

Pastor Matthew Ude
April 17, 2022
Easter Sunday
INI – SDG

He IS Arisen!

Luke 24:1-12

¹ Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

He has arisen

Japanese Intelligent officer Hiroo Onoda hid out in the mountains of Lubang Island in the Philippines, continuing guerilla warfare for 30 years after the end of WWII. At first because he did not know that Japan had surrendered but later because he did not believe it. Two of the men who were with Hiro were shot and killed during this 30 year period. They died in the jungle because they would not believe the war was over.

The women walk to the tomb in the darkness of predawn night, in sorrow, in fear, in confusion, not knowing that Jesus has already risen from the dead.

The NKJ translation here says “very early in the morning” this could also be translated in the deep morning. That time just before dawn when it was still dark. The gospel of John makes that clear saying they went “while it was still dark.”

They walked in physical darkness because the sun had not yet risen but in spiritual darkness because they did not know that the Son of God had already arisen.

Long ago it was prophesied that the Lord’s salvation would come at the darkest coldest time of night just before dawn. **Psalm 46:5 God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.**

No matter how dark or cold or dreary the path we walk, Jesus has already risen. The physical darkness of this world has no bearing on the spiritual light of Jesus’ resurrection. If the sun has not yet arisen the Son of God already has.

There is a story told about Martin Luther's wife Katy. Martin Luther was being particular grumpy and depressed for a couple days. He came down and found Katy all in black.

“Who died?” he asked her.

“From your attitude I thought that Jesus must still be dead.”

Jesus has already risen. Paul reminds us do not **“sorrow as others who have no hope.”** 1 Thessalonians 4:13

³ Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ "He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷ "saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'" ⁸ And they remembered His words.

He Is Arisen

About six months after the end of WWII Hiro and the men who were with him did find pamphlets telling them the war was over. But they did not believe the pamphlets. Later the Japanese dropped letters and family pictures urging the men to return home. Hiro and the men with him were convinced it was an ally trick. Hiro did not surrender and return home until his commanding officer who was a bookseller by then, flew to the Philippines found Hiro and ordered him in person to surrender.

The angels ask the women, “What are you doing here? Why are you seeking the living among the dead? He is arisen.”

The women believe in the resurrection on the last day, but they do not believe it now and here. They do not expect to find Jesus body risen as He said. Even though they had just seen Jesus raise Lazarus. Even though the tomb is empty, even though they see the angels, they do not believe until the angels remind them of the words Jesus himself had spoken.

We too often believe in the resurrection on the last day but not in the resurrection right now. We do not expect to see the risen Christ in our life now.

Why is it that they did not expect Jesus to rise even though they had just seen Lazarus? One miracle is hard enough to believe but surely it won't happen again. If I win the lottery that is amazing, but for it to happen a second time is unbelievable.

We do not expect to see the risen Christ in our life. But I tell you HE IS ARISEN, do not look for Him among the dead, look for him among the living, look for him in your life.

Is God only a god of the dead, that he would help us only after we die? Certainly not. He is with you as He said. He is arisen and is even now a part of your life.

Paul says you have "risen with" Christ. Ephesians 2:5 says *συνεζωποίησεν*. This is a beautiful word. It means made alive together with. Not only is Christ arisen but we are risen with Him. We live with Him. He is with us now. We do not have to wait till death to be with Christ.

A few weeks ago, I gave a sermon titled "expect miracles." Do not be like Thomas who would not believe until he saw with his own eyes, or Hiro who would not believe until his commanding officer showed up in person. Rather believe the word which Christ has already spoken to you, that He is with us now. Expect the power of the risen Christ to be a part of you life.

⁹ Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary *the mother of James*, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles. ¹¹ And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

He Is Still Arisen

Hiroo Onoda returned to Japan as a hero. This despite the fact that he had killed over 30 Filipino farmers and stolen and burned their crops. These facts were an inconvenient truth which many in Japan choose to ignore and which Onoda himself left out of his autobiography completely.

Sometimes when something good happens we might be afraid to look into it lest we find out that it is indeed too good to be true. We might walk on thin ice so to speak afraid to crack the surface, afraid of what we might find underneath. But this is no inconvenient truth when it comes to Jesus' resurrection. He is still risen.

Guess what Peter found when he ran to the tomb? He found that Jesus' body was still not there. Jesus was still arisen. Here is an event you can hammer at the surface all you want, investigate, run to the tomb, Jesus' body will not be there, because He is arisen as He said.

For 1,992 years people have been looking for the body of Jesus attempting to prove that He is dead, but no amount of searching will ever find what is not there.

The apostle Paul encourages the people of his day to investigate for themselves. He tells them that He "was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present . . ." (Corinthians 15:6). Feel free to investigate. Look into it all you want. There is nothing to hide. There is no

inconvenient truth here. The tomb is empty. Jesus is still risen. The resurrection of Jesus has been called “the most well documented fact in history.”

If you want to find the body of Jesus it is easy to find but not in any tomb. It is here in the bread we are about to receive. Jesus gives us His living body that we might live with Him.

Truly He is arisen as He said. No earthly darkness can hide the risen Son of God. He lives with you in your life. He is still arisen. Amen.