

Halleluiah Christ is risen!

The title for today's message is; **“Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again”**.

The angels said to the women: ***“Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.***

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us pray; Most gracious heavenly Father, who for our redemption gave your one and only Son to die for us on the cross, and by His glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of His resurrection. Amen.

Can you believe it! Easter is here already, you know it feels, at least to me, like we just finished the Christmas season, celebrating our Lord's birth.

Yet, here we are today, celebrating our Lord's resurrection from the dead. Yes, Jesus died, and now is risen. **Halleluiah Christ is risen!**

Now, with out a doubt, Easter is the greatest event of all time. Its the one and only moment that defines the history of all mankind.

Yes, a time in history when all people of the world, were set free from sin, giving all people great hope, and life everlasting.

A time when the great mystery of faith, is once again proclaimed to all the world, joyfully given to all believers.

We pray today that all the world might listen, and know the truth that Jesus Christ has died, Christ is Risen, and Christ will come again.

So, let's begin today, as if our entire lives depended upon the response to the following statement, for indeed it does. **"Halleluiah Christ Is Risen"!**

Today our worship service, will use two of the most ancient of Christian proclamations.

First, the Risen Christ, and second, the ancient mystery of faith, which again is; Christ has died, Christ is Risen and Christ will come again.

Its these two proclamations that are the center, and heart of faith. Its to have the knowledge, and belief in the resurrection of Jesus.

A knowledge about ourselves, our lives, and the reality of Jesus' death, and resurrection.

As we look at the difficulties of life due to our sin, we can see there's only one answer to them, and its not government, nor is it more money.

No! Since the beginning of time there has been only one answer to the sin of the world, and that is the empty tomb.

We can see how this is true when we remember that, yet as for the disciples, they weren't really counting on finding an empty tomb.

No! For them, when Jesus died it was over. That's why the disciples were hiding in fear, afraid that they too would be crucified.

And the women there, were carrying out their last act of friendship and devotion, by planning to anoint Jesus' body in the tomb.

Yet, if they, the disciples, and the women who came to the tomb had been expecting the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They wouldn't have hidden, nor would the women have prepared to anoint Jesus body. They would have all waited for Jesus to reappear to them.

Surly they would have been waiting by the opening of the tomb to witness this great miracle, of Jesus resurrection. They wouldn't have missed it.

Now, some might say, Jesus resurrection wasn't anything new, after all, He had raised His good friend Lazarus from the dead early in His ministry.

Yet, there was a big difference; our Lord Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead into a new, eternal body.

Where as for Lazarus, Jesus re-vitalized him, he was resurrected into his old body, not into a eternal body.

Non the less, a miraculous miracle. Now when were living in Christ's resurrection, entire families are transformed.

That's right, there was once anger and hatred, there is now Love, and forgiveness.

Entire families see the working of Jesus in their life, and suddenly the stress of the family can actually become a joy.

Work can go from being stressful and tiring, to a new vocation, you know, serving and helping others around us.

Co-workers, there no longer a pain in the neck, but partners in success, with the same needs and desires.

And when the empty tomb and the Love of God is our guiding principle, money even stretches further, as we buy the things we need.

Rather than on the things we really don't need. We become reasonable with our expenses, and trust that God will provide us with all of our needs.

We no longer need to try and fill the hole in our heart, because now its filled with the Holy Spirit.

Young Christian men and women need to understand that teaching in the public schools, is not only a vocation, but it's a Devine call from God.

A place where they can help young lives, to be formed in a moral, and upright way.

And to think, all this, because two men asked the women returning from the tomb, on that dawn so long ago, a question that still rings in our ears today.

They asked: ***“Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.***

And today, the questions are slightly different. We ask: “where do we look, for the living God? Or, “where can we see the living God”

Still others ask questions like: Where can we see hope in a world that always seems to be covered in the shadow of evil, hatred, and revenge?

How can we know with absolute assurance that God is with us, and fills our hearts with love and grace? How?

The answer is, right here, in today's text we find the Good News, its here we find the promise of God's hope and grace.

That's right, there is hope in the world, and there is faith in the world, and we find it right here in the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

And its in the choices we make in our own lives, and the best choice we can make is not our choices at all, but the choices that God makes for us.

God chose us to be His ambassadors of love, grace and service. He could have chosen anyone, but the fact is, God chose us.

He chose us to be His people in this place, at this time, and for the people who come our direction in need of help, and comfort.

As well as, for those in need of hearing the word of grace, and goodness. God chose us, to be the ones to instruct the young.

To show them that life has meaning, a meaning that is seen after we look into the tomb, and realize that the tomb is empty, that Jesus is alive.

And because Jesus is alive, we are also alive. Alive to love and praise, and be servants of God.

Were alive to be the ones who help change, and shift the world away from the destruction, and violence that appear on TV and the news every day.

God has chosen us to be the ones who see the empty tomb, and then go from there to do something about it.

Were the ones who move forward with grace, and truth to help those in need, and be the sign of the resurrection to the world around us.

My friends in Christ, the reality of God's grace is right here, present among us, present in those who live the message of the empty tomb.

And God's grace is present to those who know in their hearts, minds, and in their actions, that Christ is risen.

Christ has died. Christ has Risen. Christ will come again. And remember, this is the message of Easter.

As we all run to the tomb, and look in, we will see the tomb is still empty, yet God's message is full and alive.

Now, if for some reason God's message of love, forgiveness and hope doesn't burn within your heart.

Just look back on the testimony of the women who went to anoint Jesus' body on the third day after His death.

They went slowly, and bitterly weeping to the grave expecting to find the dead body of their friend, and master, Jesus Christ.

But instead, they found Jesus alive again, fulfilling the scriptures of Old, in and through the New Testament.

Therefore God's love triumphs over human selfishness and greed, yes, because the tomb is empty.

God's care for all people is steadfast and true, and His love is stronger than any other love, yes, because the tomb is empty.

God's love as shown in Jesus Christ, is stronger than the forces of evil which is all around us, yes, because the tomb is empty.

And the world is filled with hope as we wander through this life. Yes, because the tomb is empty.

It's the empty tomb, and the great proclamation of faith, that Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again.

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is Risen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.