

## He Is Risen!

Mark 16:1-8

Trinity Lutheran – Kearney, Missouri

April 12, 2020 – Festival of the Resurrection

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In the name of the Father, and of † the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. It was the third day, very early in the morning, and there they were – the three women – heading to the grave of our Lord Jesus – expecting to find His dead body so they could anoint it with spices in one final act of love and devotion. But as they went along they wondered who would roll the stone away. They hadn't thought about *that* detail. They hadn't considered *what* they were going to do, since the grave had been securely sealed and was being guarded by Roman soldiers. This was no place for women to be – especially at that time of the day. But onward they went until they arrived at the tomb. And when they arrived they found it standing wide open! The large, round stone had already been rolled to the side, so they decided to peek inside.

What did they see? They saw an angel standing on the right, where the body of Jesus was supposed to be. But His corpse was not there! They were filled with surprise, shock, fear, awe and astonishment – the kind of amazement that leaves your eyes wide open, your jaw slamming hard against the floor, and the back of your neck covered with goose bumps. That's when the white-robed angel spoke to them, saying: "Do not be alarmed. I know you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth – the very same Jesus who was crucified just a few days ago. You want to anoint His dead body, don't you? Well, His body is not here. See for yourselves. There's no corpse where you expected to find one. **He Is Risen!**"

The women gave the angel no response. No "Amen," "Hallelujah," "Thanks be to God" – nor even a "He is risen indeed, Allelu-

ia!" came from their lips. It was all such a shock. Even though Jesus *had* told them exactly how this would play out – a resurrection was the last thing they thought they would find. And because they had come expecting nothing in that tomb but a corpse, they were numb and dumbstruck. So the heavenly messenger continued: "Behold, I have another message for you. You have to go and spread the news. You need to tell Jesus' disciples – especially Peter – that He will be going on ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Jesus, just as He promised." But the women didn't say a word. Their bodies trembled as they ran from the tomb – their lips sealed because of fear. And then this reading ends. Perhaps that strikes you as more than just a little peculiar. But that's all right. What's important for you to take home today is the word of promise spoken by the angel: "**He is not here. He is risen!**" Time after time after time Jesus had promised He would be betrayed, handed over to sinful men – men who would falsely accuse Him, arrest Him, and put Him to death – and then, on the Third Day, He would rise from the dead. And that is precisely what happened – exactly as He said.

What all that means, dear Christian, is that Jesus truly is the Savior. He really did die for you. His death has answered for all your sin, so that it no longer condemns you. And when on the cross He said: "It is finished," your salvation was won. He died for you, and even for those who abandoned and denied Him. Who couldn't trust their life with a Jesus who promised that He would suffer, die and rise again for our salvation – and then went and did it? This Jesus doesn't hold grudges or

keep score. In fact, He tore up your sin score-card and dropped it in the black hole of His own death. So there is no, “Just wait ‘till after the resurrection you faithless, foolish disciples.” Instead, freshly risen from the dead, Jesus would meet these sinners and tell them that they had been forgiven – no hard feelings, no payback, no bad blood.

St. Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians that Jesus “appeared to Peter, then the Twelve, and after that, to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time . . . then to James, then to all the Apostles, and last of all” to him. So if any of you were planning to go the grave to look for the dead body of Jesus, you won’t find Him because He’s not there! He is risen! Just ask one of the Marys, Peter, James, Paul, or any of the hundreds of others who saw Him. He has gone ahead of you to meet you at the Baptismal font. With His Word and with His Name – in, with, and under the water – He buried you and all your sin into His Good Friday It-Is-Finished Dying. His is the only death that can atone for your sin. And His Galilee promise to you is this: “Whoever believes and is Baptized will be saved” – no animosity, no hard feelings, no vendetta – just forgiveness. It

doesn’t matter what you’ve done or haven’t done. It’s all been forgiven. You have been washed and cleansed in that Worded-water. And where there is forgiveness, there also is salvation – salvation not only for your soul, but also your body. Remember, He created and redeemed your body, and on the Last Day He will raise your dead body from the grave.

Jesus, the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep, got the resurrection ball rolling on the Third Day following His own death and burial. And on the Day of the Resurrection of all flesh your Baptism will be complete when He says: “It’s time to get up folks. What you’ve always had by faith, you are now going to see with your eyes. Behold I give you a resurrected body – raised in imperishable glory!” Until then, enjoy living in your Baptism – today and every day – with the eternal gifts Jesus bestows through it by His word of promise. After all, He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! In the Name of Jesus. Amen.

And now that peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in that one true faith in Christ Jesus, unto life everlasting. Amen.