

The Resurrection of our King
 Matthew 28:1-10
 Tampa Covenant Church
 05 April 2026

Proposition: Because our risen King has conquered death and reconciled us to God, we now live out the reality of resurrection life with him through our worship and witness.

FCF: Believing in the resurrection but not living out its reality in our worship and witness.

(#1) Introduction:

Today we're looking at Matthew's resurrection account, and these verses are fascinating; filled with awe, wonder, and all types of emotion. As Laurie Jo read, I trust our hearts were stirred. Because this is the greatest story ever told. It's the story of our Savior who rose victorious over sin and death and now rules and reigns over all of creation as our risen King.

So, we haven't gathered this morning to admire the story but understand how it shapes our reality. See, whether we realize it or not, we sometimes tend to operate out of certain frameworks about what's real, and plausible and how life works. And far too often these worldviews leave no room for resurrection reality in our everyday lives. Because it's quite possible to boldly confess the truth that "*Christ is risen indeed*" yet live as if it's not true.

But in today's text we'll see how the truth of the resurrection overturns our expectations and grants us a fresh perspective in our relationship with God. Because our risen King has conquered death and reconciled us to God, thus, we're now free to live out the reality of his resurrection in our relationship with him. So, in our remaining time together, we'll consider how this reality fuels our worship and our witness.

The Resurrection of our King: *Our Reality (vv.1-6)*

(#2) Matthew tells us it's after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week. And Mary Magdalene¹ and the other Mary² went to see the tomb. Both women were faithful followers of Jesus; they ministered to him and witnessed the horror of his crucifixion. They even saw Joseph of Arimathea place his dead body in the tomb and seal it with a stone. Now it's early Sunday morning and they're back, Why? Mark & Luke tell us they came with spices to anoint Jesus' body (Mk 16:1, Lk 23:56). They didn't expect to see Jesus alive; they just showed up in their grief; operating as if death has the final word. And then everything changes. **(#3) Matthew grabs our** attention in v.2...BEHOLD!! There's a great earthquake; an angel from heaven descended on the tomb, arrayed in splendor and rolled back the stone then sat on it in triumph; mission accomplished! The guards are paralyzed with fear... and the women are shaken as well. All of this was totally unexpected and we should be able to relate on some level because we all have our stories of being caught off guard at times in our lives.

A few years ago, while Daniela was serving in the Army, Aida and I drove to Georgia to surprise her on the eve of her promotion. We got there and knocked on the door... she opened it and as I barged in, our eyes met but she didn't recognize me because she wasn't expecting me. She started backing up, ...excuse me

sir! Then it clicked: Daddy, Daddy, Daddy!!! As overwhelmed as Daniela was in that moment, it pales in comparison to what's happening here. These women didn't experience a sweet surprise; they encountered nothing less than the breaking in of a new creation. And it evoked real fear. (#4) **But the** angel immediately speaks to their fear, "*Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.*" And here's the good news of reality, "*He's not here, for he has risen as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.*" So, if we can agree that Christ's resurrection from the dead is a true historical event. And if we can also agree it's the single most important event in history. Then we are free to declare that "*Jesus' resurrection is a present reality in our lives.*" (#5 Blank) **Not just** something we believe, but something that is shaping how we live right now. Because if the resurrection is true, then it changes everything. And so, how does this reality play itself out in our everyday lives?

C.S. Lewis is helpful here. He notes, when we pray, "Our Father," we're actually putting ourselves in the place of daughters and sons of God; "*we're dressing up as Christ.*" In a sense, we're pretending because we're stepping into something that doesn't fully match how we sometimes feel or live. Left to ourselves, we're often marked by fear, selfishness, greed and the like. But the crazy part about it is we've been taught to address God in this manner. So, why pretend to be something we're not? Lewis notes there are two kinds of pretending: The bad kind: The pretense with no follow through; pretending you'll help someone but you don't. But there's also a good kind; pretense with follow through. You don't feel particularly loving, but you choose to act in love and over time, your (#6) heart follows. Lewis concludes, "*very often the only way to get a quality in reality is to start behaving as if you had it already.*"³ It's not fake it till you make it; it's trusting that God, by his Spirit, is at work in us, conforming us to the image of his Son. And as we continue growing into who we already are in Christ, he himself makes that reality more and more real in our lives through worship.

