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Hickory Hill Baptist Church
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Look and Live #52

There Is Power, Power, Wonder-Working Power – Mark 16:1-8

I hope that this sermon will serve yet again as a straight-forward, simple 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 declaration of Jesus Christ and him crucified. So I wanted to tell you all about the details of burial in Israel, and I wanted to explain tomb structures and Sabbath rules and anointing dead bodies. But so what? So Jesus is alive. So what? What's that got to do with *you*? You live, breath, work on taxes, change a flat tire, take the kids to daycare, do the never-ending laundry, wash windows, answer emails, check on the cows, watch your favorite television show, and you sleep, then you do it all over again the next day. Where's the resurrection of Jesus fit into *that*? What does the *resurrection of Jesus* have to do with you?

Ask yourself the following question: if Jesus was actually still *dead* today, if Jesus never truly rose from the grave, how would that have changed the week you just finished living? Would it look any different? Would you work differently? Would you eat differently? Would you love your spouse differently if Jesus was still dead?

Well that's what I want to answer for the rest of this sermon. As interesting as the details of the story are, if I don't get to what the resurrection means for you, then I've failed you. More important than what time the women got to the tomb and what the tomb looked like is that when Jesus was resurrected from the dead he accomplished something! And he changed your life. Friends, he changed your life. **Three ways the resurrection of Jesus *changed your life*.**

1. When Jesus arose, he obtained our forgiveness of sins
 - a. It's easy to understand why Jesus had to die for our sins.

- i. The penalty and payment for sin is death. The one who sins has to die as payment for that sin.
 - ii. So if Jesus is going to pay my payment, he has to die my death.
 - iii. Death is the curse for my sin and rebellion, Jesus has to bear that curse on the cross.
 - iv. And he did. He died for me. He died my death.
- b. But what about the resurrection? Why is the resurrection so important? Isn't it enough that Jesus died? We often stumble to explain what the resurrection has to do with our salvation.
- c. Think about it like this –
 - i. If Jesus stayed dead, if death continued to hold Jesus for two thousand years, if Jesus was still dead today because he died for your sins 2000 years ago, what would that mean?
 - ii. Wouldn't it mean that Jesus was still being cursed for our sins? Jesus was still suffering the penalty and the payment for our sin?
 - iii. So is my sin really paid for or not? Jesus is still suffering for it. Jesus is still paying for it. Is it ever going to be paid off? And what does that mean for me when I die today?
 - iv. Now I don't pretend to know what was said or how exactly it happened: but early early Sunday morning, Jesus is dead in the tomb because he was counted with my sin and punished with my sin and cursed with my curse. He's dead because of my sin.

- v. And early Sunday morning, the Father looked at the Spirit and said, “Okay, that’s it. That’s enough. I’m satisfied. Justice is satisfied. Go get him up...” And in that dark, I’m sure *damp*, tomb of death, a body that is dead suddenly twitches. The heart begins to *pump.... pump.... pump...*
- vi. There’s movement. Blood flows and lungs gasp for oxygen and Jesus sat up. **He’s alive.**

- d. He’s alive because the Father said, *My sins* are now finally, fully, completely paid. He’s alive because the Father was perfectly satisfied with the payment of Jesus Christ. The Father didn’t say, “No, I need something more than that Jesus.” He said, “That’s enough! That’s it. It’s over. Arise my Son and live.”
- e. You see!? There is no more death to be paid for my sins. There is no more curse remaining for my sins! And so Jesus doesn’t need to be dead for one more second! And he’s not!
- f. See? If he’s alive, then my sins are forgiven! Well, he’s alive!
- g. The resurrection of Jesus Christ ***changed your life!***

2. When Jesus arose, he secured our eternal life

- a. Let’s be clear about something: Paul says, if Jesus did not rise from the dead to live forever, if he didn’t actually physically get up and take off the grave clothes and walk out of the tomb, then Christians are fools and we have no hope!
 - i. We have no hope. If you are here this morning and you’re not sure about the whole *resurrection* idea. You think it might be a “spiritual” thing, not so much a physical thing. If you’re not sure about us, whether we’ll actually be resurrected and come back to life one day or perhaps that’s just

the Bible's way of talking about the after-life. If that's you, Paul says,
You're pitiful.

