

“Tetelestai – IT is finished!”
Easter Morning Sunrise Service
March 31, 2024
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One day he's coming. Come quickly. Lord Jesus. Now, I may be wrong about this, and I probably am. But in my mind, he comes on a day like today. So with a sunrise like that, the beautiful painted sky like that. Now, Jesus nor God has asked me whenam he thinks when I think he should come go, or what the day ought to be like.

I'm just giving you fair warning. It'd be fine with me if he came today and we were wrapped up and called up to heaven. Well, if you got your copies of God's Word turned to Luke, the Gospel of Luke. We're going to begin in chapter 23. As you know, the Holy Week story is scattered across the four gospels.

And it's not not for contradictory accounts, it's four complementary accounts. So you have to put those four accounts in harmony to try to digest the full story so that we don't miss anything and we fully understand what the Lord has to teach us. You heard Benny read from the account in Mark four. Our call to worship will be in Luke.

Dr. Doriani will be in John this morning. That means all you have to do when you go home is read. No, Doctor. I'll be in. Matthew. All you have to do when you go home is read. John. Okay. So digest all four of the accounts because they're such rich nuggets in each and every one of them. Luke will go back up to chapter 23 before the resurrection and start in verse 44.

Now, it was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour and the sun's light failed and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus calling out with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands. I commit my spirit. Having said this, he breathed his last. Now, when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, Certainly this man was innocent and all the crowds that had assembled for the spectacle when they saw what had taken place, returned home, bidding their breath, and all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Now, there was a man named Joseph from the Jewish town of Air Mahathir. He was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man who had not consented to their decisions and action. And he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to pilot and he asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped it in linen shroud and laid him in a tomb, cut in stone where there were where no one had ever been laid.

It was the day of preparation and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath, they rested, according to commandment. Let's stop there and try to put this in context for ourselves. If you put all of the gospel accounts together to try to figure out what actually took place once Jesus died, there's this man, Joseph of Arimathea, who is a wealthy man.

It's interesting. He's a member of the council. He's part of the Sanhedrin. So here's a man who would have been a part of the Sanhedrin. We don't know whether or not he actually was there and

participated. We just know he didn't support their decision. So he didn't support the decision to have Jesus arrested. He didn't support the decision to have Jesus crucified.

And yet now he is coming in a sense, he's declaring himself he goes to pilot. This is a bold move that he makes. He goes to pilot and request the body that he might bury the body in his own tomb. Now, condemned man was not given the right of a burial in those days. And so this is an interesting act in and of itself.

But to claim the body of Jesus as an act of a true disciple of Christ, he has someone that helps him. Nicodemus, this is Nicodemus who buys the the aloe in the mirror to be able to anoint the body of Jesus. We're told it's about £75 in weight. This is the Nicodemus that showed up earlier in the Scriptures to talk to Jesus.

And in that conversation, in that conversation that he had with Jesus, this is where Jesus declared, You must be born again. And this is where we get out of that conversation. John 3:16 This is the Nicodemus that God, that Jesus shared, that wonderful, powerful declaration of the Lord's love and

So they take the body and the women follow them. And there's a great number of women that go with them. The women follow them, and they go to the tomb. It's important that it's noted in the Gospels that the women are there. They see where the body is laid. They watch them, put them in the tomb, and they watch them.

They watch the men we know Joseph and Matthew, there could have been others with them. We want, they watch them roll the stone in front of the tomb. So now Jesus is buried in the two. It's about Sabbath. Now remember Sabbath would begin when the sun goes down. So Jesus has been on the grave now for, I mean, been on the cross for 3 hours from noon until about 3:00.

And so you may have about three more hours until the Sabbath begins. So all this has to take place in a hurry and there's not enough time for them to properly anoint the body. And so what they do is they watch, which led and then in keeping with what Scripture has taught them, they're going to rest on the Sabbath.

So there'll be no work. They could not have put Jesus in the tomb after the sun went down. They would not have anointed his body after that. So they rest on the Sabbath. Well, what did the disciples do on the Sabbath? That's been a compelling question of mine, is I've tried to study the accounts of all that took place.

It's so silent on the Sabbath. As a matter of fact, this last week, each day I've been trying to set aside some time to read what actually took place on that day. On some days, there was a lot to read, a lot to digest, a lot of teaching that Jesus did on some days not so much, but on Saturday, there's next to nothing.

