

Why Easter?
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
March 31, 2024

Sermon Teaching

“And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.” **1 Corinthians 15:17 (NLT2)**

Big Idea: Jesus claimed to be the Savior of the world and **validated** it by rising from the dead.

Did Jesus really rise from the dead?

1. Was Jesus Really Dead After The Ordeal On The Cross?

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. ³⁹ He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. ⁴⁰ Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs. **John 19:38-42 (NIV)**

Thomas, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!' But he said to them, 'UNLESS I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not BELIEVE it.'

John 20:24-25 (NIV)

- Flogged / Crucifixion/ Spear in the side
- His body prepared for burial embalmed by 75lbs of gummy spices
- Placed in a tomb, Stone rolled in place (1,500lb)

Notes: _____

2. Was His Tomb Actually Empty on the First Easter Morning?

The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ "Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard. **Matthew 27:62-66 (NIV)**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" ³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

John 20:1-9 (NIV)

- The tomb had the Roman seal and guarded by Roman Soldiers Matthew 27:62
- The tomb was **discovered** empty **by women** – 1st century – unreliable witnesses
- If a **thief had stolen the body**, he wouldn't have left the grave clothes -
- The **Jews & Romans** did not deny the empty tomb - Matthew 28:11-15
- **Caiaphas** – High Priest. 18-37AD - **Pontius Pilate** – Roman Procreator of Judea

Notes: _____

3. Did Credible People See Jesus Alive After His Death?

“For what I received I passed on to you as of **first importance**: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures**,⁴ that he was **buried**, that he was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures,⁵ and that he appeared to **Peter**, and then to the **Twelve**.

⁶ After that, he appeared to more than **five hundred** of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.⁷ Then he appeared to **James**, then to all the apostles,⁸ and last of all he appeared to **me** also, as to one abnormally born.⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **1 Corinthians 15:3-9 (NIV)**

“After His suffering, He showed himself to these men and gave many **convincing proofs** that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of **forty days** and spoke about the kingdom of God.” **Acts 1:3 (NIV) Remember verse**

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."²⁸ Thomas said to him, "**My Lord and my God!**"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and **yet have believed.**"³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. **John 20:26-31 (NIV)**

“And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.” **1 Corinthians 15:17 (NLT2)**

Big Idea: Jesus claimed to be the Savior of the world and **validated** it by rising from the dead.

- What will your response be? Will your response be like Thomas?

“That if you **confess** with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord’, and **believe** in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be **saved.**” **Romans 10:9 (NIV)**

Notes: _____

My next right step I will:

[] Accept Jesus Christ as my Savior for the first time

[] Sign up to be baptized on April 14, 2024

[] Sign up Foundations Class - 4/28, 5/5, 5/19, 5/26



Light and Life: The Gospel Of John
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Open in Prayer.

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.
 Describe how you celebrated Easter growing up.

Start thinking. Ask questions to get your group thinking.

Start sharing. Choose questions that create openness.
 How does your view of the resurrection of Jesus affect your belief of forgiveness and eternal life?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:17

Why is the resurrection of Jesus so important?

Big Idea: Jesus claimed to be the Savior of the world and **validated** it by rising from the dead.

Faith is a reasonable step in the same direction that the evidence is pointing.
 - Lee Strobel

What do you think about Lee Strobel's approach to reasonable faith?

"After His suffering, He showed himself to these men and gave many **convincing proofs** that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of **forty days** and spoke about the kingdom of God." **Acts 1:3 (NIV) Remember verse**

Discussion Questions:

1. Was Jesus Really Dead After The Ordeal On The Cross?

Read John 19:31-42

Describe what Jesus went through. Could anyone survive this?

Notes: _____

Read John 20:24-25.

Why do you think Thomas had such a difficult time accepting the testimony of the disciples that Jesus was alive?

Notes: _____

2. Was His Tomb Actually Empty on the First Easter Morning?

Read John 20:1-18.

Who discovered the empty tomb first? Why is this important?

Notes: _____

3. Did Credible People See Jesus Alive After His Death?

Read Acts 1:1-3.

How many days did Jesus show himself alive before he ascended into heaven?

Why is this significant?

Notes: _____

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-9.

Why is it important that the tomb was empty on the first Easter morning?

Why is Paul an important witness of the risen Lord?

Why was it important that the church started within only a few weeks after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Notes: _____

- Jesus claimed to be the Savior of the world and validated it by rising from the dead. What will you do about it?

Read Romans 10:9.

How can someone put their faith in Jesus?

Close in Prayer: Start praying. Be bold, and pray specifically.
