

**Sermon Study Guide Based on
Pastor Glen Weber's Message of April 12, 2009
"He Is Risen and So Are We!"**

[Today, we are going to focus on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave and how this impacts all of humanity forever.]

[Topics: Easter; Resurrection; Salvation; Acceptance; Jesus Christ]

Excerpt: What is so amazing is how quickly books can appear on the market nowadays. Literally within a few days after President Obama was elected, books were appearing about how his presidency was going to go. How could they know anything about that?

So what would it have been like if the Gospels would have been written while Jesus was still in the grave? How different would have the story been? "Oh, they killed him! The one we thought was the Messiah is dead." And they would have described where the tomb was. Thank God they didn't write the Gospels then.

And they didn't write 30 days after Jesus was resurrected either. In fact, it was more like 30 years. And so the Gospels reflected the impact of Jesus' resurrection. And the apostle Paul also wrote about what the sacrifice of Christ meant and its impact upon the church at that time.

Paul didn't just write, "The tomb is empty. Jesus is gone. Amen." Instead he wrote about how the resurrection impacted mankind, what it did for the church and what has changed as a result of his resurrection.

And so we need to focus on Easter and what it means to all of us. Let's begin in the Gospel of Mark. Most scholars believe that Mark was the first one written. **Mark 16:1, "When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body."**

In those days when the Sabbath ended there was this huge rush of activity. So often after the sun went down, the markets opened up as people bought food and other items, and others started moving their animals around, feeding and watering them.

2) "Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb 3) and they asked each other, 'Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?'"

It's kind of humorous that only after the women buy all the spices and are going to the tomb, they think about the stone that is blocking the entrance way. They finally thought of who was going to remove the stone. But this was the wrong question. They should have been asking, "I wonder if he'll be there, because he told them seven times that he was going to rise after three days." But what Jesus said went right over their heads.

Now how often has Christ said things to us that we just don't believe? In this morning's Bible study, we were studying **Romans 4** and discussing how God said to Abraham that he was going to make him the father of many people. And one of your children was going to make a difference for all mankind – the Messiah.

Paul wrote that Abraham believed God, that he didn't waiver in his faith and that he absolutely trusted God. And Abraham responded to what God told him to do.

4) "But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. 5) As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

6) 'Don't be alarmed,' he said. 'You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.'"

So the Angel told the women that Jesus had been resurrected. But they still didn't get it. John tells us that Mary told the disciples that they've taken Jesus and that she didn't know where he was. Even though Jesus had told them over and over again, they didn't get it.

Now, how many times have we've been told that we've been forgiven? And we think, "I can't accept it. I don't believe it." How many times have we've been told that God loves us? And we still have those moments when we wrestle whether God loves us or not. How many times do we miss what he says to us or not get the full impact?

The angel tells them that Jesus is risen. He also made the point when he said, "See the place where they laid him." And then he showed them all the grave clothes that had been on Jesus' body. Now several of these women were probably with Jesus when he resurrected Lazarus. So they knew what this meant.

But Jesus' resurrection was a little different. When Lazarus stumbled out of the tomb, Jesus told them to take off his grave clothes. But when Jesus was resurrected, the grave clothes laid there just as they had been on his body. Jesus didn't have to unwrap himself. Jesus went through his grave clothes the same way he went through the wall of his tomb.

Jesus became a glorified human body that can pass through physical matter. Now Jesus did fold his head cloth. So Jesus just went to the next dimension, to the Godly dimension. To the dimension we call heaven in the Bible. And the grave clothes stayed.

7) "But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" 8) Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid."

Now in most NIV translations of the Bible, there is a line across the page after verse 8. In other versions, there's a footnote. Some versions have nothing else after this verse, because many scholars feel that the next section was added by others at a later date.

One commentary stated that Mark ends here at this verse, because he leaves all of us to say – what are you going to do with the resurrection of Jesus? Are you going to run away trembling? Or are you going to understand it and accept it and then respond to it?

So how does the resurrection flow out into the church and then into the world? How did Jesus' resurrection impact people? Well, Paul tells us about this in numerous places. Today, we want to look at **Colossians 2**.

6) "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7) rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

So Paul wants us to enter into all that Christ has for us. Paul wanted people to experience and live this faith. He didn't want it to be just head knowledge that Jesus had been resurrected. The demons know that. Paul wants us to experience and to be a part of what it is to live with Jesus Christ.

8) "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." Paul is asking us not to get caught up with a bunch of rules and regulations that you have to do in order to be right with Jesus.

9) "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form," Paul tells us that Christ represents every thing that God is. Christ is the fullness of God.

10) "and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority." Jesus Christ has now entered into you, which means that we have everything we need for godliness. And since all the spiritual blessings have been given to Christ, they have also been given to us.

