

Easter Changes Everything!
Scripture: Luke 24:1-12; Ephesians 3:16-19; Romans 1:16

Today, the global Church will celebrate its belief in the resurrected Jesus Christ and the transformative power that comes from him being alive and at work in our lives. What looked like defeat on Friday turned into victory as Jesus overcame sin and death to rise from the grave on Sunday! Easter is a story of victory.

When we experience powerful moments like this, we never forget them. They have the power to shape and mold us for the future. Easter is the time of year when we remember the biggest, most pivotal moment that changed the world forever.

Stories of memorable sporting moments

Luke 24:1-8 - The tomb of Jesus had been sealed by a massive stone rolled across the entrance. To their surprise, when the women arrived, the stone had been rolled away. Inside, the tomb was empty. Jesus' body was nowhere to be seen. Suddenly, two angels of the Lord appeared before them. The women were terrified and hid their faces. The angels told them that Jesus was no longer dead, he was alive, and he would not be found in the grave.

SOME THINGS ARE BETTER EXPERIENCED THAN EXPLAINED

How do you tell someone an experience like this? How would you possibly get others to imagine, let alone believe. We have the same problem today.

How could we possibly explain from the pulpit or to our friends, such a wonderful, powerful, and life changing event like the resurrection? It is better experienced than explained.

Pastor John's experience of yielding to Christ. He cannot explain it well. It is something that needs to be experienced.

Luke 24:9-12 - The words that the women were speaking seemed like nonsense to the disciples. Peter jumped up and ran to the tomb to see for himself. When he arrived, he went inside and saw the strips of linen that once covered Jesus' body lying by themselves. Peter's life would never be the same from that moment on. The miracle of Easter changed everything for him!

EASTER CHANGES EVERYTHING BECAUSE WE ENCOUNTER THE LOVE OF GOD

The reason why it is so important to not just hear the Easter story or engage it intellectually, but to experience it fully is because Easter brings into focus the incredible love of God. If Christmas is the promise, Easter is the proof. The proof of what? That we are indeed loved by God, and that he has gone to extraordinary lengths to forgive us of sin and give us new life.

Ephesians 1:16-19 - God's love for us is so unimaginable that Paul prays for them to experience its fullness.

Story of a visit to the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Battlefield Park south of Chattanooga, TN.

For Paul, it is not enough for the people in the church of Ephesus to be aware of what the death and resurrection of Christ means for them, he wants them to grasp how wide, and long, and deep the love of Christ is.

That is my prayer for all of us this morning as well.

May we be able to sense how amazing Christ's love is for us. We are the reason why he endured all that he endured. Eternal salvation and redemption is the joy that was set before him that caused him to offer his life willingly.

Hebrews 12:1-2 - It is God's love that changes us.

Motivated by love for his creation, God sent Jesus to die for you and me. He is alive, the tomb is empty, and there is hope available to those who place their faith and trust in him.

DO OTHERS EXPERIENCE JESUS WHEN THEY ENCOUNTER YOU?

There is a reason that Christians gather for worship. It is meant to be a time to remember that Easter was not just a single moment in history long ago, but it is meant to be a daily reality for every Christian. We are meant to be Easter people who live and relate to others out of the hope, love, and joy that is offered to us through the resurrection. We are meant to be people who tell this incredible story to others through our words and by the way we live our lives.

Romans 1:16 – Paul urges his readers not to be ashamed of the Gospel because it is the very power of God for salvation for everyone. We cannot afford to be timid or embarrassed to let others know, by word or deed, about what Jesus has done for them. It is a matter of life and death. It is a matter of heaven and hell. It is a matter of hope and despair.

Conclusion

That story may remind you today that you need to be more intentional about living for Jesus and sharing Him with others. This resurrection life is better experienced than explained. Perhaps that is why the disciples had to go to the tomb to see for themselves that Jesus wasn't there. They needed to see the empty tomb with their own eyes.

This Easter, you can respond to the empty tomb by placing your faith in the living Christ and receiving the power of the resurrection. All it takes is a simple prayer of confession... Confess your sin, repent, and ask the risen Jesus into your life.