On Saturday, all that we're really told is what not what the disciples did. We're simply told what the chief priest and the Pharisees do. They go and request. They remember that Jesus had said earlier that in three days he would rise from the dead, and that scares them. They don't want Jesus body to disappear. They think the disciples will probably steal the body of Jesus so that they could spread this story that Jesus did rise from the grave.

And so they go and ask a pilot to secure the tomb. And he basically says, Look, you have a guard, you secure it as good as you can. Well, it's not going to be secure enough. We know that the end of that story. And so then what? But we're not told anything else that takes place on Saturday. What did the disciples do on that Saturday?

Well, I'm not sure I'm going to guess here. And that's I know that's dangerous to do when you're teaching the Bible, but I'm going to guess that they did pretty much what we would have done. What do we do when a loved one has died? We gather together. I assume they gather together. And I can pretty much tell you at least part of the conversation that would have taken place, because it's the same conversations we would have when we gather together and the death of a loved one.

Then we gather together to comfort one another. We gather together and we have all kinds of questions about what just happened, why did it happen, What on earth? Why would Jesus have to be crucified? Why did he allowed himself to be crucified? They not only process what actually happened, but what does that mean for me? Don't we do that when a loved one dies?

What does this now mean for me? How does their death now change my life? And I'm sure the disciples would have done the same thing. And they recount their interactions and conversations with them. You know, as you've gathered together with loved ones from the death of someone, that you begin to remember the stories, you begin to recount the statements, you begin to recount the conversations that they had.

It's actually at that moment that I would have guessed that somebody, one of the disciples would have said, you know, just a couple of weeks ago, he said that he was coming to Jerusalem. He was going to be arrested. He was going to be persecuted, he was going to be killed and he was going to rise on the third day.

And I would have I'm blown away that no one said that that none of the disciples actually said, you know, he did it three times. Yeah, he actually did this recently. Three times he told us about this. We looked at this Sunday night of Palm Sunday, just last Sunday night, a week ago. We looked at these three times that Jesus told the disciples very plainly that he was going to be arrested, that he was going to be crucified, that he was going to rise again on the third day.

And we looked at why was it that the disciples didn't digest that? Well, they had their they had their hearts focused upon themselves. They were prideful. They were looking at themselves. They had a different agenda. They had a different way that they wanted things to work out. They actually were arguing over who was the greatest among them, or they were arguing over who would receive the most honor among them.

Jesus summed it up by saying that their they were focused on the things of man and not on the things of God. Well, I have to believe that in those conversations, clearly no one mentions he's going to rise again. Or at least he said he was going to rise again. Even though the Pharisees remember this. The disciples don't remember this somehow.

But I'm sure that as they were gathered together there, wherever they were, probably the upper room, as they were gathered together there, I'm sure that they remembered his last words. I'm sure that they remembered the very last thing that they heard him say. They would have been gathered, interestingly, at a distance at the cross and they would have heard those seven last statements that Jesus made.

And I'm sure they would have had conversations about those statements. I can distinctly remember the last conversation that I had with my grandmother before she died and how I misunderstood what she was trying to tell me. She was trying to tell me that she wanted to go home, meaning heaven. I thought she meant she wanted to go home, meaning the farm. And I tried to explain to her like a good grandson, that she couldn't go there until I realized what she was talking about and said, Grandma, go ahead. Absolutely go to heaven. And the Lord called her to be home. I remember the last words my father uttered to me, the last communication that I had with him. And it was a general statement with a deep meaning, which if you'd ever known, my dad would have been that would have been summed up everything that he ever said, a general statement with a deep meaning.

But I've processed back through that many times to think through that I could articulate for you the last conversation that I had with Pastor Reeder, and to think back on those words and to try to process those words and almost even to build meaning into them, what was he trying to say to me? What was the Lord trying to say to me?

Just this last week I had lunch with someone and they were telling me one phrase that someone who had died ten months ago said to them right before they died, one little phrase that they said, and they're still contemplating that. They're still trying to figure out what's the meaning that that's in that. So as the disciples would have sat there and talk, I now remember these last words that Jesus said.

