the Resurrection Morning. It is the factual truth. This is the truth upon which our hope of life is built. Jesus' resurrection shows that resurrection is real. **Rejoice!** Jesus' resurrection shows us that God has accepted the payment Jesus made as He was crucified for the sins of the world. **Rejoice!** All that Jesus said; all that Jesus promised is real and true. He is the resurrection and the life! Whoever lives and believes in Him shall never die! **Rejoice** in this our sure and certain hope of life everlasting.

This is the truth of Jesus' resurrection. Now that you have come and seen, **YOU go and tell!** Share the joy of salvation that we have in a Crucified and Risen Jesus!

**AMEN.**

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Amen. (Romans 15:13) **205: 1-Men 2- Women, 3 – All!**