

## He Is Risen, As He Said

Matthew 28:1-10

Death. Old, ugly, stinking Death. From time immemorial death has haunted humanity. The promised payment for rebellion against God ([Genesis 2:17](#)), dark, despicable death has plagued mankind ([Romans 6:23](#), [Ezekiel 18:4](#)). Though the Deceiver in the Garden denied its power ([Genesis 3:4](#)), death has reigned over humanity ([Romans 5:14](#), [5:17](#), [5:21](#)). The common Scriptural phrase “and he died” bears grim testimony to the power of old slave-master Sin and his cruel henchman, Death.

And in these deathly days, there is news about the many victims of a microscopic virus. Deny it as they will many people know that down deep inside, they are afraid. The Bible describes humanity’s lifelong slavery to the fear of death ([Hebrews 2:15](#)). One of the greatest fears during this pandemic has been the fear of a second wave of this deadly infection.<sup>i</sup> Even now, health experts are warning about the dangers. But there is something far worse than a second wave of this pandemic; it is the second death of eternal punishment (Revelation [20:14](#), [21:8](#)).

So how are we to face our fears about old, ugly, stinking, despicable death [and eternal punishment?](#)<sup>ii</sup> This question shows us the importance of Resurrection Sunday! The life-changing works and words of Jesus Christ can put an end to our fear of death and hell and fill us with His joy.

Matthew 28:1-10 acts like a telescope to bring the events of that blessed Easter morning into sharp focus for us today.

**<sup>1</sup> In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher [grave].**

**<sup>2</sup> And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. <sup>3</sup> His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: <sup>4</sup> And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.**

**<sup>5</sup> And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. <sup>7</sup> And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you.**

**<sup>8</sup> And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. <sup>9</sup> And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. <sup>10</sup> Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.**

### *The First Day of the Week*

**“In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week . . .”**

According to Jewish thinking, the Sabbath would have begun on Friday evening and concluded on Saturday evening. As the day began to dawn on the next day, Sunday, these events took place.

Throughout these accounts of the Resurrection, there are historical details such as this one. Across the centuries, skeptics such as Albert Henry Ross have set out to prove that Christ’s Resurrection from the dead was merely a myth. But they have discovered that the eyewitness accounts (including exact details) will bear up under rigorous investigation. “Ross was skeptical regarding the resurrection of [Jesus](#), and set out to

analyze the sources and to write a short paper entitled *Jesus – the Last Phase* to demonstrate the apparent myth. However, in compiling his notes, he came to be convinced of the truth of the resurrection, and set out his reasoning in the book.”<sup>iii</sup>

Ross wrote the book entitled, [“Who Moved the Stone?”](#)<sup>iv</sup> writing under the pen name “Frank Morrison.” Literary greats such as T.S. Eliot, G.K. Chesterton and Dorothy Sayers gave high praise to this work.

“The first day of the week” rose to prominence because that was the day of the Lord’s Resurrection from the dead. You can see the impact on church history in verses such as [Acts 20:7](#) and [1 Corinthians 16:2](#). It became so prominent that John, the beloved apostle, referred to Sunday as “the Lord’s Day” ([Revelation 1:10](#)). The Jewish people had always worshiped on Saturday (the Sabbath). But these verses demonstrate the powerful impact of Christ’s Resurrection on the church. Since this miraculous event, believers have met to worship on Sunday.

#### *The Angel’s Announcement of the Lord’s Message*

**<sup>2</sup> And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. <sup>3</sup> His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: <sup>4</sup> And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.**

The angel appeared in order to move the stone and relay God’s message. We discussed the ministry of angels in a [recent message from Psalm 91](#).<sup>v</sup> Here Matthew explains that the angel of the Lord caused a great earthquake when he rolled the stone from the tomb. It’s important to note that the angel did not set Jesus free from the tomb. Our Lord had already risen from the grave; He was not there. But the angel removed the stone so that the eyewitnesses could see the evidence for themselves.

