

Easter Sunday

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Date: 04 April 2021

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

- [0 : 00] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. During this time last year, the world was dealing with uncertainty, as many questions were left unanswered about this COVID-19 virus.
- Houses of worship were closed. There were no choirs and congregations singing great hymns like, Jesus Christ is risen today.
- All we heard was how many hospitals had been overrun with COVID patients, as the news channels kept track of daily deaths.
- It was unbelievable. It was like we were living in a horrible sci-fi movie that didn't even seem real. I think we were all asking, how could we, as Americans, be experiencing something like this?
- We are the sophisticated Western country that leads the world in technology, the world in innovation. This type of thing happens elsewhere and in other countries, but not on our soil and not on our watch.
- [1 : 27] COVID served a big slice of humble pie to the American ego. This time last year, people were concerned, scared about the unknown.
- Furthermore, this tragedy did not unite this country like other or previous tragedies in the past.
- No, it divided people. It still divides people. Some saw mask mandates as one big government power grab to take over our individual liberties.
- Others wanted total isolation. And they questioned the humanity of anyone who would dare advocate for any social interaction or the opening up of schools during this pandemic.
- The year 2020 will not be a date that highlights the unity of the world. And especially, it will show how divisive it was in this country.
- [2 : 40] But COVID has taught us a very, very important lesson. What we have learned is that we are not exceptional.
- We are not superior to anyone else. We are no better than the person who lives in Asia, Africa, or across the pond in England.
- We are human beings that are prone to get sick. And we are people who suffer in an imperfect and sinful world.
- Sin brings death. Sin brings destruction. As St. Paul says, the wages of sin is death. And we all carry the disease of sin within our own bodies.
- Now, please note that I am not saying that COVID was somehow God's judgment upon us or due to a particular sin.
- [3 : 47] As a matter of fact, I would say run from anyone who makes such a claim. They're a little crazy. But the disease of sin brings human frailty.
- And eventually, it brings us to the grave. We can't outrun that. We can't outsmart that. It doesn't matter if you are politically right or left or center.

Death is going to catch up with us all. It might be through a virus. It might be through a deadly disease. It might be by way of an accident.

And it might be this year or it might be 30 or 40 years from now. We don't know. The one thing we do know, we're all going to die.

And COVID has brought that reality back to us this year. We are not invincible.

[4 : 56] We are not in control of everything. And as Americans, that's very foreign. We're going to die. We're going to die.

Happy Easter. But friends, Christ came not just to give sentimental feelings.

He came to give real hope. He came so that we do not have to live in a perpetual state of anxiety and fear. We heard from Isaiah chapter 25 verses 8 and 9.

The following words. He will swallow up death forever. Amen. The rebuke of his people.

He will take away from all the earth. For the Lord has spoken. And it will be said in that day, behold, this is our God.

[5 : 59] We have waited for him and he will save us. This is the Lord. We have waited for him. And we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Amen. Amen. These words speak and they spoke of what happened when God came to this earth to rescue his people.

These words in Isaiah was a word of prophecy that was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ. The God who came in human flesh. The God who swallowed up death by overcoming death and the grave.

And that's the only reason we're here this morning. Jesus took our sin. He took our death upon himself. And he transformed death into life.

And now he gives us his life. Eternal life. And this is the real reason for joy and celebration of Easter.

[7 : 05] But not just Easter day. But throughout our entire lives. We don't need to freak out. We need to be cautious. We need to use our brain that God has given us.

But we do not need to freak out. Although there are tears in this life. Christ has brought hope beyond the tears.

Beyond the heartache. And all who wait upon him patiently living by faith. Putting their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Not in themselves. He promises. He promises. He will save. He will raise us up with him to share in his life.

For eternity. And he has already given us his life. Jesus has made us glad. Even in the midst of the hurt and pain.

[8 : 04] Even during a pandemic. Because we are reminded. That he has conquered the greatest enemy. Death itself.

He rescues the one who admits that they are sick. Because. We are all sinners. We carry this disease of sin within our bodies.

He rescues all who confess their waywardness. And their rebellion against him. You see the person who tries to live. Their own lives. By their own power.

And by their own strength. That's the person that lives in perpetual fear. And will never have true peace. In this life. But the one who trusts in Christ.

Christ. Will share. In his life. And his immortality. Forever and ever. Without end.

[9 : 07] Friends. This Easter is a great day. It's a memorable day. Yeah. We've gone through the motions of Easter before. I'll be the first one to confess. This one is very special.

Especially in light of where we were last year. We are reminded. That no matter. What happens to us in this life. No pandemic.

Nothing. Nothing. Can withhold. The mercy and grace and love of God. Found in Christ. COVID has taught us a lesson.

It's the lesson of Psalm 90 verse 12. Which says. Lord teach us to number our days. So that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

The truly wise person is the one who knows that death is coming. It's unavoidable. But. But. Our comfort.

[10:07] And our consolation. Is from the God. Who has brought forth. Life. And hope from the tomb. From death. From the grave.

Christ has trampled down. Death. Once and for all. And therefore. Dear brothers and sisters. Jesus Christ is risen.

He is risen. Indeed. Alleluia. Alleluia. And alleluia. Amen.