

Easter 2020

What Hasn't Changed

April 12, 2020 – Rev. Rick Lyon

Intro -

Some things that haven't changed:

- **The tomb is still empty**
 - **Jesus is still alive and working**
 - **God is still faithful**
 - **Forgiveness is still available**
 - **The Holy Spirit is still changing lives**
 - **God still answers prayers**
 - **And Jesus Christ is still the same: Yesterday, Today and Forever**
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1. The Resurrection still casts out fear.

Matthew 28:1-4 Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see 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 from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*.

v. 5 - But the angel answered and said to the women, “*Don't be afraid*, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He's not here; for He's risen, as He said.

John 11:25 - Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live.”

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Romans 6:8-9 - If we died *with Christ*, we believe that we'll also live with Him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead... death no longer has power over Him.

David: "Yea though I walk *through* the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for *You are with me.*"

2. The Resurrection still changes people.

v. 4 - The guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*.

v. 7 - Go quickly and tell His disciples that He's risen from the dead, and indeed He's going before you into Galilee; there you'll see Him. Behold, I've told you." So they went out quickly from the tomb with *fear and great joy*

They went out with fear and *great joy*.

John 20:19 - That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them!

The Bible says: If anyone is in Christ, they are a *new creation*. *Old things are passed away. All things become new.*

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The Resurrection can change your past.

Eph. 1:7 - In Him we have redemption through His blood, *the forgiveness of sins*.

Rom. 8:1 - There is therefore now *no condemnation* for those who are in Christ Jesus.

The Resurrection can change your present.

Ephesians 1:19-20 - I pray that you will understand the immeasurable greatness of *God's power for us who believe Him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead.*

Paul: - "I can so *all* things through Christ who strengthens me."

- **be loving... be patient... resist temptation... forgive others... be brave**

The Resurrection can change your future.

1 Peter 1:3-5 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that doesn't fade away, *reserved in heaven for you,*

Paul: For me to *live* is Christ and to die is *gain*.

- His *past* was forgiven... (Horrible things)
- In the *present* he was living for Christ...
- The *future* would be gain.

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3. The Resurrection still calls us to obey.

The angel said to the women, “I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He's not here; for He's risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He's risen from the dead.”

1. The first eyewitnesses of the resurrection were women. In that culture, a woman's testimony wasn't admissible in court... If someone was trying to invent a story, they wouldn't have the first witnesses be women unless it was true.

2. Transformation of non-believers. James, the brother of Jesus, was changed from a skeptic to a believer because of the resurrection. Paul is another example of one who was completely transformed by the resurrection of Jesus. Paul had been a persecutor of the church. After witnessing the risen Jesus, Paul became a proclaimer for the church.

3. Embarrassing details of the Resurrection. If the Resurrection was a made up story, the disciples would have made themselves look good. Instead the disciples abandon Jesus, deny Jesus and go into hiding.

4. Willingness to die for what they knew to be true. Many people will die for what they believe to be true. But no one will die for something they erroneously invented. The disciples died for proclaiming that Christ was risen from the dead.

5. Multiple Post-Resurrection eyewitnesses. Several people, over the course of 40 days, saw Jesus alive. The eyewitnesses include the women at the tomb, the Eleven disciples, two men on the road to Emmaus, James, Paul and over 500 people at once.

v. 7 - "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He's risen from the dead."

v. 8 - So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!"

Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.

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4. The Resurrection is still challenged today.

v. 10-11 - Then Jesus said to them “Don't be afraid. Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they'll see Me.” Now while they were going, behold, some of the *guard* came into the city and reported to the *chief priests* all the things that had happened.

v. 12 - When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him *away* while we slept.’”

v. 14 - And if this comes to the governor's ears, we'll appease and make you secure.” So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

v. 11 - the guards came into the city and reported to the chief priests *all the things that had happened*.

Matthew 27:42 - "He saved others; Himself He can't save. If He's the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross *and we'll believe in Him*."

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John 14:6 - "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, *no one comes to the Father, but by Me.*"

"Thank you Lord that there are things we can depend on. There are things that don't change. Thank you that:

- **The tomb is still empty**
 - **Jesus is still alive and working**
 - **God is still faithful**
 - **Forgiveness is still available**
 - **The Holy Spirit is still changing lives**
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