They didn't have the benefit of biblical insight, okay? They didn't understand them in a spiritual way. So they just heard what Jesus said, Father, forgive them for they know not what they're doing. They would have received that and just been amazed that here he is hanging on the cross, forgiving the very people that crucified him. What a powerful lesson.

I doubt they ever forgot that lesson as they heard that today you will be with me in paradise, that he would turn and say to one of the thieves on the criminals on the cross today you will be with me in paradise. We would have had a long conversation. Where's Jesus? I guess he's in paradise. The criminal would be there with him and cough into that.

John certainly would not have forgotten. WOMAN Behold! Behold your son, son, your mother. There's no way that John nor the disciples would have missed that. But they would have struggled with. Why did Jesus say, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? What did Jesus mean when He said that God had forsaken Him? That God had in any way turned against him?

And it would it would be some time before they fully understood that. Of course, they heard Jesus say, I thirst, and then Jesus made that declaration to tell us die. It is finished to tell us die. What did he mean by that? My guess and I don't know. My guess is that they would have concluded that Jesus knew he was about to die and that what Jesus was referring to was it is finished that to less die, it is accomplished, it is paid.

And for that Jesus was about to die and that it was going to be over, that it was going to be done before. He said, Father, into your hands. I commit my spirit. Well, that word tend to lust, I think is an interesting word. It's an interesting statement that Jesus makes. And as they tried to process what they meant by that, it would be some time before they understood that what Jesus was saying was the atonement had been paid, His blood had now paid for the atonement of the sins paid in full.

The sins were the sins were covered. But it doesn't come close to meaning that Jesus work was done. As a matter of fact, what was about to unfold was beyond what anything they had ever experienced. Look at Luke 24 as we go into the resurrection story now. But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb taking spices they had prepared, and they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

But when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus while they were perplexed about this, behold two men stood by them and dazzling apparel, and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.

Remember how he told you while he was still in Galilee that the son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful man and be crucified. And on the third day rise. And they remembered his words and returning from the tomb, they told all these things to the 11 and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary, the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles.

But these words seemed to them, to the apostles, an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter rose and ran to the tomb, stooping, and Luke looking in, and he saw the linen closet by themselves, and he went home marveling at what had happened. Did you catch what the declaration that got made in versus sixpence seven?

The Angel is reminding the disciples of what Jesus has already taught them, but he uses an interesting word when he says, Remember what Jesus told you He didn't. Here's what he didn't say. Remember that Jesus told you that He might go to Jerusalem and he might be crucified and he might die and he might rise from the dead.

There's a beautiful word that's in that statement. Do you remember what Jesus told you? That he must that he must. He must be crucified. He must die for the sins of the world. He must rise again on the third day as as that, Luke is declaring that to us, that emphasis of what the Angels were communicating to the disciples to understand this is the will of the Father.

The will of the Father was always for Jesus to die. The will of the Father was always for Jesus to defeat sin and death. The will of the Father was always is for Jesus to rise again From the gray. Paul, who was disciple by Jesus, certainly understood this. And First Corinthians 15, he's trying to answer a question that the Corinthians had about resurrection on the last day, and he says this to them.

He says, For I delivered to you as a first importance. What I also received that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures that he appeared to see first, then to the 12, and he appeared to them more than 500 brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to James and then to the apostles. And last of all, as one untimely born, he appeared also to me. So Paul was making a declaration that Jesus had done what he must do. But listen to what he says about what if Christ had not been raised from the dead? He said, Now, if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be

misrepresenting God because we testified about God that He raised Christ and we did not raise. If it is true that the dead are not raised from the dead or not raised, not even Christ has been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ. We have hope in this life only we are of all people, most to be pitied. Paul hangs everything on the resurrection. Paul understands the must in that declaration. Paul understands that even when Jesus declared to tell a stay, it is finished that he was referring to the atonement of Christ.

But Paul understands that's not the end of the work, that everything hinges upon the resurrection. So he makes that declaration. If there is no resurrection, then your faith is in vain. If there is no resurrection, then there is no forgiveness of your sins. If there is no if there is no resurrect action, then those who have fallen asleep have simply perished.

And if there is no resurrection, then we most of all are people to be pitied because we've placed our hope in something false instead of placing our hope in something that is real. So as we gather this morning on a sunrise Sunday morning, as we come on an Easter Sunday morning to celebrate our Heavenly Father, then what we have to understand is what this resurrection means.

