

Behold Your Risen King

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[0 : 00] Hear God's Word. When the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the Romans, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint Him, Jesus, who had died.

And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb? And looking up, they saw the stone had been rolled back. It was very large, and entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And He said to them, do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who is crucified. He is risen. He has risen. He's not here. See the place where they laid Him? But go tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you. And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them.

[1 : 06] And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. May God bless the Word. Aslan.

Aslan. That great Christ figure of the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis. The Mighty Lion. What a great book series if you haven't read that.

Parents, if you've not yet read through the Narnia series with your children, get that on your short list. Well, Aslan, as C.S. Lewis betrays him, is this Christ figure.

And early on in the Narnia series, and I think it's the magician's nephew, Lewis portrays this lion as singing into creation all of Narnia.

It's a beautiful sight. In The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Aslan rescues this Narnia from the perpetual winter of the reign of the White Witch.

[2 : 11] Well, at this moment in The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, there's this dramatic moment where Aslan offers himself to be killed in the place of Edmund.

One of the four Pevensy children. Edmund was the traitor. And though betrayed, Aslan willingly offers himself to be killed by the White Witch on that ancient stone table.

With Susan and Lucy looking on. And then the White Witch kills Aslan. Leaves him for dead. And then go bringing her, her horde of beasts goes to fight Aslan's army.

Shortly afterwards, Lucy and Susan are mourning the death of Aslan. And all of a sudden, they hear this splitting of stone. Granite being sheaved in two.

The stone table has been split. Deep magic has brought Aslan back from the grave. He appears. He's risen from the dead. His death and resurrection changes everything in Narnia.

[3 : 32] Aslan is this Christ figure. And after his resurrection, he is on the move. Breathing his life-giving breath on all of those who's been turned to stone.

This fall, we've been making our way through the Gospel of Mark. And Mark has been making this argument all throughout it that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Two weeks ago, we beheld our rejected King.

Chapter 14. Last week, we beheld our crucified King. Chapter 15. Remember, when Jesus breathes his last. The curtain of the temple is torn in two from top to bottom.

And then the centurion, he cries out, having witnessed what Jesus has just done. Says, truly, this man was the Son of God. Today, we behold our risen King.

There are three words that come from the mouth of an angel. And it changes everything. He has risen. And that should put some awe in your heart. Because that means, by implication, that Jesus is alive today.

[4 : 45] Are you living as if Jesus is presently alive? Or as if he's long dead? This Jesus is alive today.

And there are three scenes in Mark 16, 1 through 8, that will help us to see that. Going to the tomb. In the tomb. Coming out of the tomb.

So let's look at scene number one. Going to the tomb. It's in verses 1 through 4. And we start with these women. When the Sabbath was passed. That's Saturday.

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome. Bought spices so that they go and anoint Jesus. Jesus, of course, has been killed on Friday.

It's now Sunday. We've already been introduced to the Marys. If you look up one verse to 1547. At Christ's death, his body's been given to Pilate.

[5 : 44] Been placed in a tomb. In verse 47, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, Joseph, saw where he was laid. So Mary and Mary have eyewitness account of the tomb that Jesus' body was laid in.

If you look at 1540, they're also referenced. The centurion has just said, Surely this man was the Son of God. In verse 40, there were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, the younger, and of Joseph.

And Salome. They had been with Jesus from the beginning. They've been supporting in his ministry. So you have these three women who are, on Sunday morning, have spices in hand and are going to the tomb.

By the way, that Mary of Joseph, that's Jesus' mother. And don't miss the fact that the male disciples of Jesus are MIA.

Nowhere to be found. Now we come to the tomb in verses 2 and 3. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?

[6 : 59] A tomb was a place to place a body. It was basically a cave with a small entrance, and there was a bigger room inside that they had a burial platform that you'd place the corpse of someone.

And there was a confined space. But it's pretty safe to say at this point in the account that these three women, what do you think they were expecting to find in the tomb?

The dead body of Jesus. This tomb actually belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. We learn that in verses 42 through 47 in chapter 15.

Joseph was a rich man. He was part of the Sanhedrin. He was looking for the kingdom of God, which means he was a follower of Jesus. After Jesus dies, he, Joseph of Arimathea, goes to Pilate and asks for the body.

Pilate's surprised that Jesus had died so fast. So he wants to confirm that. He asks for the centurion who confessed that Jesus was the Son of God. The centurion comes.

