

Easter Sermon 2023

Lk 24:1–5 (NKJV) — 1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, *“Why do you seek the living among the dead?”*

Resurrection Day: Our Emancipation Day! Freedom From Death

The Greatest Victory in the History of the World Why Death Has No Power Over Us

- I. They, the women, went looking for Jesus.
 - A. They had seen him crucified, and they saw him die, and they saw him placed in the tomb.
 - B. They did not have time to prepare his body, so they waited until after Sabbath and went early Sunday morning to prepare it.
 1. They had expected him to be there.
 2. He was supposed to be there. That’s where they had placed the body. They had no natural reason to believe he would not be there.
 - C. They understood Death. Death is brutal! Death takes the young, the old, the rich, the poor, and all kinds of people.
 1. Death is no respecter of persons.
 2. They knew that Death would even take Jesus also at some time. They just felt like this was not the right time.
 3. But when they got to the tomb, they were met by two Angels who asked a seemingly stupid question.
“Why do you seek the living among the dead?”
 4. You don’t go to a cemetery where dead people are looking for people who are alive.
 - a. Jesus was not dead! Jesus was alive!
 - D. His absence from the grave meant the undefeated mortal enemy of all humanity that had ruled from the beginning of time had been defeated.

This was Emancipation Day! Death had been defeated!

1. The great equalizer – Death - where Rich and poor, all classes of men, aristocrats, and ordinary men, educated and uneducated all end up, had no power over him.
- B. How did Jesus overcome Death?

1. Death could not hold him because Death had no authority and no power over him.
 2. Death occurs because of sin, and Jesus had not committed any sin. Therefore, Death had no right to keep him.
 3. He died because he was made to be sin, not because he had sinned.
 4. When Jesus lived, he committed no sin, and Death was given the power to take only those who transgressed against God's law.
 - a. Death came because of sin. Remember, God told the man he would die if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and man ate and therefore had to die.
 - b. When Death took Jesus, however, Death realized it had no right over him and had to let him go.
- C. **God had been faithful** to his word when he told Adam he would surely die because of his disobedience. And, because God was faithful to his word that man would die, every human being that has ever lived has died.
1. Death has been undefeated throughout all time in the kingdom of the world because all men sin in one way or another.
 2. Death has reigned over all of us because sin is in the world, and our holy and just God cannot allow sin to go unpunished.
 - a. Any disobedience to him is sin, and any sin is punishable by Death.
 3. Sin is any failure to submit to God's law.
 - a. We have been studying that in the Westminster Shorter Catechism on Thursdays.
 4. Sin is the cause of Death. It is called in the bible the sting of Death (1 Cor 15:56)
 - a. When a person sins, they have been stung.
 - b. Slowly the poison of sin begins to work its way in, and
 - c. Death is the final result.
 - (1) We all die because of sin.
 5. Death is the judgment upon all men because of sin.
 - a. All of us have sinned and are deserving of Death.
- D. But, just as God was faithful to his word and allowed Death to reign over all men because of the disobedience of one man, **God will also be faithful to his word, and life** will now reign over all men because of the obedience of one man.
1. ***Jn 11:25–26 (NKJV) — 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”***
 - a. Ponder those words.
 - b. Death may occur in this world, but it is only an illusion for those who believe in Jesus. ***Though he may die, he shall live***

And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

- E. This day over 2000 years ago, the ruling dynasty and dominion of Death was destroyed by Christ. Now, all who choose to submit to the reign of Christ live in a kingdom where there is no death.
1. Through the disobedience of one man, Adam, Death entered the kingdom of the world, and now through the obedience of one man, Christ, eternal life has been made possible again (Ro 5:12-14)
 2. This day, over 2000 years ago, Death faced Death!
- F. This day is the most important day in the history of all mankind. Yet most people are unaware of it, and it is one of the least respected and often ignored days throughout the year.
1. This is our day of Emancipation! Our deliverance from Death!
- G. **But it is not independence from Death for all men.**
1. Only those who choose to believe!
 2. Those who believe enough to try to honor God and be obedient to his word.
 3. If they honor God, God will honor them, and they will have a blessed life in this world, and one day he will come and receive them into His kingdom.
 4. Then, in his kingdom, he will reward them with things we cannot even begin to imagine.
- H. Now, **the ability to escape Death is a simple thing.**
1. Yet many people pay no attention to the opportunity to have their freedom.
 - a. They would instead choose to be a slave to the systems of this world, pursuing the things of this world.
 - b. Then only to die and leave the things of this world behind and face eternal separation from God.
 2. God calls such people fools!