The Worship of our Risen King: Our Response (vv.7-10)

(#7) **In v.8, the women** heed the angel's words and depart quickly to relay the good news of Christ's resurrection to the disciples. And notice their hearts are gripped by fear AND flooded with joy; what a strange mix of emotions! It's dawning on them that everything they had hoped for in Jesus is actually true and their lives will never be the same.⁴ And then Matthew hits us with another BEHOLD in v.9, Jesus meets them and notice he doesn't rebuke their fear rather he confirms resurrection reality with a single word, "Greetings."⁵ They respond by taking hold of his feet. And in that moment, fear gave way to worship.⁶ (#8) **But look** what happens in v.17, "*And when they [disciples] saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.*"⁷ Matthew doesn't hide this fact. And we don't read anything of Jesus chiding these followers for their doubt; in fact, he also tells the women not to be afraid. This is grace in action and it's a divine grace that's greater than any fear we experience in this world to include our doubts. And Jesus doesn't stand at a distance waiting for us to sort it all out on our own. No, he's always near and when we cry out to him in worship, he meets us right where we are. So, if that's any of us today; fearful for whatever reason or even struggling with doubt; the answer doesn't lie in trying to figure things out ourselves; the answer lies in worship. That's the invitation here.

Experience the presence of Christ and worship him. How do we do this? We read together from Hosea 6. In v.3, the prophet (#9) **implores the people** to, "*Know the LORD.*" This is where Israel failed as God's chosen people. And Hosea doesn't stop there, rather he doubles down with a promise, "*Let us press on to*

know the LORD;" He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring." (#10) And this isn't just an OT idea. In Phil 3, Paul puts a finer point on it for us, "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection." Not knowledge in the sense of knowing a bunch of facts about God. Thanks to all of our media platforms, we can know all kinds of stuff about people without knowing them personally. But to truly know someone, you have to draw near, spend time in their presence, and share life with them. That's what we're called to as God's people, knowing him in the context of a deep, personal, ongoing relationship.

(#11 Blank) And none of this happens apart from the resurrection. Because the hope and joy of the resurrection assure us that we're not relating to a dead Savior but one who lives and meets us even now; just as he met the women: "Greetings." And we press on to know and love him as we hear his voice in his Word, draw near to his presence in prayer and meditation, and by turning from sin and turning to him in faith. And I joy and peace of forgiveness that we have in him. None of this is a one-time deal; rather, it's a daily response to his grace at work in our lives. From the beginning of his gospel, now culminating in Christ's resurrection from the dead, Matthew has been showing us that Jesus wasn't just another teacher or prophet; he is the risen King (#12) over all creation. But the religious leaders didn't believe this reality. In v.11 and following, the guards report what happened at the tomb, and instead of rejoicing in the truth, they balked at it and paid the soldiers to spread a lie that the disciples stole Jesus' body. It's just another reminder that the truth of the resurrection has always been resisted in one form or another. Every day we're surrounded by cultural noise, that seeks to drown out the truth of Christ's resurrection; there's nothing new under the sun. But while all of this is taking place, Jesus is gathering his disciples in Galilee to send them out with the truth. And he's still doing it today; gathering his people, discipling us, and sending us out as his witnesses.

The Mission of our Risen King: Our calling (vv.16-20)

So here are the eleven disciples gathered in Galilee as directed by Jesus. (#13) Recall in v.10, Jesus not only received the worship of the women; he also sent them with a message: "Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." When we reflect on what happened in the garden and in the hours leading up to the cross; the disciples didn't necessarily act like brothers; they abandoned him. And after all that, Jesus doesn't say, "Go tell those guys to meet me in Galilee so I can cuss em' out." No, he calls them brothers. (#14 Blank) See, when we say, "Jesus knows what you're going through." This is one of the numerous examples to which we point: He knows betrayal and abandonment. And in our own lives, we know how broken relationships create distance and tension until reconciliation comes.

And here's the key...someone has to initiate reconciliation. Someone has to absorb the cost for the sake of the relationship. And that's exactly what we see in Jesus. We know how tempting it is to qualify our forgiveness, "I forgive you, but..." Not Jesus, he absorbs the cost and doesn't qualify anything and he meets them with grace. Not because they've made things right but because of his great reconciling love. And that's what makes this so powerful because this kind of forgiveness isn't cheap. It cost him his life but through his resurrection from the dead; the relationship is restored. And the ones he restores... are the very ones he sends. Not only the disciples but everyone of us who now follow Christ.