[8 : 00] He says, yeah, he's dead. Pilate grants Joseph the body of Jesus. And because it was just before the Sabbath, Joseph puts the corpse of Jesus in his tomb, seals it up, and we're on our way.

Now you might be thinking, well, that's interesting. Those are little interesting little tidbits. Until you realize that Mark is actually doing something else. Do you remember how in chapter 14 and chapter 15, there's all these allusions to Isaiah 53, and then in chapter 15 to Psalm 22, but Isaiah 53 is all over the place.

What we have here is another allusion to Isaiah 53. The suffering servant. Let me just read it. This is verse 9.

And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death. You see, what's going on here is not just historic.

It actually happened. But Mark is helping us make a connection. This is all according to God's plan. This is the fulfillment of Isaiah 53. It's all according to the Scriptures.

[9 : 14] There's a time stamp as well. We saw the time stamps last week in Mark 15. The 6th hour and the 9th hour. Here we're told it's a particular day.

Do you see that in verse 2? And very early on the first day of the week. That means it's Sunday. Which means it's the third day since Jesus was crucified.

He was crucified on day 1, Friday. Then there's the Sabbath, day 2. And then there's Sunday, day 3. It's the third day. This is fulfilling what Jesus himself has said over and over and over.

I'm going to be rejected, killed, and on the third day I will rise. There's a time stamp. It's at sunrise. So this is very early on, on that Sunday.

These women have, they're not wasting any time. They've got burial spices in hand that they are going to the tomb. And then they remember something.

[10:18] Who's going to move away the stone for us? And evidently the stone was so big that the three of them themselves couldn't move it. That's how big it was. Now you may be wondering, well how can he forget a detail like that?

Has anybody planned the funeral of a loved one that recently died? It's hard work.

You're in a state of numbness. It's surreal. You've got details that you're trying to take care of. I think you need to realize the mood of this moment as these three women are making their way to the tomb.

They're not happy. They're sad. They're somber. They're quiet. They're grieving. They're forgetting details because they're distracted.

These women have spent a lot of time with Jesus over the last three years. And now they've seen him die. They saw where he was buried.

[11:33] And as they're making their way to the tomb, they are expecting to find the corpse of Jesus in that tomb. But as they walk in verse 4 up to the tomb, they see that the stone has been rolled away.

And their immediate thought is not he's been raised from the dead. If you were them, I'm guessing you'd be like, what's going on?

Who got here before us? I'm guessing their heart rate would have started going up. Maybe you came into this building this morning and you've got some questions about the empty tomb.

Maybe you've been a Christian for a long time and you've never thought about what the empty tomb actually means for you. Let's go into the tomb.

That's where Mark brings us. Scene 2, while in the tomb, verses 5 through 7. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side dressed in a white robe and they were alarmed.

[12:36] Kids, if you want to draw a picture for me, this is it. And he said to them, do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen.

He's not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him just as he told you.

Now, if you're one of these three women, you're expecting to find in this tomb the corpse of Jesus. And so the first surprise of the empty tomb, and there are a number of surprises in the empty tomb. The first surprise is a surprising sight.

Verse 5. This young man dressed in white. They don't see the body. They see this young man dressed in white. The other gospels talk about there being two angels, dazzling appearance, and in classic Mark fashion, he gives you bare bones.

[13:38] Yes? This would have been spectacular. This young man is an angel, a messenger from heaven, because God knows that these women will need a heavenly explanation to make sense of the empty tomb.

You see, this angel is to give all of us God's perspective and explanation for the empty tomb. Could you imagine if these women had heart rate monitors on them?

The three of them have a different heart rate monitor on them. As they're approaching the tomb, they see this stone rolled away. I'm guessing, amidst their grief, they're starting now to get concerned, and so their heart rate starts going up.

But when they walk into the tomb, they come underneath the entrance into the opening, and they see a young man dressed in white, sitting to the right of this burial platform.

No body. I'm guessing, if we were reading it on a digital display, their heart rates would have gone through the roof. What's going on?

[14:47] They're obviously alarmed, as you and I would be. This is a heavenly visitor with them in a confined space of this tomb where Jesus had been laid, but His body's not there.

Surprise two. This angel has a surprise explanation. He's going to explain to them what has happened.

He starts by saying, do not be alarmed because He has Heaven's point of view. He knows that this is all according to plan.

He knows something that these three women haven't yet fully realized, and that Jesus has been true to His Word.