Everything hinges on this resurrection. Paul went on to declare, based upon the resurrection, death is swallowed up in victory or death. Where is your victory of death? Where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. I encourage you, as you read through the four gospel accounts, take note of every one who experiences the resurrection and take note of the way they were before they realized that Jesus rose from the dead.

And after they realized that Jesus rose from the dead, you cannot see the empty tomb and be the same. Now, not everyone who saw the empty tomb ended up being a believer. But you cannot experience the empty tomb. You cannot experience the resurrected savior and just go on and be the same. And I would say that for us, we cannot study, we cannot ponder, we cannot embrace, we cannot engage with the resurrection and just walk away and be the same.

We did Easter again. We had our celebration Monday comes were right back to the norm. It's not what God calls us to do. Matter of fact, as Paul says to us here, having experienced the resurrection, having understood the resurrection, do you understand that your two great enemies have been defeated? Sin has no dominion over you anymore. There's still sin.

You'll still struggle with sin, but it's defeated. The resurrection declares the Senate does not have dominion over you and death. O death. Where is your victory? Death? Where is your stream? Death has been completely defeated, swallowed up in victory. Well, people who believe that live differently. People who understand that there's no fear in death and there's no dominion of sin in my life, that's a different life then that gets lived.

I can't be the same. Having experienced that and walked away. So what did Paul say at the end of that? He said, Therefore, my blood brothers, be steadfast, be immovable. Always abound in the work of the

Lord. So what the empty tomb calls for us to do as we leave the empty tomb and our celebration of the empty tomb is to be steadfast, to anchor our faith, anchor our hope anchor our trust in the reality of the empty tomb just to let it die.

It is finished. It is completed. All has been done. You cannot undo the resurrection of Christ and all the impact that that brings. The world wants to move us. The waves come hard, the winds blow hard, the things that get thrown at us come hard. But we're immovable. Not because we're strong people, but we're immovable because we're in Christ. We're in the victor. We are able to embrace the victor. And he says, And you always abound in the work of the Lord, which is never in vain. Don't think of the work of the Lord being so big that you are insignificant. The work of the Lord is your conversation with a friend, the work of the Lord in your life that you're abounding in the work of the Lord is you extending forgiveness to someone, You receiving forgiveness from someone, You sharing the good news of the Gospel with a neighbor, a friend, an acquaintance. You ministering in the name of Christ to someone to encourage them, to comfort them, to teach them, to bring them along. That's abounding in the work of the Lord. And it is never in vain. Not because you do it so well, but because God is in it, because Christ is in it, and He will bring it about to accomplish what He desires to accomplish.

Well, allow me to end this morning with not my words. I want to use the words of someone very unique in someone central in this story, the words of one who was an unbelievable failure. I can relate to that kind of person, the one who denied Christ, the one who rebuked Christ when he told him that he was going to go to Jerusalem, He was going to be crucified, is going to die, and he was going to rise again from the from the dead, the one who wandered away from the Lord, the one whose testimony when the women came and said, Jesus has risen.

And it seemed to him an idle tale, but he went to the tomb and the Lord did a work in his heart, and the Lord do it within a work in his life, just like you and me. And here's what Peter says -- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and unfailing, kept in heaven for you, who, by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed.

In the last time. In this you rejoice, though for now, for a little while if necessary. You've been greeted by various trials, so the tested genuineness of your faith more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire and may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen Him, you love him, though you do not see him. You believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory. Obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Let's pray together.

Most gracious Heavenly Father, Lord, how we thank you for Jesus, Lord, Thank you that it is accomplished, that it is finished. Lord, that you have done all the work in Christ. There's nothing left for Christ to do and to resurrect His resurrection from the dead. The empty tomb declares to tell us why it is finished. Lord, may we be men and women who live In light of that, may we be men and women who live in light of serving a risen, victorious savior. Men and women whose enemies have been defeated. Lord, may we be steadfast? May we be immovable, clinging to our Savior and Lord, May we abound with boldness, not in our self confidence in Christ. May we abound in your work that you would call us to do

until you come back. And we do pray. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. It is In the name of Jesus Christ that we do pray.

Amen.