

Expositional Sermon Helps

The Risen Lord

Luke 24:1-12, 36-49

[With Lesson 6, "The Promise of the Future" from *In Jerusalem*]

Sermon Focus:

We celebrate a Savior who rose from the dead!

Introduction Idea:

New. We love the word. We love the idea. New car, new dress, new home, new job, all these make us smile.

The Bible speaks often about new things:

- A new song Psalm 40:3
- New strength Isaiah 40:31
- New Covenant Jeremiah 31:33-34
- New creation in Christ 2 Corinthians 5:17
- All things made new Revelation 21:5

When we come to Easter Sunday we come to the ultimate in new. Jesus came back from the dead to new life. Because of this we can have new life as well! Today we celebrate that.

Context of Passage:

Jesus has been crucified. His followers are a wreck, even though he told them of his resurrection. This very low moment would quickly be reversed as Jesus' tomb is found to be empty.

Outline:

1. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead (Luke 24:1-12)

Investigation: These same women (identified in verse 10) came to the tomb early on Sunday. They were surprised to find that the stone was moved, and Jesus was not there. This perplexing scenario became more frightening when two angels appeared to them in "dazzling apparel." The angels gave them the glorious news that Jesus was raised from the dead, noting that Jesus had already told them this. On several occasions in the Gospels Jesus had told the twelve the same thing, yet they completely missed this when it happened.

"All four Gospels possess accounts of the women's coming to the empty tomb. All four refer to the first day of the week, women as the chief characters in the story, Mary Magdalene's being one of the women, the stone's being rolled away, the women's finding the tomb empty, and an angelic message."¹

They hurried to tell the remaining disciples. Judas now being gone from them. How did the men respond? "These words seemed to them an idle tale." Like the early church praying for Peter's release and yet not believing it when it happened (Acts 12), the disciples were in disbelief. Yet Peter, who seemed always the first to act or speak, even if not wisely, rushed to the tomb. John adds the detail in his Gospel that he also ran with Peter (John 20:3-4).

¹ Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 603.

Application: The Apostle Paul was clear in the importance of the death and resurrection of Jesus. He told the Corinthians what mattered above all else:

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve" (1 Corinthians 15:3-5).

Of first importance is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. In fact, Paul added twice that this was "in accordance with the Scriptures." All of Scripture points to the climax of the story of redemption in Jesus' death and resurrection. May we not be like those women and disciples who missed this vital teaching!

Illustration: In the early church there was a custom that when one believer met another the first would say, "He is risen," to which the other would reply, "He is risen indeed!"

You will never achieve influencer status on social media, fame as an athlete, success in business, or anything else that compares to the one fact that Christ died for sinners, was buried, and was raised again. This changes everything. We may through our influences change a few minds, but the resurrection of Jesus gives us a message that will change people's destiny. This account also gives us hope that God uses the unlikely (like the women) and the imperfect: Peter, who had denied Jesus only days before, would soon preach the message at Pentecost in Acts 2 where the church was born.

2. The Risen Lord Sends Us as Witnesses (Luke 24:36-49).

Investigation: This passage reflects the final three acts in the Gospel of Luke.

First, Jesus appears to the disciples (verses 36-39). They are shocked and afraid. Jesus invites them to see his hands and feet to ensure he is really standing in front of them.

Second, he shows his hands and feet and the reality of his physical nature by asking for food and eating in their presence. There is no doubt that Jesus physically rose from the grave.

Third, he gives the commission to be witnesses. All four Gospels and the book of Acts have some version of the Great Commission. In this account Jesus explains how the Old Testament pointed to Jesus and his work on the cross. "Everything written about me in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning me" is a direct reference to what we call the Old Testament.

Opening their minds so they could understand clearly, Jesus explained that all the Old Testament Scriptures pointed to this singular message: "That the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead" (verse 46). This is the gospel. It is as clear as to be summarized in one sentence, but so vast that it spans the entire biblical story.

Because of this message Jesus gives his followers a mission: "that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations" (verse 47).

He adds, "You are witnesses of these things." In his Part 2 of the two-part work of Luke-Acts Luke gives account after account of the early church doing just what Jesus said here.

Application: The gospel of Jesus Christ does not begin with the New Testament. It goes back to the beginning (John 1). The Old Testament message about God and his grace is not a different one from the New Testament gospel. Rather, the gospel is the fulfillment of God's greater story of redemption (Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration).

We have been given a mission by none other than the Lord of glory, Jesus Christ. This mission is grounded in the message of the whole Bible, with the cross and resurrection at the center.

Illustration: Saints throughout history have repeated in their own words the call of Jesus to the nations, including:

- "The great commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed."
- Hudson Taylor
- "To know the will of God, we need an open Bible and open map." - William Carey
- "I have but one passion: It is He; it is He alone. The world is the field, and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ." – Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf
- "I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather burn it out in a land filled with darkness than in a land flooded with light." – John Keith Falconer

Conclusion:

May we live in the light of the fact that Jesus is risen, indeed! May that living be focused on witnessing to all Jesus came to do.

Call unbelievers to give their lives to a greater mission than any other on earth, the cause of Christ.

Call believers to renew their focus on bearing witness to Jesus through word and deed.