

Here we are this morning, celebrating an event that took place 2,000 years ago.
Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

To appreciate the resurrection of Jesus, we must first appreciate His death.

Jesus really died.

This fact has been denied by some people for 2,000 years...

In particular by Muslims, none of whom were there. They just make up their own history.

Ten facts point to the certainty of His death:

1. The Romans were good at killing people. People never survived crucifixion.
2. The Romans found Him dead, therefore they did not break His legs.
3. They stabbed Him in the side to make sure He was dead and blood and water came out.
4. Many of Jesus' friends, including His mother, watched Him die.
5. The centurion in charge of the crucifixion told Pilate that Jesus was dead.
6. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus received permission to bury Him from Pilate.
7. They wrapped Him in 100lbs. of linens and spices. No one could breathe with that.
8. When He was buried, the Roman authorities put a seal on the tomb.
9. The tomb was guarded by soldiers because the Jewish authorities knew He was dead.
10. The disciples of Jesus went into hiding because they knew He was dead.

But Jesus did not stay dead. He has risen!

Jesus rose from the dead.

And I want you to see with me four reasons to believe He is alive from Luke 24:1-27.

The first reason is the most obvious.

1. The tomb is empty.

vss. 1-3

vs. 1 Why did they come? (23:56) because the Sabbath was over, and they wanted to finish the burial...

vs. 2 The stone: **Mark 16:1-4** They were wondering how they would enter the tomb...

Matt. 28:1-7 The stone was removed...

Probably not so that Jesus could get out, but so that the women could see in!

vs. 3 They entered... did not find the body.

The empty tomb is important because it puts to rest any other explanations for Jesus' resurrection.

The Jewish leaders and the Romans would have been quick to disprove the resurrection if they could.

Any fake Jesus is alive stories should be immediately put to rest by the body in the tomb.

And any stolen body efforts could have been quickly disproved and Christianity would be over.

All they would have had to do was find the disciples and get the body and show it to the public.

This would not have been difficult for them, except for this: There was no dead body.

Jesus is alive.

2. The angels said that Jesus is alive.

vss. 4-6a

vs. 4 "perplexed" NIV, "wondering" = They did not understand.

According to John's gospel, they think that someone took the body.

Then they are visited by the very angels who moved the stone. "dazzling clothing"

vs. 5 "terrified and bowed their faces to the ground" = no rosy bottomed cherubs are these.

You would have hidden your eyes too.

These angels are not holding little bows.

These are flaming messengers of God, surrounded by unconscious soldiers lying about. (Matthew)

No wonder their first words to the women, recorded for us by Matthew, are, "Be not afraid!"

Then the angels speak. They ask a question, “Why do you seek The Living One among the dead?”
To show the error of their thinking, Jesus the Christ is now called “the Living One.”
He is the way the truth and the life. In him is living water, life. How could He remain dead?!

The question is quickly followed by an explanation, “He is not here, but He has risen.”
Jesus has risen from the dead.
This, as unbelievable as it seems, is the only reasonable explanation for the empty tomb.
Moreover, to hear it from the mouths of angels only makes it more reasonable.

3. The predictions of Jesus Himself vss. 6b-8

“Remember how He spoke to you...”

You know that it is hard to remember and think about what you don’t understand.

“The Son of Man delivered into the hands of sinful men”

“Be crucified”

“and the third day rise again”

Luke 18:31-34 but not yet... and they needed a little help remembering.

Matt. 16:21 They didn’t like when Jesus spoke this way. And He did so at least seven different times.

Matt. 27:62-66 Note that Christ’s enemies recalled what He said and understood His meaning.

John 2:18-22 Amidst their grief it might have taken a little work to remember.

vs. 8 “They remembered His words.”

Then they reported all of this to the rest of the disciples.

4. The predictions of the Hebrew Scriptures. vss. 25-27

Here, later on the same day, that first Easter, Jesus meets two disciples on the road.

He has an extended conversation with them about the empty tomb. They are trying to figure it out.

It is in that context that we read Jesus’ words in verses 25-27.