- ii. Literally! Pitiful. You should be *pitied*. People should look at you and sigh and say, "Oh you poor thing."
 - iii. Why? Because you have no hope! Because your life is meaningless!
 - iv. Because if Jesus is dead, then we are dead.
 - v. We are dead in terms of our sins.
 - vi. And we're dead in terms of eternal life.
 - vii. Death is the absolute end for you, if you're don't believe Jesus rose from the grave. You should just eat all you want today, drink all that you can, smoke all your cigarettes, watch all your movies, spend all your money, and think only about yourself.
 - viii. Nothing matters. What matters? Does right and wrong matter? No! You just die. Does charity matter? Being kind and loving and sacrificial? No, it's just about you living and dying.
 - ix. You poor poor pitiful soul, you who don't believe in the resurrection of Jesus.
- b. The truth is – Jesus *did* rise. He died Friday afternoon, and he lived Sunday morning. And he lives today.
 - c. The Bible calls the resurrection of Jesus the *firstfruits* of the harvest.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.

- d. You get it? Jesus died, and three days later he arose, and he's coming back to do the same thing *for all of us!*
 - i. Is it hard for you to believe? Are you trying to spiritualize it?
 - ii. Don't. I'm not saying that somehow, in some way, we're all going to continue some kind of existence after we die.
 - iii. I'm telling you, these hundred or more dead bodies right behind us [in the cemetery behind the church], most of them have rotted and are decomposed and some are turned completely into dust. I'm saying, Jesus is coming back to dig them up. And they will walk out of the holes in the ground that they're lying in.
 - iv. Don't spiritualize this. Don't explain it away. If this church is still standing here, it will be surrounded by people who died a hundred years ago and more; they'll be walking around as Jesus tells them where to go.
- e. So here's what that means:
 - i. Your week has been completely flipped upside down. If Jesus *wasn't* raised, then you should have spent this week living for yourself because you're dying and you're almost out of time. You should have done whatever you wanted to do. Just enjoying and soaking in all the pleasures and comforts of life. Demanding service. Refusing to show mercy. Caring only for yourself and your family and your finances.
 - ii. But if Jesus *is* raised, then you're going to live forever. And so *now* is not the time to eat drink and be merry; now is the time to live for Christ! Now is not the time to sleep in; now is not the time to gorge yourself on food;

now is not the time to spend all your money getting everything you ever wanted. Now is the time to die for Jesus. Now is the time to take up your cross. Now is the time to deny yourself, to serve rather than be served, to love and show mercy rather than demanding that they be shown to you.

See, it changes everything!

iii. We will *all* experience eternal life. Just a matter of where and how.

3. When Jesus arose, he became the Master and Commander of the universe.
 - a. Read Eph 1:15-23. An incredibly powerful passage that I want you to read for yourselves.
 - b. Verse 15 starts a prayer to God from the Apostle Paul on behalf of the Ephesians.
 - c. Verse 20 - God raised Jesus from the dead, and then “seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet.”
 - d. You don’t usually think about this when you think about Easter, but you should.
 - e. When we think Easter, when we think resurrection of Jesus, we should think – King of kings.
 - f. God resurrected Jesus to make him *the number one King and Ruler of the universe*. Not the number one in Israel. Not the number one in the year 30 AD. But the number one in the universe. In all of history. In this age and in the age to come.
 - g. God put *all things under his feet*.

- i. Think about something. Think about a thing. Anything. It is *under* Jesus.
Jesus is *OVER* that thing! He put *all things* under his feet!
- ii. Think about a person. Any person. A king. A president. A congressman. A child. A school teacher. A state worker. A governor. A garbage man, a plumber, a cattle-farmer. They are *under* Jesus! When he was resurrected, God took them and put them under King Jesus!
- iii. You've never seen a thing that's not under Jesus. You've never met a person that was over Jesus, above Jesus, free from the kingship of Jesus. He's over everything! He's over everything.
- iv. The children's song is right man – "he's got the whole world, in his hand." Meaning, he's King! He's absolute, absolute King. The whole *universe* is in his hand. Every particle, every planet, every bull, every droplet of moisture in the clouds, they call Jesus "Sir". They all look *up* to Jesus. No one looks *down* to Jesus!
- h. That's what happened when he was resurrected. At that moment, he was now over *everything*.
- i. So this aspect of the resurrection of Jesus *changed my life*, and changes your life:
 - i. We *have* a King
 - ii. We *don't* have a way of living or a system of rules
 - j. He's my King. He's the reason I do *everything* I do!
- 4. One final way the resurrection of Jesus changes your life – if he's alive, he can come back