Unfortunately our flesh often times tries to talk us out of what God wants to accomplish in our lives, by saying we're too weak or we're too whatever. The resurrection of Jesus is about what God wants to do in us, about what God can accomplish in feeble human beings, about what he can do, not what we can do, about what he can accomplish through us.

11) "In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ," So Jesus circumcises our heart and transforms us. Jesus does something in our heart that no one else can do, not even us.

12) "having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." Jesus said that whosoever comes to him, he would not drive them away – that he would save them. Jesus makes it possible for all of us to enter in. Now all humanity has been buried with him. But not all have been baptized with him to acknowledge that.

Our baptism is an event saying that we believe that Jesus came and died for us. And that we believe we died with him and acknowledging that by going down into the water. In a sense, that's dying to oneself and choosing to live with him. **Romans 6** tells us that we've been raised with him. And so coming out of that water is symbolic of being raised with Jesus Christ and acknowledging that and entering into that.

Jesus did it all for us – we just entering into that. We just say, "Wow, thank you very much." And we repent of going our own way, and we begin to respond to him. And so Jesus brings

us into that relationship. How awesome is that! It's not about what you do. It's not about how strong you are. It's not about how much faith you have. It's not about whether you do enough. It's about – he did it. Now, how do I respond to that? How do I hear his voice, so that when he speaks to me, I answer and I respond in obedience?

Most of the time God will be saying, "Do you see that hurting person, go help them. See that person in need, go help them." God motivates us do things.

Now our faith is a response in accepting what Jesus has already done for us. But you know our flesh gets in the way and we start doing our own thing and we start charging off trying to fix things our way.

In the Bible study this morning, Paul said that Abraham never wavered in his faith. But it's interesting, he did try to help his faith. So Abraham said to God, "Here's my servant Eliezer Let him be the heir and I'll adopt him." And God said that it's not Eliezer.

Then a few years later Sarah has a brainstorm and told Abraham that Hagar is young and she could have his baby. And Abraham said that it sounded like a good idea. Abraham wanted to help his faith along. So after the baby is born, he takes the child up to God and says, "I have a son."

And God says, "That's not the one. The child has to come through Sarah." Abraham's faith never wavered, it's just he wanted to help it along. And how often do we want to help God along. We want to hurry God. But it's not about our faith. It's about his faith.

13) "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins," Before we realized that we were a sinner, before any repentance has taken place, God made us alive with Christ. This includes all mankind. Because of Jesus' resurrection, all sinful mankind has been made alive in Christ. God wants all to acknowledge that. So all we have to do is repent from doing our own thing and start following Jesus.

In the next several verses in **Colossians 2** Paul wrote that Jesus cancelled out all our sins by the cross. He removed them all. Don't let "religious stuff" make you think that you are right with God. That's not what it's about. It's about what Jesus did for us. Thus, we don't have to do "religious stuff" to be right with God.

And far too many churches have "religious stuff" they demand members do. We have religious language we use. Now there's nothing wrong with choirs and Bible studies and praise music as long as we don't let them become a test of righteousness that we have to do in order to be right with God.

Now **verse 20**. **"Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: "** And then Paul goes on to write about various "religious" rules – don't touch this, don't eat that, and a whole bunch of other rules that mankind comes up with. Since we've died with Christ, these "religious" rules are NOT relevant any more. Instead we are now responding to Christ and letting him lead us.

Isaiah says you will hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way, walk in it." Now speaking to the men, when we walk past racks of magazines in a store, most of us will hear a voice that says, "This is the way, walk in it. Get out of here." Now we can ignore that voice and stand there and gawk, or we can listen to the voice because we are alive in Christ.

Likewise, if we are on the Web, and something comes up or we're tempted to go look at something, there's a voice in us that will say, "This is the way, walk in it. Don't go there." And we have to make a choice, don't we. We need to respond to that prompting.

Paul uses the word "since" so often in his writings. He's building an argument that all this has already happened – that Christ has already done it for all mankind. In **2 Cor. 5**, Paul wrote that Christ has reconciled everyone and therefore he is no longer counting people's sins against them. Paul also wrote in **Romans 4** that where there is no law, there is no transgression. Jesus removed the law. Therefore, he's not counting people's sins against them anymore. He's forgiven them.

Now Jesus is inviting us to respond to his heart. He wants a relationship not obedience. And out of this new relationship obedience flows. Abraham got circumcised, Abraham left his country, Abraham offered his son on the mountaintop out of obedience because of that relationship with God. God brought Christ out of that grave to have relationship with us, with all mankind. And he's willing that none shall perish, and that all would come to salvation.

Col. 3:1 "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." Not only was Christ resurrected, but he also ascended to the right hand of the Father and is directly involved in sustaining all of us every single day of our life. Jesus is our Mediator; he's our Intercessor; he's our Advocate; he's our High Priest.

