

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Not Ashamed

PART

3

TITLE

Not Ashamed Of His Resurrection

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:1-20; Romans 1:16



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Well, it is so good to see all of you on this very special weekend we call Easter. If you're new here with us, welcome, we're thrilled that you have joined us. It really is our honor, and I pray this time would be really encouraging to you.

All of us know that in this room that we are just a sampling of the entire world, and the entire world looks on this day that we call Easter and its actual events very, very differently.

There's some people in the world and in this room who are absolutely excited about this day, because you believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and you see how it matters in your personal life.

There are also folks in this room and around the world who look upon this day and what we are singing about and celebrating, with a measure of deep skepticism, an uncertainty if these things actually took place and if the rest of us have just been tricked, been simply deceived.

Then there's a third grouping that is probably in this room, and it's certainly all around the world, and that is a measure of apathy. They look at the claim that Jesus made that He would come to this earth, that He would rise from the dead after dying for our sin, and they look at those events and they say, "What does it matter to me anyway? What does it matter to my eternity, much less to my tomorrow?"

So I pray to God that wherever you are at, that as we open up His Word and as we pray to Him now, that God would meet you specifically because He cares so much for you. If you would, would you bow with me as we pray?

Father in heaven, we thank You for Your kindness to us, and I pray out of your mercy Lord that you would invade each of our lives, whether it's to intensify our joy of the things that we know to be true, whether it's to help us to see that which we don't understand, help us to see that it is true, or whether it's to help us to see why it matters.

I pray Father that you would work in our lives. As we read Your word now I pray God that You would give us interest in what we're reading, that You would incline our heart to lean into this and to wonder of it's really true. God, I pray that You would give us the gift of belief.

For those in the room right now who have yet to trust Christ as Savior and Lord, I pray that You would use this time to move in their life, to help them to see the significance and the power of Jesus Christ. We pray that You would glorify Your Son now, would you speak through weakness, and we pray all of this in Christ' name. Amen.

We're in Matthew chapter 28 in your bible. If you have one, I'd love for you to actually just head there with me, and if you don't, there's lots of bibles all around you in those chairs. If you don't have one at one, take that home as a gift.

We're in a short series, it's called Not Ashamed. The word shame, all of us feel it, but sometimes we don't necessarily identify what it actually means. So shame is simply that awful feeling that all of us have known from time to time, a falling short in front of people whose approval we want.

The fact is, is that when we fall short in front of nobody's eyes, we don't necessarily feel as much shame as if other people who we want to approve of us and honor us, as if they're watching. So shame comes into our life when we fail in public, it can also come into our life when we associate with somebody who is ridiculed by the public.

This is where we're at, everyone of us. We live in a culture where we see ridicule being directed towards Jesus Christ and towards His word, and sometimes towards His people. As a result of that, many of us in the room have felt the social risk of publicly associating ourselves with Him.

What we're hoping to see over these weeks here in April, is that though Jesus lived an audacious life, and though He suffered a horrible death, He rose from the dead. This message is something that we care deeply about. That though He is a different kind of man who walked this earth, is there are a million things that you and I ... valid reasons for you and I to feel shame as we walk through this earth, but being associated with Jesus Christ is simply not one of them.

This is what we find, is we're not ashamed of His resurrection. In Matthew chapter 28 starting in verse one, it says, "Now after the Sabbath," and don't forget the Sabbath was Saturday for the Jews, "toward the dawn of the first day of the week," and the first day of the week was Sunday. So He's talking about Easter Sunday morning.

"Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord had come down 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 is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where He lay. Then go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and behold He's going before you to Galilee and 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.’”

“While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priest all that had taken place. When they had assembled with the elders and taken council, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep. And if this comes to the Pilate’s ears,’ who was the governor, ‘We will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.’ So they took the money and did as they were directed; and this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.”

