

What does the Resurrection Bring?

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[0 : 00] to read this morning from Mark's Gospel, chapter 16, and verses 1 to 8. Let's then read together and hear God's Word.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome brought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body.

Very early in the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb, and they asked each other, Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. Don't be alarmed, he said.

[1 : 24] You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen. He is not here. See the place where they laid him.

But go tell the disciples and Peter. He is going ahead of you into Galilee.

There you will see him, just as he told you. Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb.

They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid. And God will bless the reading and hearing of his word this morning.

On this Easter Sunday morning, the question I have is this, what does resurrection bring to your life and to mine?

[2 : 34] As we survey the Easter story, we discover certain factors which should be evident in all of our lives, every single day.

picture the scene. There was hopelessness, despair, dreams had been shattered, plans had been crushed.

Those disciples who held so much hope in Jesus and what he had said seemed to be that they lost all that hope when Christ was crucified on the cross.

And in a sense, in our lives, we can identify with some of those points in our own experiences.

Those timid disciples initially were afraid. Trembling and bewildered, so we are told, the women went out and fled from the tomb.

[3 : 55] And if you read further on into Mark chapter 16, we are told that Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene.

She went and told those who had been with him when they heard they did not believe.

Before modern technology, Facebook, the internet, and Twitter, there were three ways, so I'm told, of communication.

Telegram, telephone, and telewoon. Now, I'm not being disrespectful when I say that.

I'm not being sexist, please, don't believe that. But interesting to note how Jesus used the women who came to the tomb.

[5 : 03] Go and tell the disciples and don't forget Peter. It's important that he hears this message that I am alive.

And it's important that our friends and our neighbors, this community, hears that same message that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

and we're asked to have that same passion and that same commitment as those women had that Sunday morning, Easter Sunday morning, to go and tell, to go and tell.

And don't forget, don't miss anybody out. Help them all hear the good news.

And the first job of leadership, the first job of ministry in the church is to love people.

[6 : 24] Even people that we don't like or who noise us up, love them. because leadership or ministry without love is simply manipulation.

And we have to remember that each and every one of us leads by example. our lives tell the story of Jesus Christ.

But what kind of story does it tell? As we come together as God people to read God's Word, to look at God's Word, to listen to God's Word, to learn from God's Word, we are enabled to follow the mind of Christ rather than deviate, digress, and be distracted from adhering to what God wants to say to us and wants to teach us from Scripture about knowing the fullness of Christ through obedience and imitating him in all his inimitable excellencies.

Because the power of the resurrection and the resurrection demands it from our lives to the community.

those who don't know go and tell. And we tell that message by our behavior.

[8 : 32] So those early disciples, those first disciples on resurrection morning were afraid, they were timid, they didn't know what was happening but now all has transformed, all has changed.

and as we think about resurrection, we see four things in particular as to what resurrection can bring to your life and to my life.

The first is this, that resurrection brings new life. Springing from the deadness of a cross was new life.

Those early disciples thought there was hopelessness but Christ was to transform that into love. All despair, distress, disappointments, failure, frustration, ill feeling, which they possibly would have had for one another, which has caused many of those lives to be shattered, leaving them metaphorically dead.

[9 : 57] Those feelings that they had contained in their lives, their minds, although the disciples didn't realize at the time, were buried in the tomb, and new life, and new hope, came marching out triumphantly.

And that is so true in our daily lives. Jesus brings newness of life day by day. Every day can be a resurrection morning.

for us. It can spell resurrection. The failures, the disappointments, forgotten as they seek to, or as he seeks to fill us again and again with resurrection life.

the same old drudgery, gone with new perspectives, lighting up as we recognize that Jesus is the most important aspect of our lives.

He's the one we have to share. His is the love we have to show. His is the resurrection. We have to demonstrate in newness of life.

[11 : 44] And although in one sense those feelings can still, and those emotions can still be in our lives, Christ overrides them.

For resurrection is about new life. New every morning, says the hymn writer. New every morning. Not this old drudgery of yesterday, but newness of life today.

And I trust that we have that new life. But not only does it bring to us new life, it brings to us new friendships, or restored friendships.

It was the same old friends, the Peters, the James, the John, the Matthews, that were there. But their friendships became new as Christ ignited his love in them.

Yes, how Peter must have felt when he wept following his denial of the Lord. How the others must have felt total embarrassment at the thought of deserting Christ.

[13 : 12] And if such had happened to anybody else, their friendships could have been severely damaged for the rest of their lives.

And maybe we can think of some friendships which have been impaired, which require to be renewed and restored and reinvigorated.

Something has happened like that between the disciples and Jesus, a friend, a neighbour, a colleague, a fellow Christian from some other church or someone in this church where relationships which were once sparkling have been severely damaged.

And we never thought that they could be brought back to life again. But resurrection brings new friendships or renews friendships.

Those friendships which were broken can and will be restored by the power of Christ. Before that can happen, of course, there has to be repentance on our part, seeking of forgiveness from God and from each other or from the person who has been relationship being broken.

[15 : 01] A change in character. in a sense, the past always reminds us of our failures.

Reminds of our failures not to beat us up about it or beat ourselves up about it, but Jesus wants us to move forward.