So, Jesus says to his (#15) disciples and to us, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*” Church, the keyword here is all; meaning no exceptions, limits or boundaries: All authority... all nations... all that I have commanded... always. Sounds daunting and intimidating. But don’t miss what Jesus is saying. (#16) Our call as witnesses isn’t grounded on our ability; rather it’s rooted in Christ’s authority and sustained by his presence until the end of the age.⁸

(#17 Blank) And when this reality is pressed deeply into our hearts in worship, it reshapes how we understand our witness. We’re not a bunch of individuals sent out on a task; we’re a community of believers who’ve been transformed by the gospel and commissioned by Christ to make disciples who make disciples. In other words, we live out the reality of our Savior’s resurrection in the way that we love and serve others. And this is where the rubber meets the road in our discipleship because we don’t always feel it. But remember what we said concerning the good “*pretending*” in the Christian life, stepping into what’s true and allowing our hearts to follow. So, we do it all in Christ’s name knowing we’re sustained by his presence. And as we go, we dialogue about Christ’s person and work with neighbors, coworkers, friends, and we engage charitably with respect. We welcome people into our lives by opening our homes and sharing a meal. We let go of bitterness by granting forgiveness when we’re wronged. Likewise, we ask for forgiveness when we’re in the wrong. We show patience and integrity in our workplaces; instead of going with the flow. And we move toward one another with compassion instead of assuming someone else has it covered. And in it all we trust in the Lord for the outcome because again, none of this depends on our ability or personality but on the power of God’s grace at work in us.

Conclusion:

Church, the resurrection of our Lord truly changes everything because we serve a risen Savior who grants us hope now as we live for the world to come. So may the grace of his ongoing presence fuel our worship and witness. The more we know him; the greater our desire will be in making him known. And for those who don’t know Christ. Before one is called to go; they must hear and respond to the gospel call. (#18) Lou said last week, that “*Only Jesus can save us. Only Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, resurrected, and ascended can save us and bring us the reconciliation we desperately need. Not only with God, but also with each other.*” So, hear the voice of Christ right where you are, trust in him, receive the forgiveness that he alone can give, and with a transformed heart and renewed mind, live out the reality of his resurrection for his glory.

(#19 Blank) And so today, we give glory to God for what he’s done for us in Christ, and we give thanks for the journey that’s brought us here: Last Sunday Palms were waved, on Thursday a meal was shared, On Friday the tomb was sealed but today the tomb is empty! Our King is no longer in the grave; he’s alive! So, let us live for him as we look to that great and glorious day when he will indeed make all things new. He is risen!

¹ Mary Magdalene appears at the tomb in all four gospels. See Matt 27:61, 28:10, Mark 15:47-16:11, Luke 24:1-11 and John 20:1-18

² The other Mary was the mother of the James and John (Matt 27:56).

³ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: HarperOne, 2001), 83-84.

⁴ Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 940.

⁵ χαίρω (*chairō*): rejoice, be glad, be delighted (Mt 5:12; Php 4:4); Greetings!, (most versions) Hail!; formally (in the imperative), Rejoice!; in some contexts (as in the mocking of a king), "Long live!;" in other contexts it is a mere "Hello!" (Mt 26:49; 27:29; 28:9; Mk 15:18; Lk 1:28; Jn 19:3; Ac 15:23; 23:26; Jas 1:1+)

⁶ προσκυνέω (*proskyneō*). vb. to bow down, worship. *To bow down before a human as a sign of respect or before a divine figure as an act of worship.* In a few cases, *proskyneō* means bowing before a superior (Matt 9:18; 20:20). The nt, influenced by the use of *proskyneō* to translate הִשָּׁתַּחוּ (*hāwâ*), uses *proskyneō* to describe worship properly given to God alone (John 4:20-24). In⁶

⁷ Commentators are divided on how best to understand what Matthew intends here: (1) Many scholars contend that Matthew means that some of the Eleven doubt (taking *hoi de* in a partitive sense). The cause for their doubt may be that Jesus is and is not the same as prior to the resurrection. (2) Other commentators take the *hoi de* as a pronoun meaning "they," which implies that all of the Eleven doubt. In this view, the verb *distazo* should not be rendered as "doubted" in the sense of unbelief or disbelief, for which other terms are used, but rather more like "were uncertain." *Distazo* can indicate uncertainty or hesitancy about a particular course of action. In other words, with all that has transpired, the disciples are not sure what to do. Too much has happened too fast for them to understand fully what is going on. Wilkins, 948-949.

⁸ David Turner and Darrell L. Bock, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 11: Matthew and Mark* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), 377.