“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

Now friends, I don’t know where you stand this morning, whether you believe what I just read as truth or not, but I hope that you can see that if these events are true, that if Jesus Christ actually did rise from the dead and thereby conquering it, and if He does have all authority, then I hope you can also see that there is nothing that is more urgent in your day, there is nothing more important about your life than you would believe in Jesus Christ and become one of His followers.

You see as a church family, we are no ashamed of Jesus Christ. We’re not ashamed in believing, first and foremost, that Jesus rose from the dead. We’re not ashamed of this. We recognize that this is an impossibility for humanity. It requires God to move in supernatural ways. The resurrection is not natural, and yet we believe it.

And you know what’s interesting, is that Jesus promised on a number of occasions, that are all recorder in the book of Matthew, that He was going to rise from the dead. In Matthew chapter 20, this is what He says. He says, “We are going up to Jerusalem,” and then He says, “and the Son of Man.” Now let me just pause there just for a second.

There’s lots of different titles within the scriptures that are given to Jesus Christ. He’s the Son of God, He’s fully God, but in the book of Daniel, He’s ... said of him that He will also be the Son of man. In other words, that He can fully identify with God because He is God, and He can also fully identify with man, because He is also fully man.

Therefore this One, this special One, His name is Jesus Christ, He can mediate between God and man, because God and man because of sin have a broken relationship. So when He was on the earth, He referenced Himself repeatedly as the Son of Man in front of people so that they could see, “I identify with you. I can sympathize with all of your weaknesses for I have been tempted just as you, and yet I was without sin.”

So this is what He says to him, He says, look, “We’re going up to Jerusalem, and there the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and they will condemn him to death, and they will deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified.” And here it is, “And He will be raised on the third day.” He promised it.

Everyone of us in this room, we have people in our life who are promise makers. They said, “I’ll be here at this time. I’ll be faithful to you. I’ll fulfill my end of the deal.” But being a promise keeper is a far different thing than being a promise maker, and as a result of that, we have all kinds of ways to leverage one another because we don’t believe each other when we make promises.

It starts on the playground. You can see some of the ways on the screen right now. You say, “I don’t believe you. Give me your pinky. Pinky promise me right now.” If it’s not that, we grow up and now all of a sudden we’re like, “I don’t trust you’re going to pay me back, so I want you to sign this promissory note.”

You go to court, you put your hand on a bible, people swear to God, they swear to their mother’s grave, they swear on something other than their own integrity, and the reason that we do these things is because collectively we live in a world of deceit that we know that we’ve all contributed to.

Therefore we’ve been told promises that haven’t come, and we’ve told promises that we’ve not fulfilled. We all feel that we need something more than just your promise, and so give me your handshake, give me something in writing, I need something more. I need to staple something to your integrity that’s weightier, that’s more eternal, that’s more lasting, so that I can believe you.

This Jesus, He came to this earth and He made a promise that He was going to die and that He was going to rise from the dead. Now listen to me, the fact that Jesus promised that He was going to rise from the dead does not mean that it happened. The fact that He promised that He was going to rise from the dead meant that everyone was invited to watch.

Everyone was invited to see if it would happen, to observe His life, to continue to look at Him, to actually see if His promises would come to pass. So on Friday of this week, these two women that are referenced in verse one, they’re both named Mary, the bible says in chapter 27 of Matthew, it says that these two women, among others, that they were at the foot of the cross and they observed Jesus die.

In other words, these were two women who actually had the horrifying privilege to hear His very last cry on the cross when He says, "It is finished." These two women actually saw Jesus take His last breath, and they hoped that His lungs would re-expand again, and they didn't. These two women were told in verse 61 of the same chapter, were actually sitting opposite the tomb and they watched Jesus' body wrapped and placed and laid in a tomb.

These two women saw it. They knew where the tomb was. On Saturday we're told that the tomb was guarded, and the reason is because at the end of that chapter 27, this is what it says, it says, "So the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and they said, 'Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive that after three days I will rise. Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He's risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first.'"

