

The Empty Tomb

Mark 16:2-6

October 08, 2022

The disciples had given up everything to follow Jesus.

And in the beginning, it had all seemed worth it.

Because He was popular – they were popular.

They were riding hi on the coat-tails of Jesus the Messiah.

They had believed His words to be true – He would be king, except, they were looking for an earthly kingdom, when all along Jesus had been talking about a heavenly kingdom.

They had misunderstood Him and ignored his very precise declarations regarding His own future:

- **Matthew 12:40** - For just as Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.
- **Matthew 17:22–23** - Now *as* they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.” And they were extremely distressed.

And now He was dead - Jesus was **DEAD!!**

But more than that, their dreams were dead. Dead and buried in a rich man’s tomb.

Judas had betrayed Him and was now dead – unable to cope with his role in Jesus’ death.

Peter had denied Him and was now who knows where – wracked with guilt and shame.

All the women had been at the cross, but only one disciple had managed to be there.

The others were cowering in an upper room somewhere in the city – awaiting their own fate.

That was the worst Friday any of them had ever experienced and Sabbath, the day of rest, was anything but restful.

Grief and fear and shame hounded their every step. What would become of them all now?

Now..... What if that was the end of the story?

What if there was no resurrection after the cross?

What if Jesus was still dead?

Would that impact the truth of His claims about Himself and the promises that He made? Without doubt the answer is yes.

But then came Sunday morning.

A flash of light streaked across the pre-dawn sky.

The guards around the tomb fell as dead men as the stone was rolled away.

“Get up, Jesus! Your Father is calling you!”

And out of the tomb walked our Conquering Hero!

While the disciples still huddled in the upper room, the women rose early and went to the tomb.

Not to greet him as a Conquering Hero and their risen Lord, but to anoint his body.

As they made their way to the tomb, they talked among themselves – who was going to move the stone?

But when they arrived, something amazing had happened:

- **Luke 24:1–9** they found the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, ³but *when they* went in, they did not find the body. ⁴And it happened that while they were perplexed about this, behold, two men in gleaming clothing stood near them. ⁵And *as* they were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, they said to them, “Why are you looking for the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but has been raised! Remember how he spoke to you *while he* was still in Galilee, ⁷saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of men *who are* sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise?” ⁸And they remembered his words, ⁹and *when they* returned from the tomb, they reported all these *things* to the eleven and to all the rest.
- **John 20:3–10** - Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they were going to the tomb. ⁴ And the two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter, and came to the tomb first; ⁵ and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*; but he did not go in. ⁶ Simon Peter therefore also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he beheld the linen wrappings lying *there*, ⁷ and the face-cloth, which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb entered then also, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. ¹⁰ So the disciples went away again to their own homes.

They still didn't understand, but Mary just couldn't bring herself to leave.

She loved Jesus with every fiber of her being.

He might be dead AND missing, but she had to stay.

That place was as close him and she could get, so she lingered.

As she wept, she took one last look into the tomb – just in case – and to her surprise found 2 angels sitting where Jesus had once lain.

- **John 20:13–16** - And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have put him!” ¹⁴ *When she* had said these *things*, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?” She thought that it was the gardener, *and* said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned around *and* said to him Teacher.”

We do not serve a dead martyr killed against his will.

We serve a Lion who chose to die as a Lamb.

We serve a RISEN king.

The tomb is empty and over it Christ has proclaimed in triumph, ***"I am the resurrection, and the life."***

- **Philippians 3:7-10a** - But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection.....