The Roman guards<sup>vi</sup> there at the tomb were undoubtedly stunned by the earthquake. But the brilliant sight of the angel who appeared like lightning in white clothing put them in awe. They were so stunned by the sight that they became like dead men: motionless and astonished. The Lord wanted these women to see the empty tomb, so His angel frightened the guards so badly that they could not stop them. The angel had an important message to deliver to the believing women, but what an introduction! What happened next is the heart of the message of this text. Here we will see that the life-changing works and words of Jesus Christ are described in these next few verses.

### **This is the Message for Those Who Seek Jesus**

Knowing that they were seeking Jesus, the angel delivered the simple message to them.

#### ***Seven Life-Changing Features of our Faithful Lord***

##### **1. Jesus Was Crucified. v.5**

**<sup>5</sup> And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.**

The Roman guards were stunned by the appearance of the angel. But to the believing women, the angel said, “Don’t be afraid.” Why shouldn’t they be afraid? They had just felt the rumblings of a great earthquake. Then they saw that the stone cover of the tomb had been dislodged. And on top of that, there was the brilliant sight of the fearsome angel. Yet the angel said, “Don’t be afraid!” Why not? He said, “. . .for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.”

Jesus had been put to death by the cruelest of punishments: crucifixion. Today, the talk about the death penalty is how to execute someone humanely showing mercy. But let’s face it: death is a horrible, ugly stinking event. One man in France, who opposed

the death penalty, nevertheless looked for a humane way to execute those whom his countrymen condemned to death. His name was Dr. Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, and his children were so horrified by the popularity of his deadly machine that they changed their names. They did not want to be associated with such a deadly memory. But Jesus had been put to death by the cruelest of punishments: crucifixion. And His angel declared that they should not be afraid to seek Him who had been crucified.

What had gone through the minds of people such as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and the women who cared for the body of the crucified Jesus? How did they care for that lifeless clay? How did they grieve as they removed those iron nails? Knowing the furies that Jesus had endured, didn't they have every reason to be afraid? Yet the angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified."

This is a puzzling pronouncement to those who don't understand the significance of the crucifixion of Christ. Why shouldn't the memory of the horrid sight of a bloodied body, nailed to a cross terrify them? And how could anything this horrible have any life-changing features for us today? In the words of [1 Corinthians 15:3](#), "**Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures . . .**" Jesus did not go to that cross for His evil; He was innocent. He went to that cross for our evil – so that we could escape from it. And that knowledge about Jesus' work is life-changing.

Verse 6 gives us a second life-changing feature of our faithful Lord

## **2. Jesus Is the Risen One: He Rose from the Dead. v.6**

**<sup>6</sup> He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.**

How could the body of the One who was crucified not be there? Here is the life-changing answer: **He is risen**. This is why we celebrate on this Resurrection Sunday, 2020 in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Here is why we do not fear death – even

the cruelest kind of death: **He is risen.** Dr. Guillotin's children changed their names; God's children take up their own crosses and follow in the name of Christ (Matthew 16:24). Why? It is because Jesus has risen from the dead. Jesus is God's Son.

But why does that put away fear? Why can believers be bold and fearless? In [1 Corinthians 15:4](#), Paul described just how essential this is as part of the Gospel. "He was buried and He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." The Apostle Paul explained the impact of Christ's Resurrection on us today this way: *"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you"* (Romans 8:11) God's adopted sons (believers) were raised to new life by the Holy Spirit; and one day, we will be resurrected from the dead by that same Holy Spirit!

Donald Guthrie wrote, "A dead Christ could never deliver from the fear of death, because he had not himself been delivered. But a risen Christ could do so, because in him was the power of life."<sup>vii</sup>

Here is the third life-changing feature of our faithful Lord.

### **3. Jesus Fulfills His Promises, v.6**

**<sup>6</sup> He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.**

#### **■ As He Said**

Jesus had said that He would rise from the dead. And He did. And these words are life-changing.

In rising again from the dead, Jesus demonstrated the truthfulness of what He had said in John 10:17-18, "<sup>17</sup> **Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.** <sup>18</sup> **No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I**

**have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”**

At Caesarea Philippi, in Matthew 16, Jesus had begun to predict His rising again from the dead. **“From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day”** (Matthew 16:21)<sup>viii</sup>. To Him, His crucifixion and resurrection were not a surprise, nor a mistake. By His Father’s will, He had promised that these things would take place.