He says to them, you seek Jesus of Nazareth. They're all talking about the same person. This Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified.

[15:55] crucified. This angel knows that these women just witnessed three days earlier the death of Jesus. And I'm guessing all Heaven had witnessed the death of Jesus.

Which makes one wonder, how do you think Heaven responded when Jesus breathed His last and the curtain was torn in two and the centurion confessed, truly this man was the Son of God.

Do you think that there was just like this heavenly thunderous ovation? Or do you think there was just such silence around the throne that this is what God has done to save sinners?

This angel knows that He was crucified. And then He speaks those three words that change everything.

He has risen. In the Greek it's just one verb. To roughly translate it into English you could say He has been risen.

[17:15] The angel is saying Jesus didn't raise Himself He was raised by God the Father. The divine Son of God who bore the wrath of God the Father on Friday has now been raised by the same God the Father on Sunday morning.

This is all according to God's plan. This is according to the Scriptures. This is actually surprising good news.

These three words the angel is speaking I'm guessing if you're one of these three ladies with your heart rate kind of heart in your chest you're kind of like what? I'm not sure if they totally understood what's being said here.

Maybe you've never thought about the implications of those three words. He has risen. He's alive today. The angel goes on to say he's not here and sitting to the right of this burial platform he kind of gestures and say see the place where they laid him?

Nothing. No body. No corpse. No Jesus. Empty. It's an empty tomb. Here we have an angel explaining the empty tomb.

[18:48] Surprise! He has risen. This is a God-sized miracle for the God-sized work of saving sinners.

It's at the heart of the gospel. It's all accordance to the scriptures. And you know what? It either happened or it didn't.

He was either raised from the dead or he wasn't. He's either alive today or he's been long dead. So this is an angelic heavenly explanation for the empty tomb.

But there's more surprises coming from the empty tomb. In verse 6, this angel explains why the body's not there.

He is risen. In verse 7, he goes into some surprise instruction. Look at verse 7. But go tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee.

[19:49] There you will see him just as he told you. Well, that's rather surprising. He has risen. Go tell. What's historically interesting about this and striking is that the first witnesses to the empty tomb, the first people to bear testimony, the first humans to bear testimony that Jesus has risen from the dead are these women.

It was historically remarkable because back in that time, their testimony would not have been considered having much weight. this is extraordinary.

Now, it even gets more extraordinary. This angel says, but go tell his disciples and Peter.

Now, I don't know about you, but if I were Jesus and had been abandoned by all my dudes, I'd be like, you're fired. Done.

I'll go find some other Gentile folks to do this. but that's not what's going on here. This angel seems to think that the risen Jesus hasn't disowned his disciples, but still claims them as his own.

[21:17] Do you remember back in chapter 14, what Jesus said to them? 1427, and Jesus said to them, while on the Mount of Olives that just had the last supper before Gethsemane, you will all fall away for it is written, I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, Zechariah 13.

7. And it happened. They had all abandoned him. Despite their failures, Jesus still claims them as his own.

Did you notice the angel singles out Peter? But go tell his disciples and Peter. Maybe it's better understood if it went something like that.

But go tell his disciples, especially Peter. Remember where we left Peter at the end of Mark 14. Let me just point you there.

Mark 14, verse 72. The verse before Peter, third denial, he makes it big. He calls down a curse on himself, and he swears, I do not know this man of whom you speak.

[22 : 35] Cock-a-doodle-doo. Do you remember? Do you remember? Peter breaks down and weeps because Jesus' words to him in 30 have come to pass.

He has denied Jesus three times before the cock crowed twice. he's been exposed as the complete and utter failure that he is.

So he breaks down and weeps. In the empty tomb, this angel speaks words that are full of grace. Forgiveness. Restoration. Regathering. They would all see him again in Galilee, including these women.

They would all be with him and he would forgive them and restore them and regather them, even recommission them to go to the nations, proclaiming that he is a crucified and risen king.

[23 : 49] I just want to pause here for a second. This is surprising. In the tomb, this angel speaks words full of grace.

Anyone in the room come into this place this morning thinking that you are somehow unworthy, that you've done something so awful, so terrible, that it is beyond God's grace, that you've been permanently disqualified from following Jesus, that somehow because of something you've done, you bear the black mark in Jesus' eyes, and now you are at best second class in the family of God. Anybody come in like that? That you don't measure up? why would Jesus want to bother with me? I'm a mess. I've sinned too much. From the bloody cross and the empty tomb issues forth some really good news for you.

