

Series: Alive; Sermon: **How Easter Sunday Can Change Your Life**

Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; Date: **April 1, 2018**

Bible text explored: Matthew 28:1–10

¹Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” ⁸So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.” [ESV]

Review and application:

Pastor Moody asked, “Have you felt your life is not sufficiently happy?” As a preliminary response, he quoted physicist Albert Einstein: “A calm and modest life brings more happiness than the pursuit of success combined with constant restlessness.” But he quickly moved on to a more compelling focus: “You can only live with purpose and lasting joy now when you encounter the risen Jesus as seen then,” on that first Easter.

1. The two (v. 1) who first arrived at the burial site came, Pastor Josh noted, in burial mode. How do we know this? (See *Mark 16:1*.)
2. What (vv. 2-4) would have alarmed the women?
How does their consternation enhance the authenticity of the Gospel account?
Why would an invented story not have used women as witnesses?
Following the angel’s reassurance (v. 5), what emotion (v. 8) displaced the women’s fear?
3. How did this display of God’s direct power in the Crucifixion and Resurrection establish that much more than a religion devised by humans was at stake?

While Pastor Josh admitted that the Resurrection can’t be put in a test tube, he quoted Francis Collins, the human genome project director: “It is . . . awe-inspiring to realize that we have caught the first glimpse of our own instruction book, previously known only to God.”

4. What *does* make this account (plus that of the other Gospel writers) so convincing?
5. Why (v. 6) did the angel say the women shouldn’t have been surprised at the lack of a corpse? (See *Matt. 20:17-19; John 10:17; 16:19-22*.)
To what evidence did the angel point the women?
What assignment (v. 7) did he give the women?
How (v. 8) did they respond?
6. What conclusive confirmation (v. 9) did the women encounter as they ran?
Why was their response the only appropriate one?
7. What does Mary Magdalene’s “sketchy past” tell you about the eligibility of *anyone* to be born from above? (See *Luke 8:1-3; John 3:16*.)
8. In this conclusion to Matthew’s Gospel, how does the assignment from the angel and Jesus himself to share the joy of his Resurrection lead in to the “Great Commission?”

9. How can we seriously apply Jesus' "Do not be afraid" instructions to telling others the good news?