

“Did Jesus Really Mean That? “On The Third Day I Will Rise”

Luke 18:31-33, 24:1-8 (NIV)

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Today we begin a new sermon series. The series theme is “Did Jesus Really Mean That? Next week we will look at Did Jesus really mean...love your enemies. Other messages in the series is Did Jesus Really Mean? Forgive as I have Forgiven and for us to really go the extra mile.

But today we begin the series Did Jesus really mean... “on the third day I will rise? The answer—an emphatic “YES!” Yes, he meant it and did it! Amen. (sit down)



(image: Spoiler alert: )

(video: <https://www.sermonspice.com/product/80464/empty> )

The tomb IS empty. Woo-hoo!!! So today a different meaning of empty. Empty is not disappointment---but decisive victory. Empty does not mean misery---but because of today means HOPE. Empty does not mean heartache---but a heart full of joy. Now there is heartache that is to be sure, but because of Christ we should realize that just as He conquered the grave our loved ones who believed also conquered the grave. They have gone on before us. This is the first Easter that my mom is worshipping and honoring the risen Christ face to face. There is some heartache that she is not here...yet my emptiness is filled with joy that she is with Jesus. Empty means not anxiety, but excitement.

Oh yes, empty can mean all those things but today empty takes on a different meaning---a meaning of fullness, a measure of hope, a mix of joy and excitement.

In our world today we may even call someone or text them and say, “I guess I’m just feeling empty.” That’s a real feeling we sometimes cannot deny. However, today...today...Easter Sunday empty means alive. The tomb is empty so that you won’t be alone. The tomb is empty so you won’t be empty.



(image: spoiler alert: )

Earlier this year one of our church members saw me in the lobby on a Sunday morning and presented me with this cut out obituary. I first checked to make sure it didn’t have my name on it, and then I read the first few lines and my mouth flew open. Our church member said something to the affect, “Can you believe this?” I said “I can use this.”

So, trying to be as sensitive as possible as this obituary appeared in one of our local papers sometimes this year. It identifies the person's name, middle initial, and his nickname. It gives the date of his birth and death. And now I quote from the first 2 lines of his printed obituary. "If you are reading this, I am dead. I died on (xxx not going to give the actual date, but it was in 2019)" "I was not "called home." I did not "go to be with the Lord." I died. Get over it, I have. I never believed in life after death. I hope that I was right. But if not, then remember what Mark Twain said, "Heaven for the climate, Hell for the company."

Oh, beloved I was shocked when I first read it and am actually saddened as I read it to you. He says, "I don't believe in life after death. I hope I was right."

Beloved there is life beyond the grave. Jesus said, "Because I live you can live also." Christ conquered the grave. Because He was victorious, we can be too!

To this person whose obituary I read. I would have mentioned to him what supposedly the philosopher Albert Camus said: **(image) I would rather live my life as if there is a God and die to find out there isn't, than live as if there isn't and to die to find out that there is.**  
**Albert Camus**

Last month I saw this article in USA Today: "Stephen Hawking didn't believe he'd go to heaven, a place for 'people afraid of the dark'\_  
 (Ashley May, USA TODAY Published 10:11 a.m. ET March 14, 2019)

Here are some of the excerpts.

World-renowned physicist Stephen Hawking, who died March 14, 2018, didn't believe in God and called heaven "a fairy story."

Hawking, who died at 76, wrote "there is no God" in his final, posthumous book "Brief Answers to the Big Questions."

As for life after death, Hawking told the Guardian he believes the brain is like a computer that will simply shut off.

"There is no heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark," (he told the Guardian.)

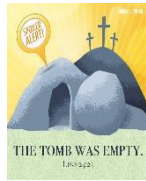
Oh dear...then for them this day, this Easter, this Resurrection day means nothing, nada, zilch. Oh, friends this day is full because of the tomb being empty.

Did Jesus really mean it when He said: "On the third day He will rise." And again, I want to give an emphatic YES! Amen...but I'm not going to sit down this time, I'm just getting started with the revved, revelation, real resurrection retold!!!

Oh, I wonder what it would have looked like back in the day of the resurrection with such if there had been a social media presence. **(image)** “He’s not in there! Oh, wait---he’s changed his status to ‘risen.’”

But I’m sure that with the smart phones and i-phones around they would have tried to capture it on their phone. **(image)**

I wondered if they shared it? I want to share the eternal life-giving power of the resurrection. Share it!!! Oh, Christ the Lord is risen today! Share it!



**(image, spoiler alert)**

Oh friends, do you get it???? He was crucified, dead and buried. The women went with spices. They found the stone rolled away. Whoa, dead man walking. And today He is still rolling stones away. He’s calling Rise up. You may think it is over, but the savior says follow me---rise up!

The darkness, the disappointments, the messiness—but He’s still rolling stones away. He saves you. Gave you a song of revival. Don’t just hear about it...believe it. Rise up. You are not too far gone; with all you’ve done wrong the tomb is empty to say He died and was resurrected because you are worth it. He’s calling your name. Come alive! Come alive!

And scripture says they entered the tomb. And guess what they found----nothing. Who was there? Nobody. And I do mean no body.

**(image, spoiler alert)**



The angels, the men said, “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” Remember Jesus has changed His social media status to “Risen.”

Oh, He had let the disciples know back in earlier in Luke. **Luke 9:22 New International Version (NIV)** <sup>22</sup> And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Actually, this is the third time of prophecy where He has told them that He would rise again. And then here at the tomb it is said, **Luke 24:6-8** **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.**

Ah ha...then they remembered His words.

This is just as Jesus said. He healed the sick, He raised the dead, He did what He said He would do. He said on the cross as He died, “It is finished.” Certainly, his promise that on the third day He would rise again is consistent with all He had done in His ministry. You might say what He said fit Him to a tee.



**(image, spoiler alert)**

Did Jesus really mean that? Did He mean that He would rise again? The man whose actual obituary I read may not have believed it. Stephen Hawkins said He didn't believe in heaven, but in God's Word it says, **1 Corinthians 15:14 New Living Translation (NLT) 14 And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.**

I guess I should have been giving you a spoiler alert to this sermon---but the tomb was empty. Jesus is alive!!!!

Because the tomb was empty, I have hope; I have excitement; I have assurance; I don't have to feel empty. Oh, throughout life I will have my moments, and so will you but know that He lives in you, with you, and for you.

I believe in the Son. I believe in the Risen One. I believe I can overcome. I'm alive because the tomb is empty---I know it's a spoiler alert. He lives.

Oh, and I can face tomorrow because He rolled the stone away. And He's still rolling stones away. Amen!!! Amen!!! I was dead in the grave covered with sin and shame.

Our only hope is our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Today let's give Him honor. Today let's give Him glory. He is our prince of peace who came to save us.

Oh, the tomb is empty, but my heart is full!!!