

Sermon Notes – April 5th, 2026

Why Easter Matters

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is one of the best attested events in history. Remarkably, Jesus foretells both His death *and* His resurrection (**Mark 8:31; 10:34**). The Apostle Paul sees the resurrection as essential to Jesus' identity (**Romans 1:4**) and even goes so far as to say that if Jesus wasn't actually raised from the dead, all of Christianity is worthless (**I Corinthians 15:17-19**). **Easter is why Christians hold on to hope, believing that life has purpose, ultimate meaning, and eternal value.**

Today's Texts: Matthew 28:1-11; texts from Acts

The Bible tells ONE big, unfolding story of redemption. In the New Testament there are four accounts of Jesus' life, each with different emphases, but all together pointing to the remarkable life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Those four gospel stories are followed by the book of Acts that tells what the early followers of Jesus did with the story of Jesus.

The First Easter Morning: Matthew 28:1-11

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay. Then go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and behold, He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him. See, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell His disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

6. You probably noticed that there seem to be 2 kinds of righteousness discussed in this passage: a good kind and a bad kind. Look back over what you marked in #5 and make a list of what you learned about the *good* kind of **righteousness**. How does one attain it? Who can attain it? What does success look like?

_____ (9:30) _____ (9:30)
 _____ (9:32) _____ (9:32)
 _____ (10:3) _____ (10:3)
 _____ (10:4) _____ (10:6)
 _____ (10:8) _____ (10:8)

7. The word **end** in v.4 can mean a number of different things depending on the context. For example, it can mean...

- (a) *termination* (as in the sentence "The end of class has finally come!")
- (b) *goal* (as in "The end of government is the welfare of the people.")
- (c) *result* (as in "She did not foresee the end of her actions.")

Which of these meanings seem like they *could* fit the context of Romans 10? Are any of them definitely not an option? Consider Romans 3:31 and Matthew 5:17 as you answer.

8. Romans 10:5 quotes Leviticus 18:5. Read **Leviticus 18:1-5, 26-30**. Based on the context, what exactly does Moses mean when he says that **a man may live if he does them**? Is he talking about eternal life? Or something else? What kind of **life** is Paul talking about in Romans 10?

9. Read **Romans 10:6-10** again and notice the word **but** at the beginning of v.8. The word **but** signals a contrast. How are the activities described in v. 6 and 7 different than those described in v.8-10?

Time to PRAY (Or do this at the beginning of your group time)

Share prayer requests that relate to the people in your group & PRAY for them!

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

Worship Next Sunday: April 12th, 2026

"Do You Have Gospel Compassion?"

(Romans 10:1-11) Jay Mosser

The Events Of Easter Morning Were Unexpected (and feared)

- ⇒ The context – **27:62-66** and **28:11-15**. Both the political and religious leaders were afraid of what would happen if stories of resurrection surfaced and then paid “a sufficient sum of money” to buy a _____ story.
- ⇒ The ladies going to the tomb had watched the entire crucifixion (**27:61**). They were not at the _____. According to other gospel accounts, they were coming to complete the burial process. They were expecting to find Jesus’ body in the tomb.
- ⇒ The very idea of the disciples _____ Jesus’ dead body is ludicrous. People do sometimes die for a lie, but only rarely for something they *know* to be a lie. (History buffs: How long did the Watergate cover up last?).
- ⇒ Words that changed history: “**He is not here, for He has risen.**”
- ⇒ Because Jesus rose from the dead, 1) My _____ is not futile; 2) My _____ are not fatal; 3) My _____ is not final. (Lucado).
- ⇒ Watch the disciples here: 1) The important role of the women; 2) Jesus is not done with the Twelve even though they had run away to save their own skin (**27:56**). Jesus is about to give “The Great Commission” (**28:16-20**).

The Resurrection Of Jesus Became An Unending Story

- ⇒ **Acts 4:1-3, 8-12, 33** – The resurrection of Jesus was _____.
- ⇒ **Acts 5:27-28** – The disciples had “filled Jerusalem” with the story of Jesus’ resurrection.
- ⇒ **Acts 9** – How does an angry cynic become a preacher?
- ⇒ **Acts 26:6-8** – The resurrection was a vital part of Paul’s preaching.
- ⇒ **Acts 28:20** – Paul calls the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection “The Hope of Israel.”

Responding in Faith and Obedience

- ⇒ Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection is not only “The Hope of Israel,” it is the only hope of the world. It is the only hope for you and me.
- ⇒ Because Jesus rose from the dead, 1) My life is not futile; 2) My mistakes are not fatal; 3) My death is not final. (Lucado).
- ⇒ All other hopes for fixing this world have ultimately failed: money, environmental progress, education, ambassadors...all of it fails to fix the world’s woes.

Community Group Notes

Getting Started

This week the news reported that Americans spent a record \$24.9 Billion dollars on Easter this year – about \$195-\$200 per person. Where do you think that money was spent, and why would that happen in our increasingly secular society? (Bonus: And how much might YOU have spent?)

Looking Back and Taking it Home (Review)

1. Re-read the Easter account that your group heard preached on Sunday at Sunset and at Central (Matthew 28:1-11 and/or Luke 24:1-12). Some groups will need to read both accounts. What things stood out to you from Sunday’s Easter sermon? What do you remember and what encouraged you?
2. Think about the details of both texts for a few minutes.
 - A) How does the presence of fear and doubt make these stories more credible?
 - B) What specific details do you see in the text that suggest that eyewitnesses contributed to each account?
 - C) If you were “making up a great story” to start a new religious movement (like some accuse the gospel accounts of being), what details would you change or add to make the disciples look more heroic or believable?
3. Both Matthew and Luke include the words, “He is not here, for He has risen.” How do you think those words were “heard” by those first hearers? What *indications in the text* support your view? (You’ll want to read both accounts). Put yourself in their sandals for a moment – Do you think you would have been quick to believe it, or would you have joined “Doubting Thomas” in asking for more evidence?
4. Read **Acts 4:1-3, 8-12, 33**; and **Acts 5:27-28** as representative of how the resurrection of Jesus is such a key concept to the early disciples. Do you think that believers today are *more* or *less* bold about “preaching the resurrection”? Does contemporary Christianity focus too much on “how Jesus will improve your life”? Why might we do that?

Preparing for next week’s sermon (Looking Ahead)

5. Read **Romans 9:30 – 10:11** (ESV) together as a group. Mark the word **righteousness** in some distinctive way. Mark also the pronoun **it** where it refers to **righteousness**. There is also one place where the word **righteousness** is not actually in the text but is clearly implied. Mark this also. Share with your group what you marked.