

Resurrection Truths

Easter April 5, 2026

Luke 24: 1-12
Walker

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Perplexed. Terrified. Remember. Remembered. Idle tale. Amazed. These are key words and phrases from our reading today. We can imagine other descriptive words from the context and what we know of the story.

Unexpected – on so many levels – it was unexpected that the stone was rolled away; unexpected that Jesus was not there; unexpected to have two men in dazzling clothes appear; unexpected to have women telling such an ‘idle tale’; unexpected that women are the first witnesses of this amazing significant event. Bereft – the women and disciples would be grief stricken from the death of Jesus and traumatized from the brutality of it. Fear – they would have been terrified that they were next, - that the oppressive authorities would come for them next. So much is going on in this story as their grief and terror turned to amazement and hope.

As amazing and hopeful as this story is, we need to remember that there is no resurrection without crucifixion. After the pain and suffering Jesus went through and his followers witnessing it, the experience of transformation is all the more powerful because of it. We know that because of Jesus’ suffering that he is with us in our suffering and pain. And that there is always hope, and more importantly there is love – that God’s love, the love of God in Christ, is more powerful than death, than hate, than any suffering we might experience. So acknowledging that there is no resurrection without crucifixion, let us think about our suffering and the suffering in the world, and where is there crucifixion in our lives, in our world today?

There is crucifixion when there is violent abuse in families or relationships.

There is crucifixion when there is terminal illness.

There is crucifixion when 165 children are killed from a US bomb in Iran.

There is crucifixion when Gaza is reduced to rubble and over 65,000 of its men women and children are killed.

There is crucifixion when leaders continue to push fossil fuel use, contributing to more extreme climate and related disasters.

There is crucifixion when families are imprisoned because of the colour of their skin under the guise of immigration crackdowns.

There is crucifixion when queer people are prevented from receiving health care, support, and are beaten because of who they are.

There is crucifixion when sex traffickers of young women are not prosecuted.

There is crucifixion when houseless people have to live on the streets because of a lack of supports and political will to really address the problem.

The list could go on, and we know there is plenty of pain and suffering in our world today, much of it caused by systems and empires of oppression. There are plenty of places and situations that need love, hope and transformation – resurrection.

Jesus' resurrection affirms that what he did in life, was right and pleasing to God. According to [John Dominic Crossan](#) and [Marcus Borg](#) in [The Last Week](#), the message that Jesus is alive, his resurrection, also vindicates Jesus. God has said yes to Jesus and no to the powers that crucified him. All that Jesus said and did in his ministry is affirmed through the resurrection. It also affirms that Jesus is Lord – not Caesar, the emperor, or Herod. If Jesus is Lord, the lords of the world are not. And Jesus proved he is a different kind of Lord. Not the kind of lord that uses his power to enforce his way and abuse the rights of those who disagree. The phrase 'lording it over them' will not fit for Jesus, the Christ. He turns traditional understandings of Lord on its head. So when we say Jesus is Lord, we need to know this, that we are not using the word in its traditional sense but in the way that Jesus redefines it. Crossan and Borg say: "Easter affirms that the domination systems of this world are not of God and that they do not have the final word."

In spite of the power of the Roman Empire and the religious authorities, God through the resurrection communicates a message that they really have no power. It gives us hope when we are facing the powers and principalities as we seek to live out the Kingdom, the shalom community, Jesus proclaims. Again, to quote Crossan and Borg:

“Easter as the reversal of Good Friday means God’s vindication of Jesus’s passion for the kingdom of God, for God’s justice, and God’s “no” to the powers who killed him, powers still very much active in our world. Easter is about God even as it is about Jesus. Easter discloses the character of God. Easter means God’s Great Cleanup of the world has begun – but it will not happen without us.”

How Jesus lived and what he proclaimed was truth is also affirmed and is what we are called to as well. In his trial he said he had come to testify to the truth – Truth, if we belong to Jesus, we listen to his voice. His voice and actions are truth.

What does the resurrection affirm of Jesus’ life and ministry?

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of loving our neighbour as ourselves.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of supporting women, and including them in his community.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of welcoming the outcast, the prostitutes, the sinners.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of welcoming the children, to whom the kingdom of God belongs.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of the blessings, the beatitudes including the peacemakers, and mourners, and righteousness.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of challenging the religious systems that put law ahead of love and compassion.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of resisting violence and shaming the systems of violence.

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of not punishing people for their sins, recognizing sin in all of us and in the systems

Resurrection affirms Jesus’ truth of servanthood and loving one another.

The list could go on as there is much that Jesus taught and preached that challenged the people, the leaders, the systems and structures by placing love and peace first. All of it is affirmed through the resurrection. So we are called to practice resurrection to live out truth - the lifegiving message of love and compassion, hope and peace that was in Jesus. Archbishop Desmond Tutu knew this and lived it out in his ministry of resistance to Apartheid in South Africa, the systemic institution of segregation and oppression of black South Africans by the Afrikaans, Dutch government. In [Jim Wallis's](#) book, *God's Politics*, he tells a powerful story about practicing resurrection. He tells a story that took place in South Africa when, to all outward appearances, apartheid still had a stranglehold on power and Nelson Mandela was still in jail. Wallis was at an ecumenical service at the Cathedral of St. George's where Archbishop Tutu was presiding, when a group of the notorious South African Security Police broke into the service. Wallis writes:

“Tutu stopped preaching and just looked at the intruders as they lined the walls of his cathedral, wielding writing pads and tape recorders. ... They had already arrested Tutu and other church leaders just a few weeks before and kept them in jail for several days. ... After meeting their eyes with his in a steely gaze, the church leader acknowledged their power ... but reminded them that he served a higher power than their political authority. Then, in the most extraordinary challenge to political tyranny I have ever witnessed, Archbishop Desmond Tutu told the representatives of South African apartheid, ‘Since you have already lost, I invite you today to come and join the winning side!’ He said it with a smile on his face and an enticing warmth in his invitation, but with a clarity and a boldness that took everyone’s breath away. The congregation’s response was electric. The crowd was literally transformed by the bishop’s challenge to power. From a cowering fear of the heavily armed security forces that surrounded the cathedral and greatly outnumbered the band of worshippers, we literally leaped to our feet, shouted the praises of God and began dancing. We danced out of the

cathedral to meet the awaiting police and military forces who, not knowing what else to do, backed up to provide the space for the people of faith to dance for freedom in the streets of South Africa.”

Tutu lived out Jesus' example of speaking truth to power, and showing love in the face of an oppressive, system, intimidating with threatened violence. He lived and practiced resurrection. May we all have the courage of Jesus and his followers like Bishop Tutu as we seek to practice resurrection in our lives, facing injustice, pain and suffering, with the proclamation of God's truth of love and peace and justice. Amen