■ Come See The Place

These events were not hidden myths; they were historical facts. When men like Albert Ross began to examine the eyewitness accounts, they were convinced. The angel invited the eyewitnesses to “come see the place where the Lord lay.” He did so to convince them that their eyes did not deceive them. They could check things out for themselves. These historical eyewitness accounts would continue. As you can see in verse 7, the angel sent the message that Jesus’ disciples would see Him. In other words, these are factual, historic realities. Liberals try to say that the Resurrection of Jesus was an imagination: a mass hallucination of His disciples. But the eyewitness accounts show us the folly of this ridiculous idea.<sup>ix</sup> Someone who was merely trying to dream something up would have never chosen women to be the first eyewitnesses. Yet the Lord honored women with being the first to understand and to tell the disciples of Jesus.

You can see the significance of these eyewitness accounts for yourself in [1 Corinthians 15:5-8](#). It’s important to note that the Apostle Paul staked everything on these factual, historical realities of Christ’s Resurrection. In [1 Corinthians 15:17-19](#), Paul declared that if it were not true, then the Christian faith is an empty faith. Without the Resurrection

of Jesus Christ from the dead, we are all just miserable men who are still in our sins. But Jesus has risen from the dead! In the words of Dr. Luke in [Acts 1:3](#), Jesus demonstrated that He was alive by many infallible evidences and proofs.

What are we learning? The life-changing works and words of Jesus Christ can put an end to our fear of death and hell and fill us with His joy.

#### **4. Jesus is the Lord: He Commands Angels and Disciples, vs. 6-7**

**<sup>6</sup> He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. <sup>7</sup> And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.**

Consider this fourth life-changing feature. Think about the significant title that the angel used in verse 6: **“the Lord.”** If the angels call Him “Lord” what does that tell us? And then the angel passed along a command from the risen Lord Jesus to His disciples: “and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead and, behold, He goes before you into Galilee.” You can see that the angel is fulfilling the responsibility with which he was charged when he said, “Behold, I have told you.” He was even asking them to be eyewitnesses of what he had just said to them. These are not flimsy imaginations or cunningly devised fables. The exact events could be repeated by the eyewitnesses, using the very words that had been said. By going before them to Galilee, Jesus was going to the borderlands with the Gentiles. There He would meet with His disciples as He prepared them to go to all the nations with the Good News of His death, burial and resurrection from the dead. These life-changing words would give them a new purpose for living.

In verse 8, you can really see another life-changing feature of our faithful Lord’s work:

#### **5. Jesus’ Work Fills His People with Fear and Joy, v.8**



**<sup>8</sup> And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word.**

Just try to put yourselves in the sandals of those women. Think about the zeal they would have felt to tell others what they had seen and heard. You can see it in the words of verse 8: *“they departed quickly,” . . . “with fear and great joy and did run”* to take the message to His disciples.

But the Bible doesn't just tell us what they did. It tells us how they felt. They experienced fear and great joy. The fear of God overshadowed their souls; the joy of the message of the risen Jesus caused their hearts to leap. On that first Easter morning, they experienced a wonderful combination of fear and great joy. Have you experienced this kind of joy? You can.

Now you might say, “Well, I wish I had been there. I wish I had seen that.” Perhaps the Apostle Peter had the joy of those women in mind when he wrote the words of [1 Peter 1:8](#). But he most certainly had those in mind who have never seen the risen Lord Jesus with their own eyes: *“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:”* The fact is that, on this Easter Sunday, you and I can experience the same zeal and the same joy that those women felt on that great Resurrection Day. And that's life-changing.

## **6. Jesus is the God Who Deserves Our Worship, v.9**

**<sup>9</sup> And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him.**

Now the angel had told them not to be afraid. But the women ran with fear in their hearts. Theirs was a great joy, but there was fear. But what the angel's message could not do, the Lord Himself would do. And it would be life-changing.