Think of Peter when Christ came to him and said, do you love me? Do you love me more than these?

Lord, you know all things, you know I love you. Then feed my sheep. Here was a man who was broken, who was distraught, but now brought back, who was still loved, who was still usable, who was not past his sell-by date, and who can be repassioned by Christ.

And that question is asked of us this morning and every day, do you still love me? How do we answer that? And how do we respond to it?

[16:27] not just by words, but by actions. New life, new friendships, new possibilities.

Those disciples had their strength taken from them, like a mat being pulled from beneath their feet, which left them floundering and disorientated.

But resurrection changed all that, as Christ has promised and as Christ has shown.

And so too with us. Now the sky's the limit. the excitement is infectious. The strength is beginning to be returned.

The possibilities are now certainties and resurrection enabled that to happen. Except for one man, Thomas.

[17:44] Unless I see for myself, I will not believe. Can you imagine how Thomas must have felt for that one week after having been told that Jesus was alive?

He was left for a week to mull over those things. And finally, when Christ appeared again, a second time, his exclamation said it all, my Lord and my God.

The story's told of a man who used to go into graveyards and liked to read the inscriptions on stone headstones. He sat beside this headstone one day and as he looked at it, he read the inscription.

The inscription said this, remember me as you pass by, as you are now, so once was I, as I am now, so you must be, prepare for death and follow me.

He thought about that for a few months and taking out his pen, he wrote these words, to follow you, I'm not content until I know which way you went.

[19:25] But to wait will be too late because we are told in scripture that now is the appointed time, now is the day of salvation.

those early disciples had the power of the risen Lord coming to them, reassuring them, and in obedience to his command to wait until the Holy Spirit came and empowered them.

And they did just that. They waited for the promise of the Holy Spirit. but the Holy Spirit is available today to each and every one of us.

When we become a Christian, we immediately receive the Holy Spirit into our lives, but we need to allow the Holy Spirit to empower us, to work through us, to embolden us in everything we do, because it's all about you, Jesus.

It's not about us, it's about Christ. The last thing is this, there's a new commitment.

[20:49] Now that Jesus is alive, there's a new commitment in this step, a new boldness, a new spring, the despair, disappointment, failures, frustrations that they had once experienced are gone as they realize their newfound faith in the claims of Christ.

And with a new zeal, a new enthusiasm, they commit themselves to all that was possible in the here and now.

Commitment to a new obedience. a new dependence and trust, a new life, a new fulfillment, and new possibilities.

And those can be ours as well. All because Jesus is alive.

Easter shows us the depth of God's love through the cross, the empty tomb, and everything that follows after that.

[22:10] The gift of the Holy Spirit, God's power to live a life worthy of being an example. And in ministry, all of us, stuff happens, things take place.

Things can go wrong from the small to the major. However, believing in a wonderful Father and a glorious Savior, he helps us to conquer all things.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Eddie ask you, you might know that guy, he wrote a lot of books, leprosy mission, couldn't get a hold of that.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. And then he had a light bulb moment, a conference, the person who was speaking enabled him to realize that he could do all things through

Christ, what Christ wanted, but not necessarily what he wanted.

And what Christ wants you to do for him, he will give you the power and the strength to do that. As I said, things happen to us all, from the small to major.

[24 : 00] And Christ helps us to conquer all things by picking up the broken pieces and turning them into something beautiful from the bitterness and self pity.

something like those first disciples after the resurrection. Inevitably, we will face trials in ministry. There are times, especially, when we find it especially difficult to go forward. hard days in our lives. And sometimes that little voice comes to us and says to us things like, nobody cares about you. You're a waste of space.

No one wants to come and help you. And maybe there are times we feel like that when we're very low, exhausted, or feeling wabbit.

[25 : 18] And in those moments when the enemy strikes, seeking the disillusioners to put us down and make us feel inadequate and helpless.

And many in this church have felt that over the years, over the last months. It's saying we have to straighten up and adjust our crown because you're a child of the king.

In other words, you're a spiritual prince or princess, or to put it in more biblical speak, you're a saint. Here we have Saint Ian.

You laugh? Saint Ian? A Saint John? A Saint George? A Saint Paul? We're all saints.

It's all about letting our lives glorify God with our resilience on him and the development of his character in our lives.

[26 : 54] will you let the power of resurrection change you, transform you, motivate you, and glorify God through your ministry?

chris is going to show us a little slide.

Look at that. If you understand the enormity of your blessings you've received, you'll understand the magnitude of the battle you're fighting.

God blessed us but we realize that we're in a battle because the enemy doesn't want God to be glorified in our lives.

let's trust him and let's believe him in the power of the resurrection. I'm going to pray and then I'm going to invite everyone to stand and sing a rousing song.

[28 : 19] Father God, we acknowledge that there are times in our lives when we we feel broken. We can feel annoyed with ourselves.

We feel as if we've let you down. And yet we must never forget that you're always there with the power of your Holy Spirit to renew our lives, our friendships, our commitment.

let's go forward believing that we can do all things through Christ, all the things that Christ wants us to do, not that we want to do, but that Christ wants us to do, by his power and his strength and his authority.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen.