

Easter Message – March 31, 2024

Empty Tomb. To some, it means nothing... some don't understand.
Share 4 things the Empty Tomb means to me.

Read: John 20:1-18.

① God Does the Impossible – There should have been a body to anoint.
Impossible to have stolen the body... Disciples / people don't die for a lie.

- Tomb was empty b/c Jesus alive.
 - Stone as rolled away so we could come in... see truth.
 - Truth: God does the impossible. Impossibilities in your life, too!

② Jesus Spoke the Truth – Everything He said was true. He predicted it.
Because that was true, we can accept His words as truth in other things:

1. You are loved. And He died to prove it.
2. He's gone to prepare a place for us.
3. He is the way – the truth – the life. We come to God thru Jesus.

③ Purpose for Living – Mary came with 1 purpose, left w/ another

Most purposes we have for our lives are meaningless... they don't last.

Ecclesiastes: "Everything is meaningless." Futility of futilities. Vanity of vanities."

Most meaningful purpose of our lives is same as Mary's: tell others about Jesus.

It's the only purpose that has lasting consequences.

Whatever we do here on earth will mean nothing if we miss Heaven.

"What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"

"Those who want to save their lives will lose them. But those who lose their lives for Jesus and for the Good News will save them." **Mark 8:35-36.**

④ Proves Eternal Life – Empty tomb means Jesus is alive.

Folded linen... coming back!

Still have doubt? They did too. He appeared to followers ... more than once.

- We need to be reminded over & over. He's really alive!
 - Jesus wants us to believe in Him. He proved Himself ... w/healings.
 - *And they touched him. He ate with them. He made them breakfast.*
 - He appeared again so Thomas could see.
- Because He is alive, it changes everything. Hope for tomorrow.

20 Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. ² She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, “They have taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”

³ Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. ⁴ They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ while the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. ⁸ Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed— ⁹ for until then they still hadn’t understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then they went home.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. ¹² She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. ¹³ “Dear woman, why are you crying?” the angels asked her.

“Because they have taken away my Lord,” she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.”

¹⁴ She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn’t recognize him. ¹⁵ “Dear woman, why are you crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who are you looking for?”

She thought he was the gardener. “Sir,” she said, “if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.”

¹⁶ “Mary!” Jesus said.

She turned to him and cried out, “Rabboni!” (which is Hebrew for “Teacher”).

¹⁷ “Don’t cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message.