God's grace is greater than your failure. God's grace is greater than your failure. It's a surprise in the surprise. From the empty tomb, this angel speaks words full of grace.

[25 : 28] If he can restore Peter, he certainly can restore me. He can certainly restore you. God's grace is greater than your failure.

That's nothing. There's more. You want to see another surprise? this angel says, there you will see him just as he told you.

Just as he told you. Wait, Mr. Angel, are you saying that Jesus told his disciples that he would see them in Galilee after he's been raised up?

That's exactly what he's saying. Turn back to Mark chapter 14 verse 27, and Jesus said to them, you will all fall away for it is written, I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.

Look at verse 28. This is Jesus speaking. But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee. Do you know what this means?

[26 : 34] Jesus knew all of his disciples would abandon him. and he factored it in. His plan all along factored in their failure and his forgiving them post-resurrection.

Recommissioning them to take this good news of a God who became man and was crucified for sins and raised victorious over sin and death.

to take that to the nations. It's all according to plan. And if he's able to factor in the failures of those early disciples, he is able to factor in our failures too.

In fact, our God specializes in pouring out grace on failures to accomplish his glorious purposes. Keeps us humble, doesn't it? There's one more surprise and that is go tell his disciples that he is going before you to Galilee.

[27 : 58] Aslan's on the move. He's on the move. This empty tomb is full of surprises. One surprise after another he is alive.

He is restoring grace. And he's on the move. Which brings us to scene three. Coming out of the tomb.

And they went out and fled from the tomb for trembling in astonishment had seized them and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid. I mean, seriously, could you imagine being these three women at this moment?

They're expecting to find his corpse, but they find an angel announcing that he is risen and then they're like, go tell his disciples that you all are going to see him in Galilee. Just like he said, you're like, what?

They went to the tomb mourning and they come out of the tomb in awe. Something happened.

[29 : 01] all these surprises lying within the empty tomb. What's going on here in verse 8?

There's trembling, which literally means shaking, astonishment, they're totally overwhelmed, they've been seized by these feelings, which means they're controlled by them, they're saying nothing to

anyone, which means they're speechless in that last phrase, for they were afraid. What kind of fear is this? Let's rule out a couple things. Well, they're obviously not overjoyed, happy ladies, are they? We can rule that out.

But they didn't run out of the tomb screaming in terror, did they? What kind of fear is this? We come across a similar phrase, they were afraid, in Mark chapter 5.

Jesus has just released a man who has been ruled by a legion of demons for who knows how long, and nobody in that region could subdue him.

[30 : 16] Word gets out to the people in the surrounding city and countryside, they come to him, they see Jesus, they see this man who they could not subdue, sitting next to Jesus, clothed in his right mind, and you know what their response was?

They were afraid. They actually begged Jesus to leave at that point. These three women, they come out of the empty tomb, full of surprises, he has risen, and they are speechless in awe. Because they are realizing that what Jesus has repeatedly said about himself has come to pass. I'll be raised on the third day.

This is not disbelief, this is not unbelief, this is speechless, fear and trembling awe. They have heard, and have begun to believe that Jesus is alive.

They went to the empty tomb grieving, and they flee the tomb in hopeful awe, expecting to see a risen Jesus in Galilee.

[31 : 43] The empty tomb is full of surprises, isn't it? It changes people. It changes people. Jesus is alive, he's on the move, they will see him soon, just as he has said.

What does this mean for us? What's the point? The point are just really three words. He has risen. Let me say that, you respond. He has risen. Which means Jesus is alive today.

Today. Today. this surprise announcement of this angel in the empty tomb, it speaks of a reality that changes everything, and it changes everything for all who believe it.

Do you believe that Jesus has been risen from the dead? Do you believe that Jesus is alive today? These three little words change everything.

He has risen. It's a surprising fulfillment. This is according to the scriptures of Psalm 16 and Isaiah 53 again, verse 10.

[32 : 57] His day shall be prolonged. It's all in accordance with the scriptures, but not just Old Testament scriptures. This is fulfilling of what Jesus himself has said five times in Mark.

He said he'd be raised from the dead. Do you know anybody like that? Not only know you're going to die, when you're going to die, but then you're going to be raised and then it happens. Who is this guy?