In other words, His enemies and His friends and the authorities, they all knew that Jesus Christ stood on this earth in time and space and said, "I will rise from the dead." So these women, they show up on Sunday morning and all of a sudden they know soldiers are going to be there, but now the soldiers that they see, they're face down in the ground as though they're dead.

They're not dead, they're as they're dead. Sitting on the rock that had been moved away from the tomb is an angel, and the angel says what all angels say to people when they first see them, "Don't be afraid. Don't die. Don't die on me right now. I know why you've come, you've come because Jesus Christ was crucified. It is true, but He is not here, for he has risen," and then notice what the angel said, "As he said."

He invited you to watch, He invited you to look, He invited you to see what was going to happen, and it happened just like He said it would. The angel says, come on in and look, see, and now I want you to go and tell. I want you to find His disciples, the 11 remaining disciples, get them to Galilee because Jesus is going to show up there.

These women, it says that they began ... so overwhelmed that they began running, and it says with fear and joy. Just a collision of emotions that was taking place until they run straight into Jesus. They see Jesus and they drop to their face, and it says they grabbed hold of His feet and they begin worshiping Him.

Jesus says, "Don't be afraid." Then He commissions them. He says, "I want you to go and I want you to tell," and notice He changes the words. He didn't say my disciples, He says my brothers. This was a foreshadowing that what Jesus intended to create on the earth was not a religion, but a family. A big family of brothers and sisters of whom He was one.

So He said, "Go tell my brothers to get to Galilee. I'm going to show up there." You see providence ... and all of our visitors, I want you to know something, is that we as a church family, we admit that we are staking our life, our hope, our faith and eternity of a miracle, on something that cannot happen, but it did happen.

We admit, just as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15, that if Christ has not been raised, that our faith is futile and we are still in your sins, and we are of all people most to be pitied. If Jesus Christ is dead in a grave somewhere and everyone who calls Jesus Christ Lord, is to be among the most pitied people on the face of the earth, because what it's saying is this, we would've wasted our life on a lie.

It would all be a sham. It all comes back to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and friends, we are not ashamed of that, because Jesus rose from the dead. There's so much evidence, and that evidence begins with an empty tomb. All anyone had to do was produce a body, and Christianity would be immediately eradicated.

So somebody had to move the body, it wasn't in the tomb. If His enemies had moved the body, had stolen the body, all they would've done was unveil the body when the disciples started preaching a message they absolutely hated, and that was that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. They could've paraded His body through Jerusalem and said, "You see, it's all a lie."

Had Jesus friends, His disciples, His brothers stolen or moved that body of Jesus Christ, well surely they would have revealed it, unveiled it before choosing martyrdom. You see, every single one of these men, every one of these men was given an option in life that they could either recant their faith and their preaching that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, or they could die.

Every single one of them said, "I cannot unsee what I have seen. I can't untouch the hands that I have touched, and so you're going to have to kill me." All but one of them was martyred. The one they tried to martyr, his name was John, they couldn't kill him, and so they said, "We'll send him off to some island somewhere," and there he wrote the book of Revelation.

You see, these people, they couldn't be stopped because the empty tomb. Not only the empty tomb, but there's also these eye witnesses, and it's not just the 11, it's not just these two women, there were so many more. 1 Corinthians 15 says that, "Christ was raised on the third day. He appeared to Peter, then to the 12, and then He appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive."

Now Paul is writing a church in the first century, and what they're saying is this, for all of you early skeptics, there are almost 500 people in your midst who are living eye witnesses, who touched Him, who heard Him, who saw Him. Go talk to one of them. You see, if your dad was in a coma and you lived in a different city and your mom called and she said, "You're not going to believe this. I was just with Dad, he's awake."

