

“What Is It That You Are Looking For?”

Hallelujah! Jesus is resurrected!

Each Easter, I find it challenging as a pastor to reasonably explain the resurrection, which always frustrates me. Despite presenting ample evidence, those who choose not to believe in the resurrection event do so regardless.

However, those touched by the absolute power of the Holy Spirit naturally acknowledge the resurrection event themselves, regardless of human will. However, we have a mission to always be prepared to provide a reasonable explanation of the resurrection to anyone.

Are you a born-again Christian? There is also something that makes born-again Christians very boring on Easter Sunday. That is, the pastor emphasizes the historical credibility of the resurrection of Jesus. It is because they have long ago forgotten the reasons or conditions for denying the resurrection of Jesus. So, what should I say today?

It must be resurrection again. Some of us say that he believes in the resurrection, but in reality, he does not believe it. It is also because those who accurately believe in the resurrection want to hear the truth over and over again. Amen!

As we learn about the risen Jesus Christ as introduced by the Gospels, we discover three things: The first is identity. This is the central point. The Jesus who died on the cross and was buried in the tomb is the same Jesus who was resurrected.

The second is continuity. Jesus was resurrected in the form of a body that could be perceived by the physical senses. Paul also emphasizes the physical character of the resurrection.

Third, it is discontinuity. Although Jesus was resurrected physically, his body was not the same as before. It was a transformed body, now possessing a new transcendental power.

I want to go through the lesson of the resurrection of Jesus Christ with you through the Gospel of John today.

I. Our resurrection faith should be based on the message of the Bible (v. 9).

It was morning on the third day of Jesus' death. Can you imagine the shock and despair Mary Magdalene must have felt when she saw Jesus' empty tomb? Not only was her savior's body stolen and her tomb desecrated, but her belief system likely took a serious hit as well. Not only Mary, but Jesus' disciples Peter and John were full of sorrow and fear as well.

Eventually, the disciples, who had seen the empty grave, went back to where they were. And they were so afraid that they closed all the doors. Their teacher, Jesus, had died, and all his disciples were scattered and defeated. Or so they thought.

Verse 9 speaks. "They still did not understand the Scripture, which said that he must rise from death." This was something Jesus preached three times in advance, and the prophets of the Old Testament also prophesied.

But they did not understand it. The empty tomb and missing body meant Jesus' resurrection, but they likely thought that someone had stolen the body. So, at the moment of the greatest victory, they were in the greatest sorrow and fear.

How much of your thinking is dominated by worries and complaints? The Bible clearly teaches us how to live and believe. However, we are not dependent on the Word of God and only think about the situations we are in and the negative aspects of our troubles. However, I Peter 5: 7 says, "Leave all your worries with him, because he cares for you."

We confess that on Easter, "Jesus has risen." But the confession of our faith should not end there. So, we must believe in the resurrection, and today we must live the resurrection life. Because Jesus' resurrection was to revive us.

Conflict and struggles are things that we cannot avoid while living this life here on earth. But the Lord asks us to find the voice of the Holy Spirit, who leads us in the midst of those events. As we absorb and rely on the Word through the Bible, we will experience true faith and lives filled with boldness and hope.

II. The Lord will meet those who seek him (v. 14).

For as long as I can remember, when I call my wife, I call her "Honey" or "Uni." If I simply said "hello" or "excuse me," it would be ludicrous. Such a greeting is only proper with someone you do not know well.

Mary met Jesus in the tomb. But she did not recognize him and thought he was the gardener. Why didn't she recognize Jesus? Is it because he got the transformed body? However, it does not change the appearance, so she cannot distinguish him even though he has a transformed body. She just mistook Jesus for the gardener. Why? She did not think Jesus would ever be with her.

So, Mary said "Hello" to Jesus. I would imagine Jesus would have been amused by that. Later, when she told the disciples that she had seen the resurrected Jesus, she confessed, "I saw the Lord."

Jesus asked Mary, "Who are you looking for?" The resurrected Jesus was standing next to her. But Mary was looking for the dead Jesus. But through his resurrection, Jesus will always be with us.