II. The Bronze Serpent

The simplicity of deliverance from Death. God provided an example of how he would deliver people from Death when the children of Israel were traveling in the wilderness.

- A. I want to show you God's plan and hope that you understand the necessity of believing not only in your mind but in your actions to receive your deliverance from Death.
- B. There is no action or work required on your part. Your Emancipation Day is given to you by the grace of God! The example we have was when Israel was traveling to the promised land, just like we are to see this world as a journey to eternity.

Nu 21:4–9 (NKJV) — 4 Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.”

6 So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

The serpents were sent because the people were grumbling against God and God’s man, Moses.

1. They committed sin by complaining. They showed a lack of faith in God and Moses.
 - a. And sin is the sting of Death. Death always follows sin.
2. The people were helpless. Once there is sin, a transgression against God’s law, there is no turning back. Death is certain.
3. In this following phrase, I want you to make a special note.

7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

- C. The people confess their sin. This tells us how we are to live in this life as we journey to our promised land and eternal life.
- D. **8 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, *when he looks at it, shall live.*”**
9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.
- E. Death is the result of sin, and all humanity suffers Death because of sin. But God provided a way out. This is what Jesus told Nicodemus.
Jn 3:14–15 (NKJV) — 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
- F. God loved the people of the world so much that he gave his only son that whosoever believes in him should not die because of sin but have eternal life.
- G. Like the children of Israel, we should not practice sin, but if we do sin, if we are bitten by the serpent, all we have to do is keep the faith and look to Jesus.

1 Jn 1:9 (NKJV) — 9 If we confess our sins, He is *faithful* and *just* to *forgive us our sins* and to *cleanse us from all unrighteousness*.

1. We must be careful to confess our sins as they did, and then we trust God and know that he is faithful and just!!
 2. He will restore us to righteousness!
- H. We have no fear of Death because we have gained our independence from Death through Christ.
1. He died and paid the price for sin; now, we do not have to die.
- I. Death has no rule over us anymore and cannot keep us, just like he could not keep Jesus. We have been made righteous through Jesus Christ.
1. Death has no hold over us anymore! We should not fear Death!
 2. For us, Death is not an ending but a beginning of eternal life.
 3. Death is a transition to the presence of God.

Death is not an ending but an entering into eternal life for a Child of God.

- J. This is our Emancipation Day; we are truly free. Free beyond our expectations!

III. We are also made free from sin

- A. Before I conclude, I want to leave you with a few thoughts to ponder:
- B. I want to ask you, “How many of you believe that because of Christ, when you leave this world, even by death, you will still live?”
1. You are right! You have been delivered from the law of Death!
- C. But consider this, not only did Jesus defeat Death, but Jesus took away the sting of Death, which is sin.

Jn 1:29 (NKJV) — 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

1. We do not have to die at all now because Christ has cleansed us from sin and if we have been cleansed from sin, Death had no right to hold Jesus; Death has no right to hold us!
 - a. Sin has been taken away from us!

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV): For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the *righteousness* of God in Him

- D. Where there is no sin, there is no reason for Death. Death came because of sin. Jesus has cleansed us and taken away sin from us.
- Ro 8:1 (NKJV) — 1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.***

Jesus paid the penalty for Our Crime!

- E. If Jesus took away sin, and we have been declared righteous, why do we still sin?
1. Because we are flesh, we are tempted by the flesh, but if we walk in the Spirit of God, we will not sin.
- F. But now I will tell you another truth. The same Scriptures that tell you, you are free from Death and that you shall live and not die are the same Scriptures that tell you; you are also free from sin. You are no longer a slave to sin.
- Ro 8:2 (NKJV) — 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and Death.***

This is our Emancipation Day, not only from Death but also from SIN!

- G. We do not have time to discuss this reality today, but I am here to make you aware that the word of God that has made you free from Death has made you able to be free from sin!
1. Past, present, and future.
 2. You can live your life free from sin!
- H. The same John that told us Death cannot hold us is also the same one that told us
- 1 Jn 3:6 (NKJV) — 6 Whoever abides in Him **does not sin**. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.***
- 1 Jn 3:9 (NKJV) — 9 **Whoever has been born of God does not sin**, for His seed remains in him; **and he cannot sin**, because he has been born of God.***
- And then he repeats it
- 1 Jn 5:18 (NKJV) — 18 We know that whoever is born of God **does not sin**; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, **and the wicked one does not touch him.*****

You have faith God can raise you from the dead? Then have faith he can give you the power to overcome SIN!

- I. This is actually the point of Question 35 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism. I will take this up with you in a few Thursday nights.
- J. But say with me now. This is

**Resurrection Day: Our Emancipation Day
Freedom From Death & Sin**