There maybe a measure of doubt simply because you thought it wouldn't happen, but the credibility of that eye witness actually leads you to hope and get in a car and drive so that you can see your dad. It's the credibility of the eye witnesses, and what we know about these eye witnesses, these early disciples who saw Jesus Christ alive, was that they were among the most credible eye witnesses in the history of the world.

First of all, they were so truthful. When I say so truthful, they were truthful to a fault, if it was all a sham. Let me give you one piece of evidence there of how truthful they were. Did you know that at this point in time, I know this is offensive to many of us, it should be offensive to all of us today, but at this point in time in their culture, women were forbidden to testify in a court of law.

So what does Jesus do? Jesus rises from the dead and He ensures that the first two people who see Him alive are both women, and then He commissions these two women to go do what the law says they can't do, I want you to go testify to my disciples that I'm alive. You will be the first spokesmen, you will be the first people who testify that I have risen from the dead.

What does this do? Well, not only does it elevate womanhood back to its rightful God given place, but it also verifies the integrity of the message. Why? Because if these 11 men, their pipe dream was ruined when Jesus died, and they tried to fabricate a resurrection, and then package it for cultural approval, they wouldn't have led with two women.

In other words, the only reason in this culture to lead the story with two women were the first testimonies, is if it happened that way. Utter truthfulness. Not only that, but they keep speaking, and not only are they truthful when they're speaking, you open up the book of Acts and you keep reading there.

What we find is all of the educated people in the culture, they're looking at these 11 men, most of whom were simple fishermen, tradesmen, uneducated, they didn't go to college, they didn't go to seminary, and all of a sudden these people, they're voicing such articulate lucid arguments that cannot be refuted about things that everyone in the world wants to know. Things like origin, purpose, destiny, the problem of evil, the reason for suffering, what's going to happen in the future?

All of the educated people, they kept looking and go, "Where do these people get this?" They were so compelling. The evidence of an empty tomb and these eye witnesses, and they all gave their life for Jesus Christ, it's compounded by one other piece of evidence that most of us in this room have identified with, and that's experience.

You go outside, I believe this is true right now, is you're going to see a sun up in the sky. But there's a reason that I believe in the sun, and it's not simply because of the amount of academic evidence that there is a sun, I believe in the sun because I've personally felt its warmth and its light.

In the same way, I believe in Jesus Christ being resurrected from the dead not merely because of all of the credible evidence that stacks up from the empty tomb and moves out in 100,000 different directions, but also because Jesus Christ is my living friend who speaks and who teaches and who listens and who provides and protects and continues to fulfill promise after promise in my life that I can not answer for any other reason than Jesus Christ is alive.

It's experience. You see, we stand not for a functional religion. We stand with a Man who rose from the dead, and that's why we say we're not ashamed to believe that He rose from the dead, nor are we ashamed in believing Jesus has all authority. You see, the day came in verse 16, that these 11 disciples, they all saw Jesus, and that collision of emotion all took place at once.

It says that they doubted and they worshiped and suddenly it was all interrupted with Jesus Christ in the room saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." Now let me tell you something. This is called unrivaled authority. That's what all authority means. It's unrivaled. Unrivaled authority is what you receive when you stand before the undefeated champion over humanity called death and you conquer it.

When someone comes back from the dead, I promise you the very next thing they say to you, it matters. The very next thing He says is this, now look, I have all authority, the jurisdiction of my authority includes everything including your life and your future and your eternity. Now go and make disciples of all nations and baptize them and teach them everything that I have commanded you.

In other words what He's saying is with my authority I command you to change the direction of your life, to change your life mission. Instead of your kingdom, now you're going to build My kingdom. Instead of your disciples and your honor and your approval, you're going to live to make my disciples and you're going to live for My honor and for My approval.

You are going to live in a relationship with Me, because I have the authority to say so. That's what happens when you rise from the dead, and it's interesting that the Bible continues to emphasize the same thing. In Acts chapter 17, this is what it says. It says, "God commands all people everywhere to repent." And when you see all people everywhere, that includes you. "All people everywhere to repent." Well, why?