In fact, his desire to always be with us while sitting at the right of God is the very reason behind the resurrection. Now he is in his rightful position and authority with God and is also always with us by the Holy Spirit, as He promised.

So, when we call upon him, let us not take that timid and unfamiliar tone by saying hello, but call on him as a friend, a father, our savior, and our Lord.

III. We have not seen Jesus, but we can surely believe Him as the resurrected Lord "(v. 29)!"

On the night of His resurrection, Jesus came to the house where His disciples were gathered and showed them His hands and his side. But one of the twelve disciples, Thomas, was not there with them.

Then afterward, Thomas said, "Unless I see his scars with my eyes and put my finger on those scars, I will not believe!" It is a very rational and realistic claim, isn't it? It sounds a lot like what we would probably say today.

However, eight days later, Jesus came there again. He said to Thomas, "Reach out your hand and put it in my body. Stop your doubting, and believe!" "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me?" (v 29).

How many people have believed in Jesus after seeing the resurrected Jesus since he ascended? Jesus knew that there would be numerous people who could not see Him but would believe in Him in the future. Can we believe everything we have seen?

How is it possible for us to believe in Jesus as the Lord? It is the help of the word of the Bible and the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:3 says, "No one can confess 'Jesus is Lord' without being guided by the Holy Spirit."

In other words, if anyone is empowered by the Holy Spirit, he can confess that "Jesus is Lord." We should look not only for what is visible but also seek what the Holy Spirit allows us to see. Only then can we be witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

An American woman poet, Pat Barnes, introduced the experience of one Easter morning. There was an old woman selling flowers at the door of the church. She was an elderly woman with a wrinkled look in shabby attire, but her face was filled with laughter and happiness.

Pat asked, "Is there anything good?" The woman's answer was simple. "Living to this old age, I had a lot of sad days and heartaches. But I think of Jesus every time I do that. The Friday of suffering with the cross is not the end. In just three days, the dawn of the resurrection came. So, when I'm in trouble, I always say to myself, "Let me wait just for three days." Would you follow me once?"

Let's understand exactly why Jesus was resurrected. "I am alive again. I am the best in the universe; worship me!" This claim is by no means the purpose of Jesus' resurrection. Instead, "What makes me alive again is to bring you back to life. You have to live again and let others live forever." This is the purpose of Jesus!

When faced with pain, frustration, or hatred, have you relied on the power of Jesus' resurrection to resist them? The process can be like carrying a cross. We must be prepared for it. But after passing through the grave darkness, we will surely experience the Lord's raising us up again.

It is a coincidence that Easter is to be met, but learning the meaning of the resurrection requires a commitment of faith. The more we find the things of the earth, the more we forget the heavenly things and become attached to the things of the earth. But if we find something in heaven, we can experience the world of resurrection and power and be free from the things of the earth.

Hebrews 13:15 says to us, "Let us, then, always offer praise to God as our sacrifice through Jesus, which is the offering presented by lips that confess him as Lord."

Today, the Holy Spirit tells us and reminds us to remember what Jesus said while He was on earth. Is the resurrection of Jesus Christ the everlasting hope in your life today? Does He touch you with His living power now?

We need to be witnesses to the resurrection, more so for ourselves than for anyone else. How can we save others without saving ourselves first? Faith in the resurrection raises us up and gives us life. The resurrection of Jesus removes the grave from our lives, just as the stone of His grave was removed.

We know that we cannot live without the grace of God. And at the root of God's grace is the resurrection. Therefore, we hold strongly to the power of the resurrection. If the resurrection of Jesus had not happened, we would be the most sad and miserable people.

Instead, we are the most joyful people because of the guarantee of the resurrection in Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit is always with us so that we can live in the miracle of the resurrection. Today, you and I are all witnesses to the resurrection together! Amen.

**** Reflections and Applications for Today's Sermon:**

- 1) What made you accept the resurrection of Jesus as a historical event? How does that experience help you testify to others about the resurrection of Jesus?
- 2) What Bible passage or ritual during worship excites you every year when Easter approaches? Why?
- 3) Today, what does the resurrection of Jesus mean to you, and what strength does it provide?