He is fully glorified flesh sitting at the right hand of the Father constantly working. And since that's the case, we too are raised with him and sitting in the heavenly with him. So we need to set our affections on things above. Hebrews tells us to **"Fix our eyes on Jesus."** That's what the resurrection is about. There is a living one and he is directly connected to us and he invites us into that relationship.

The resurrection isn't just some nice historical event. The resurrection makes us alive. The resurrection connects us to God. And as Christ ascended up to the Father, he took us with him. And he's holding us in his hands and it says that he prays for us and the Holy Spirit prays for us.

And even when we can't pray and are crying out in our aches and pain, the Holy Spirit takes our moans and groans and turns them into understandable words to the Father. Jesus works with us because he was resurrected. This relationship fills us with life.

2) "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3) For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." Paul isn't just talking about believers; he's talking about all mankind. It's just that believers have come to say, "Yes, please. Let me receive what you have done." Perhaps some of you haven't yet said, "Yes,

please.” Or maybe you’ve been away from God for a long time and doing your own thing and you need to reconnect with him and experience that life with God again.

4) "When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." Now how amazing is that. Not only have we died with Christ and are raised with him, but when he comes in glory, we’re going to be glorified like he is. We will pass into that next dimension with him.

Our bodies will be transformed and glorified. We will remain us. We won’t be somebody else. Transformed and glorified for all eternity. Can anyone say Halleluiah? We’re going to be with God in glory. God wants all mankind to experience that. God is not a God picking out just a few for himself and have everyone else will go somewhere else. God is calling all mankind. He’s doing this for everyone.

And it’s only going to be for those few who say, “No thank you” that won’t go into God’s kingdom. By saying, “No” they are saying, “God I don’t want what Jesus already did for me.” Now it’s hard to understand why someone would do that. Why would you say no thank you to Jesus? The Bible implies that a few will. But God is inviting all and saying, “Come to me.”

And we invite you today to come in and receive that what God offers, because you are already in relationship with God. Christ is already sustaining you. If there’s any good in your life, it comes from God. So you might be a total pagan you might be a total sinner, who just happens to walk in the door today, but it doesn’t matter. Any good that has been manifested in your life has been coming from the God of this universe who has been sustaining you. And so we are going to invite you today.

Now we have before us the communion table. We have at the table broken bread that represents the fact that Jesus was really flesh. He was one of us. And that his fleshly body was beaten and broken so that we could be healed. And that he did die.

And the cup here is represented by wine or grape juice. Now the fruit of the vine tells us that Jesus has already covered our sins. It’s not a matter of us repenting good enough, it’s not a matter if we jump through hoops good enough, it’s a matter that he did it – period. And Jesus invites us to become a part of that.

Now while we come forward and partake of the elements, the choir will sing the “Halleluiah Chorus.” Now we’re going to encourage you to gather in groups of six or eight or ten with one person in the group say a prayer and offer up the bread as the body of Jesus and offer up the cup for the forgiveness of our sins.

Now if you are here today and you need to accept the fact that Jesus has done it already for you or you want to recommit to God, you are invited to come up and meet with Pastor Glen and his wife and they will pray with you.

Now as you come to the table and hear the choir sing the “Halleluiah Chorus” come with joy and rejoice what Jesus has done for all of us.

Now after everyone had partaken of communion, Pastor Glen made the following statements that were responded to by the congregation.

Pastor: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing,

All: Calling us to heal and transform the brokenness and the violence of our world.

Pastor: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing,

All: Calling us to seek out the lonely and the lost and those who need to experience God's love.

Pastor: The risen Christ lives among us, calling us to be a blessing,

All: Calling us to be disciples to the world, blessed, healed, and filled with joyous good news!

Pastor: Amen.

Key Scripture: Mark 16:1-7.

General Group Question: What is the significance of the resurrection of Jesus to all humanity?

Additional questions for the entire group or in groups of two or three of the same gender (15-20 minutes). If appropriate, please pray for each other's needs afterwards.

1. Why were the women so distraught when they saw the tomb was empty?
2. How did the realization of Jesus' resurrection impact your relationship with God? Did it frighten you or encourage you into action? Briefly explain.
3. What does it mean that "**You have been given the fullness of Christ**" in **Col. 2:10**?
4. What does our baptism signify or say about our relationship with God?
5. How has God the Father "**made us alive in Christ**"?
6. What is our relationship with God based upon – our good works or what Jesus has accomplished for us by his death, resurrection and ascension? Briefly explain your answer.
7. How does our obedience to God flow out of our relationship with Jesus Christ?
8. Please explain how the resurrection of Jesus makes us alive and connects us to God?
9. How can you share your experience with the risen Lord with others?