Clearly, Jesus expects that they could figure out what happened from the Old Testament text.

What He says to them is instructive. All the Old Testament talks about Jesus.

Now, it is important to recognize before we begin a brief exploration that Jesus’ name does not show up...
in every verse in the Old Testament. In fact, the name of Jesus does not show up even once.

But Jesus is saying something else. When you take the whole of it, Torah, the Prophets, and the writings...

It is all talking about Him. He is the focus. That is not always obvious, but it is always true.

The Old Testament prepares us to understand Jesus in just about every way possible.

Torah tells us about Jesus.

Genesis 3:14-15 Who is the “seed of the woman” who will crush Satan’s head?

Genesis 12:1-3 Who is going to be “blessed in Abraham?”

In Genesis 22 Isaac has now been born to Abraham and God has told Abraham to offer him as a sacrifice.

Genesis 22:7-8 God will provide a lamb. What is Abraham talking about? Or who?

Genesis 22:10-14 God provided a sacrifice on the same mountain that Jerusalem would be built.

In Exodus the Children of Israel are commanded to build a Tabernacle, which points to Jesus.

The Tabernacle would be replaced by the Temple, which is a symbolic picture of Jesus.

John 2:19 Jesus is saying that the Temple is Himself.

In Leviticus God’s people are commanded to make sacrifices to the Lord because of their sins.

These sacrifices, together, point to the suffering and death of Jesus who will be the ultimate sacrifice.

The Psalms tell us about Jesus.

Psalm 2 is a Royal psalm talking about Jesus. **Psalm 2:7-8** He will rule over all nations.

Psalm 16:10 But, David died and was buried.

That is why Peter tells us in Acts 2 that this is speaking of Jesus.

God's Holy One would be buried but rise again.

Psalm 22:1, 7-8, 16-18 Who else can this psalm be talking about?

Jesus often takes the psalms of suffering and loneliness as His own.

The psalms speaking of God as our mighty warrior and defense are the war songs of the Prince of Peace.

Psalm 68:18-20 Who is this speaking of? Ephesians tells us that it is Jesus who leads us in victory.

Psalm 72 is singing entirely about Jesus the King. **Psalm 72:8-14, 18-19**

So many of the psalms speak of all the nations coming to worship the Messianic King.

This King is Jesus.

Job 19:25 This is an expression of faith even in deep darkness and loss. Who might Job's redeemer be?

The prophets tell us about Jesus.

There is, of course Isaiah 53, which bears such a startling similarity to Jesus on the Cross...

that this one chapter alone would be enough for any rational person to believe. **Isaiah 53:4-9**

Jeremiah 23:3-6 In the New Testament we discover that Jesus is the Good Shepherd.

Ezekiel 17:22-24 Jesus is the "branch." As Isaiah tells us, the shoot from the root of Jesse.

Did you know that "Nazareth" is a play on the Hebrew word "branch?"

Jesus of Nazareth = Jesus the branch

Ezekiel 37:24-28 The Messiah will be King over all the nations.

In Daniel 7 we see the awesome vision of the Son of Man at the right hand of the Father.

"Son of Man" was Jesus' favorite way of speaking about Himself.

Daniel 12 speaks of a resurrection yet to come.

We could find things in every one of the prophets.

In Hosea, Jesus is the husband who suffers the unfaithfulness of His wife.

Zechariah 9:9 This is speaking of that first Palm Sunday still in the future when Zechariah wrote it.

Zechariah 11:12-13 The betrayal of Judas.

Thirty pieces of silver was the cost of a dead animal according to the law in Exodus.

Zechariah 12:10 He is the Lamb of God, pierced for our sins, offering Himself as our perfect sacrifice.

Malachi 4:1-6 Jesus, risen from the dead, restores our hearts.

Maybe Jesus explained some of these things to the disciples there 2,000 years ago.

The understanding and belief would come later... after the Lord would change them forever.

Because He is alive. He is active. He speaks. He sends His Holy Spirit into the world.

He would change the hearts and minds of these disciples and they would change the world.

He still changes hearts and minds... like mine, and yours.