

**Date:** April 5, 2026

**Title:** From Fear to Joy: Meeting the Risen Christ

**Passage:** Matthew 28:1-15

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Summary:

I. The empty tomb confronts our fear. (vv. 1-6)

II. The risen Christ transforms fear into joy (vv. 8-10)

III. The unbelieving heart suppresses the truth. (vv. 11-15)

Key Truths:

- *"Come, see the place where he lay."* Christianity always encourages you to research the faith. Christianity is in fact based on truth that is supported by many historical evidences. Christianity is the most trustworthy truth you can put your faith in.
- The lie that Jesus never resurrected but instead his body was due to a theft is false because: 1) It contradicts the testimony of the guards, 2) It admits corruption and bribery, and 3) It cannot explain the transformation of the disciples who all died for the faith or willing to do so. None ever made any type of alternative confession.

Application:

- If you are a Christian, the resurrection of Jesus is our assurance. We can trust in God, Who has power over death.
- If you are not a believer, consider this word of warning: The day of judgment will come soon. Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
- What's the most awesome display of power you have ever seen?
- What can you do this week to prepare for discussions with those who don't believe Jesus rose from the dead?
- "If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world." (C.S. Lewis) - how have you seen this to be true in your life?
- What next steps will you take in response to the truths you have heard or seen?

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**Introduction**

Have you ever been in a situation where you entered with fear but emerged with joy?

- In today's passage, women were approaching the tomb in fear but left with great joy.
  - Why? They met the risen Christ!

- Only Jesus can take fear from you and replace it with pure joy.

### **Passage:**

#### Matthew 28:1-15

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell people, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

### **EXPOSITION**

#### **I. The Empty Tomb Confronts our Fear (vv. 1-6)**

##### Matthew 28:1-6

***Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.***

*Now after the Sabbath,*

- On a Sunday (why Christians usually meet on Sunday in celebration of Jesus' resurrection)

*toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.*

- Why were women going?

- To anoint Jesus' dead body.
- Note: If someone were making up this as a fictional story of a resurrection, one would not draft it such that women would be the first eye witnesses.

#### Luke 24:10

Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles,

- Women were not given much credibility back then and were initially disbelieved.
- Truth: This was an actual historical account of what happened. Jesus first appeared to women.
  - Men and women are of both equal dignity and value. Why women loved Jesus so much as He had given them dignity and value that they did not have before.

*And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.*

- Second earthquake over the span of a few days.
  - When Jesus died on the cross, an earthquake occurred.

#### Matthew 27:51

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

- Why? A display of God's power, glory, and sovereignty.

*His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.*

- The angel appeared in great awe.
  - In response, great fear overwhelmed the Roman guards at the tomb.
- Likewise, when we see the glory of God in the future, we would fall before in great fear.
  - Contrast: if people claim to see an angel and walk away unchanged, that story was clearly untrue.

*But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.*

- Angel came to bring the good news that Jesus has risen!

- Note: None of the disciples were present. The idea of a resurrection was inconceivable. They were not predisposed to believe in the resurrection.

*Come, see the place where he lay.*

- Angel invited the women to see the proof that the tomb was empty.
- Christianity always encourages you to research the faith.
  - Christianity is not a false or fictional religion created by man.
  - Christianity is in fact based on truth that is supported by many historical evidence.
  - Christianity is the most trustworthy truth you can put your faith in.
- You each live by faith everyday.
  - Ex: you put your life in a car and have faith that it was built well. You eat food in a restaurant and have faith that it was made safely.
  - How do you know George Washington existed? You trust historical accounts.
- Trust in God who has a 100% track record.
  - The Bible has more historical support than any other document.
  - The resurrection of Jesus did indeed happen!
- All the eyewitness accounts of Jesus' resurrection were willing to die for what they saw.
  - Christianity is the only religion where eyewitnesses were willing to die for it.
    - Otherwise, someone would have confessed that it was a lie.
      - No one could refute the fact that Jesus had indeed resurrected.

## **II. The risen Christ transforms fear into joy (vv. 8-10)**

### **Matthew 28:8-10**

***So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."***

*So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!"*

- "Greetings!" = Rejoice!
  - This word reminded them of Jesus' teaching.
- Why? Jesus had conquered death!
- The suffering of this present time is not compared to the glory to be revealed to us.
  - Why? Jesus is alive!

John 11:25

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

- We are truly rejoicing as there is no fear.

### 2 Corinthians 5:8

Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

- Whether alive or dead, we can be satisfied.
  - Why? Christ is risen!
- True joy comes when you meet Jesus.

*And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him.*

- The women were devout Jews.
  - They knew of the first commandment that they are not to worship anyone other than the one true God.
- Here: The women worshipped Jesus.
  - Why? They knew Jesus is God incarnate.
  - Worship is only given to God so it was the right response.

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

- "Do not be afraid"
  - There are 365 mentions of this in the Bible.
    - Why? We tend to be afraid or anxious.
- But now: there is nothing to be afraid! Jesus is risen!

### 1 Corinthians 15:54-57

...“Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **III. The unbelieving heart suppresses the truth. (vv. 11-15)**

#### **Matthew 28:11-15**

***While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell***

***people, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.***

*and said, “Tell people, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’*

- The lie that Jesus' resurrection did not actually happen.
  - Continued after the resurrection and continues to be relied upon today.

Truth: The version of the religious leaders is false because:

- It contradicts the testimony of the guards.
- It admits corruption and bribery.
- It cannot explain the transformation of the disciples.

## **APPLICATION**

If you are a Christian, the resurrection of Jesus is our assurance.

- Christ is risen. Our faith is not in vain.
- If this is true, then:
  - Our sins are forgiven.
  - We have atonement for our sins.
  - The resurrection shows that our sins have been paid for.
  - There is no nothing to be afraid of.
  - No obstacle can now separate you from the love of God.
- We can trust in God, Who has power over death.

If you are not a believer,

- Word of warning: The day of judgment will come soon.
  - After you die, you will face judgement before God.
    - You don't know when it will occur.
- If you were to die, where would you go?
  - The only way to appear before a holy God is to have been saved through Jesus.

"If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world." (C.S. Lewis)

- You can experience things in this world that bring happiness and peace but it is all fleeting.

- They all point to the true need we have to find everlasting joy and peace in God.