

“Hope” – Pr Jim Sprengle – The Resurrection of Our Lord April 4, 2026

- I. **Matthew 28:1-10** – Previously read
- II. **By the time the sun set on Friday**, everything they had hoped for in Jesus was dead and buried.
 - a. It’s hard to imagine the emotions these women experienced... Mary Magdalene and the other Mary... as they set out to “go see the tomb.”
 - i. It makes sense... as we also go to the graves of our loved ones to grieve, remember, and sometimes to think about what could have been.
 - ii. Perhaps that’s why the women were up so early... using the first chance they had after the Sabbath Day to see the tomb where the body of their Lord and Savior was... plodding along with the memories of Jesus on the cross burned into their eyes... how He went through all the torture and suffering a human could endure, and the words, “It is finished” ringing in their ears.
 - iii. For them, in human terms, it was finished... with the death of Jesus, their hopes for the Messiah leading the people into a new era of prosperity and freedom were gone.
 - iv. The prior three years gave them more hope than they ever had... as Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, put to shame the teachers of the Law, and claimed to be the actual Son of God... claimed to be God Himself.
 - v. Now, as they walked to the tomb after witnessing the horrors of Good Friday.... and everything Jesus claimed seemed to have ended in a grave.... I can only assume they felt utterly hopeless.
 - b. Hopeless is a horrible place to be.
 - i. It means that the future has nothing for you.
 - ii. In the minds of the hopeless, nothing really matters because all is lost anyway.
 - iii. We all suffer from the sin and brokenness in this world, and some suffer much more than others... from incurable diseases... to terrible family situations and upbringing... from tragic losses... to shattered dreams.
 1. Some people get so beat down with the trials and tribulations that they don’t feel like the future can hold anything good.
 2. Pretty soon, a person might just be resigned, no longer looking ahead... but just enduring what comes.
 - iv. I know that many of you have faced trials and difficulties of all kinds – and depending on how hard they were, the temptation is to lose hope... to wonder if God’s promises are true... or are they just buried in a tomb?

- c. This is the great challenge of Good Friday and Easter Day... what we see versus what God is actually doing.
 - i. With our eyes we often look around and see the heartache and suffering of a world gone mad.
 - ii. We see the wars and rumors of wars... the fear of diseases spreading in another epidemic... the natural disasters that cost lives and property... social turmoil and crime...
 - iii. It all seems pretty hopeless – especially as we could add a thousand more things to the list!
- d. Now, I don't want you to feel hopeless on a wonderful day like this, so remember that God is in control... and His promises are never broken...
- III. **An angel from heaven appears and with a great earthquake**, the stone is moved away from the opening of the tomb... and he sits on it to greet them.
 - a. Sorrow and loss and hopelessness... turn to fear.
 - b. What should be a quiet morning as the sun comes up is now changed in an instant... as the supernatural breaks into the natural world.
 - i. The women went to see the tomb, and to their surprise, they would not see a giant stone covering the entrance but get a firsthand look at the inside... as the stone was moved and their crucified Lord and Savior was not there.
 - c. The message was clear... with an earthquake, a man who looked like lightning... and the guards shaken to their core... this was no ordinary visit to see the tomb!
 - i. They came expecting death and loss... and they found life and victory.
 - ii. The One who was crucified is risen, He is risen! **He is risen indeed!** **Alleluia!**, just as He said. (v 6)
 - d. In a few moments of processing what was going on, the utter hopelessness turned into an eager expectation and pure joy – hope had returned as they were told to tell the disciples that Jesus is alive... and they should plan to meet Him in Galilee.
 - e. Even better, in their rush to follow through with the angel's instructions to tell the disciples what happened... Jesus met them along the way.
 - i. I just wish I could have been there to see how Jesus greeted them, but for some reason I think of something less reverent and official than our word, "greetings!" – but maybe it was like, "Hi..." in a kind tone.
 - ii. Regardless of the greeting, the genuine, real, authentic, living Jesus was right in front of them.
 - iii. They fall down and grasp His feet (He is no spirit) – and they worship Him as God.

1. They don't go up for the big hug... they are so blown away and realize they are in the presence of God... and bow down to simply grasp His feet.
 2. Don't forget, their Jewish heritage taught them never to worship anything but the One True God, and Jesus was not just a man, but God in the flesh.
 - iv. The tomb could not hold Jesus Christ... Immanuel, God with us... the great I AM... who conquered sin and its power to condemn us... death and its power to separate us... and the devil and his power to claim us and drag us down with him.
 - v. From utter loss and hopelessness... to falling at the feet of the risen Jesus and worshiping Him... because everything He said and did was true.
- IV. **When the women met the risen Jesus that day,** He set in motion a fire of hope and joy that has spread throughout the world... even to us today.
- a. As their hope had returned, they shared the Good News that Jesus Christ died on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins... and was raised to conquer sin, death, and Satan... and the empty tomb shows that this victory is now ours.
 - b. He loved us so much, He did it for all humanity...
 - c. The only challenge is that some choose not to believe... to remain in the state of hopelessness that ends in a world of sin and brokenness.
 - i. Sure, many may say they will be fine and "go to heaven" because they are a pretty good person – but that is absolutely false hope.
 - ii. The truth is that Jesus Himself said, "Whoever believes in [Me] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." (John 3:18)
 - iii. The truth is that having faith in Jesus Christ, the one who rose from death on Easter morning, is the only thing that gives us all the benefits of the cross and empty tomb.
 - iv. Without faith in Jesus, we don't win... our sins are not forgiven... we have no victory over sin... over death... or over the devil... we lose.
 - d. But all praise be to our God and Savior Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit is hard at work bringing many sons to glory... opening the eyes of the lost to see the hopeless condition of the world and the fickle hopes and dreams it offers.
 - i. All praise be to our God and Savior Jesus Christ that He never stops seeking us and looking for opportunities to share that message of hope and life – which cannot be found anywhere else.
 - ii. All praise be to our God and Savior Jesus Christ that He restores real hope – an eager expectation that we have a future with Him... we

have a future glory that will never fade or break down... by grace through faith we are destined for glory.

- e. Jesus rose from the dead on Easter morning... He is risen! (**He is risen indeed, alleluia!**)... and we may leave here with great joy and hope, knowing that we are saved... we have a future.
- f. Because Christ is risen, your sin is defeated, the grave is undone, your future is secure, and your hope is alive... now and forever. Amen.