Because "He has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed." In other words, every single one of us has to repent because there's a day at the end of our life when no matter what you put on the tray in this buffet line, you're going to give an account at the end. There's a cash register there and there's somebody at the end who's operating that cash register, He's a judge, He's the jury over all of life, and who is that?

It goes on, "And of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." Do you know who you're going to stand before when you die? It will be Jesus Christ Himself, and therefore when you understand who this judge is and He tells you how to live your life, it means that we must turn.

See, the resurrection is God's evidence to us that we must repent, believe and worship Jesus Christ, and then help other people to hear this news so they too can repent and believe and worship Christ. So what do we do with this? I beg of you today, trust Christ without shame. Some of you here today, you've never done that. You're still relying on yourself, your good works or your family status or whatever it is, whatever it is other than Jesus Christ.

This is so critical that you understand this, that the bible tells us that to trust Jesus Christ, it means to put all of our weight upon Him, not on anything else. Not on your good works, not on your religion, not on anything. We're not ... it's Jesus Christ alone, He alone is the savior of the world.

The bible tells us how to place all our weight on Him. This is what He says in Romans 10:9, He says, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you too will be saved." This is how. You see, it's so important you understand this, that for many of you right now, you're contemplating trusting Christ with your life and you're focusing your primary attention on what Jesus said when He was on this earth.

Let me encourage you to shift your focus. Instead of looking first at what Jesus said on this earth and what He taught, which was absolutely compelling, let me encourage you today to focus on the fact that did this man rise from the dead or not, and this is why. If it is true that Jesus is still in a grave, then His teachings are terribly interesting, but if he rose from the dead, they are absolutely essential.

Jesus Christ, when He was on this earth, He stood before all of humanity on a mountain and you know what He said? He says, "I am the judge over all of humanity. Who gets to go to heaven, I'm going to determine that, and let me tell you, who goes in and who doesn't go in," and this is what He says, "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Do you know who gets to go to heaven? Perfect people. That's it. Just perfect people. Morally, spotless, righteous people, and if you're sitting here and you're thinking, "This is a problem," then you're understanding correctly. We've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and this is the love of God, is He looked at us, we were all stuck in a pit, we couldn't pull ourselves out of that pit.

There's nothing that we could do to become perfect after we've all sinned against God, so God acted on our behalf when we were helpless, and that is that He sent Jesus down into that pit. Jesus lived in this pit called this fallen earth, and you know what He did? He lived without sin. He was perfect in every way, and yet Jesus died for our sin.

He was buried in a grave, and the third day He rose from the dead and He says, “If you will believe in Me, I will forgive you of all of your sin, and I will give you my perfect righteousness.” Do you see what He’s saying? You have to be perfect, or you have to go with the One who was and who is. It’s Jesus Christ or it is not at all.

This is the gospel. You can be forgiven of all of your sin today, and so what I want to urge you to do right now is to trust Christ. We don’t want you to leave this room without having an opportunity, so what I want to ask you to do, all of you, is just to bow your head.

If you know Christ as Savior and Lord, you’re rejoicing in resurrection, just pray for those on your right and left. If you’re here today and you say, you know what, I believe what he’s saying, I believe that Jesus Christ ... and for some reason, for the first time in my life this is self-evident, my heart is warm to know, I believe this is true, then you can pray to God Himself something like this.

Father in heaven, I admit to You that I am not perfect, I have sinned against You and I admit that I cannot save myself, but I believe in Jesus Christ. I believe that He died on a cross for my sin. I believe that He was buried in a grave, and I believe that He rose from the dead, and I ask that You would forgive me of all of my sin. I ask You to do what You’ve promised, and that is that the righteousness that is purely Jesus’ righteousness, that You would give that to me as a gift. Would you save me, forgive me, and make me righteous as You promise You would? We pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.



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