While they were on their way – seeking to accomplish their mission – Jesus met them in the way. He greeted them with the words, [“All Hail!” or “Rejoice!”](#) And what did they do? They worshiped Him. Jesus received their worship as God. You will sometimes hear the error that someone says, “Jesus is a god, but not the God.” Dear friend, even God the Father exalted Jesus Christ as God in [Hebrews 1:8](#). God the Father said to the Son, “Thy throne O God is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom.”<sup>x</sup> Those women responded the right way. Jesus deserves our worship as God. Just imagine that life-changing moment when they gripped His feet and saw the scars of the nails. And their lives were changed.

And this brings us to the seventh life-changing feature of our faithful Lord.

### **7. Jesus is the One who Meets His People and Calms Their Fears as They Serve Him, v. 10**

**<sup>10</sup> Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.**

The angel had told them not to be afraid. But then Jesus quelled their fears by appearing to them. He set aside their fear and encouraged them to get on with their mission.

His appearing to grieving women<sup>xi</sup> changed their lives forever. They came to see the sepulcher, and they saw the Savior. They came to see the grave, but they saw the Lord God. This is the life-changing feature of our faithful Lord. He meets His people and calms their fears as they serve Him. In the pandemonium surrounding this pandemic in the year 2020, He will do same for us. Later in this same chapter, Jesus promised to be with us always. He is still here, and He still calms our fear.

*Angels cannot quell our fear*

*Only when the Lord draws near  
Can our hearts find peace and rest  
Knowing that His way is best*

*Tell disciples who have fled  
“He is risen as He said!”  
This can end our fear and dread  
“He is risen from the dead!”*

Death. Old, ugly stinking Death. It still rules and reigns in the lives of the people around us. But now we know that, as Christians, we have answers. We know the life-changing works and words of Jesus Christ. And this calms our fears.

*Pastor Gordon Dickson, Calvary Baptist Church, Findlay, Ohio, Easter Sunday morning,  
2020*

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<sup>i</sup> “A study in the [Lancet Public Health Journal](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/02/asian-countries-face-possible-second-wave-of-coronavirus-infections) said the extreme restrictions on Wuhan helped control the outbreak, and lifting them now could see a second wave by August.” from “Asian countries face possible second wave of coronavirus infections” Helen Davidson, The Guardian, April 2, 2020, accessed at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/02/asian-countries-face-possible-second-wave-of-coronavirus-infections>  
This same serious concern was raised by an article in Time magazine. See Charlie Campbell, “Wuhan Has Reopened After a Brutal Coronavirus Lockdown. But Is China Ready?” Time, April 8, 2020, accessed at <https://time.com/5817251/wuhan-coronavirus-lockdown-reopens/>

<sup>ii</sup> Please give careful consideration to the words you never want to hear (Matthew 25:41) Audio at <https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=62412179407>

<sup>iii</sup> Albert Henry Ross, Wikipedia accessed at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert\\_Henry\\_Ross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Henry_Ross)

<sup>iv</sup> The text of Morrison’s book is available online at <https://www.gospeltruth.net/whomovedthestone.htm>

<sup>v</sup> God’s Grace in the Secret Place <https://www.cbfindlay.org/gods-grace-in-the-secret-place/>

<sup>vi</sup> Read the events described in Matthew 27:57-66

<sup>vii</sup> Donald Guthrie, New Testament Theology, Downer’s Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981, p. 388

<sup>viii</sup> See also: Mark 8:31, Luke 9:22, Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 9:31, Matthew 20:19, Mark 10:34, and Luke 18:33

<sup>ix</sup> Guthrie, p. 381

<sup>x</sup> Quoting from Psalm 45:6-7

<sup>xi</sup> For a good discussion of how to harmonize the Gospel accounts about this resurrection account, see Tim Chaffey, “Christ’s Resurrection – Four Accounts, One Reality” Answers in Genesis, April 5, 2015

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<https://answersingenesis.org/jesus/resurrection/christs-resurrection-four-accounts-one-reality/> These accounts help us to see that there was no collusion or conspiracy since they each share various details.