If all this is true, if he died for our sins and was raised from the dead and he's alive today, if that's true, then Jesus is unlike anyone else in existence.

not just surprising fulfillment, but surprising grace. I mean, restorative grace.

These words full of grace come out of the tomb. Isn't that good news for us? I needed to hear that. If Jesus can restore Peter, he can restore you and me.

[34 : 06] This is a surprising claim. he has risen. It's a surprising claim. People don't rise from the dead.

This is a God-sized miracle. And all of Christianity falls or rises on these three words. He has risen. He's either alive today or he's long dead. We're given a surprising glimpse that Jesus is on the move. Aslan is on the move. Today, he's at work all around this globe calling a people from every tribe, tongue, and nation to himself because he's been given a dominion, a kingdom, everlasting and indestructible because he is the son of man.

Surprising glimpse. His resurrection defeated sin. His resurrection defeated death. His resurrection defeated the devil. And if you believe in him, you are brought into that victory over sin, death, and the devil too.

His bloody cross and his empty tomb are good news. Behold your risen king. risen. How do we respond?

[35 : 39] These three words, he has risen, which means for us he's alive today. How do you respond to that? Well, if you're not a Christian in the room, you've got to come to terms with these words.

They're either true or they're not. Jesus is either presently alive or he's long dead. All of Christianity rises or falls on it. If he wasn't raised from the dead, don't waste your time with Christianity.

But if he's been raised from the dead, his claims of being the Christ, his claims of being the Son of Man and the Son of God, the great I Am, man, that means he's the king of all.

God's only way of salvation, the way to respond to that is Romans 10 9. If we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord, King, and believe in our hearts that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved, you'll be rescued, you'll be brought into the kingdom, and the way that we respond to this great news is confessing him and then denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following him for the rest of our lives.

There's a group of people in the room that I'm concerned about that I just want to say, let me help you think this through a little bit. If you've grown up in the church, and you've heard this good news over and over again, do you know when it's possible to respond to it?

[37 : 16] It's possible to respond this way. Yeah, I believe that's true, but you never actually commit to following Jesus.

You think, yeah, I agree with that, but you're still living for yourself. According to the New Testament, those who confess Jesus as their king, then deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him.

They commit to him. if you're not a Christian, or you think you're a Christian, but you're not, you need to decide whether or not the resurrection actually happened, is it true or not, and then you need to decide, will I commit to following Jesus?

For those of us who are Christians, isn't this just wonderful to hear? Our king's alive.

Our Aslan, the Lion of Judah, is alive. It's easy to forget. It's easy to fall asleep, to drift, to lose sight of what matters most.

[38 : 40] In those three words, he has risen. They're like smelling salts to our souls. They wake us up. They help us to not just stay awake, but stay awake looking for our king, anticipating his return.

Jesus went to the tomb dead and came out of the tomb alive so that we would be wholehearted followers of him. To treasure Jesus above all else.

To obey him in all that he commands. To magnify him among all people. We no longer make a name for ourselves, nor do we seek to protect our reputations when it comes to him.

We magnify him. We speak of our crucified and risen king, and we belong to him with all who treasure him. He is forming a new family of faith and we are bound together by a love that is born of the spirit.

Blood bought, blood bound, spirit empowered love for one another in the family. We belong to one another regardless of our backgrounds, regardless of skin color, regardless of salary rates, education, you name it.

[40 : 15] We belong to him with all who treasure him. We're the new family of faith doing his will. Jesus went to the tomb and came out so that we would treasure, obey, magnify, and belong to him.

Because he's our one consuming passion. He's our all governing reality. and we stay awake. In the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, after Aslan comes back to life, he travels throughout Narnia breathing his life-giving breath on all his own that were turned to stone by the White Witch.

He gives them life, gathers them together, and together they follow Aslan. There's no one like Jesus.

The Gospel of Mark, over and over again, there's no one like him. He's the Christ, the Son of Man, the Son of God, the incarnate I Am, crucified and raised. Jesus is alive today.

Do you know how we respond? Deny ourselves, take up our cross, follow him, and together follow Jesus. Christ the King Church, as we head into Christmas season, behold your King, rejected, crucified, and raised.

[41 : 44] He is alive. Let's pray. God in heaven, Lord Jesus, we know you're hearing us now. Thank you for what you've done for us, for both in your death and resurrection.

Lord Jesus, would you be about your work and would you graciously allow us to be a part of what you are doing for your namesake?

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.