

Kingdom Come- the victory of the King

Ryan Abernathy / General

Kingdom Come / Matthew 28

The King was left in a borrowed tomb. All His friends left Him. His enemies spent the last two days celebrating and worshiping. They were convinced that order was restored and their power and influence were safe.

Then early Sunday morning everything changed.

Change is scary. Some of you are here this morning and that is all that is going thru your minds. Why did I accept this invitation. These people are going to tell me I need to change.

Some of you came this morning to celebrate the resurrection, not suspecting that God is going to ask you to change this morning.

One thing the resurrection of Jesus tells us is possible- what IS can be changed. What we think is insurmountable is possible because of the power of God. When it is brought to bear on our lives, the power of God can even bring the dead to life.

On that Sunday morning about 2000 years ago, everything changed. And hope was born. Hope for today. Hope for tomorrow. Hope that we are no longer bound by what we have done in the past. Hope that the present does not dictate our future. We can begin again.

Turn with me to [Matthew 28](#), and let's look at what happened on that Sunday, that we celebrate every Sunday since and especially on this Sunday when we remember a Sunday like no other in Jerusalem when Jesus was buried in a borrowed tomb.

Read vs 1-10.

The first 2 people to arrive are women. That is not an accident. These ladies came to mourn their dead friend and dead son. they came to do for Him what had not been done on Friday, but what they found was a chaotic scene.

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

the women will become the first witnesses to the resurrection, a fact that seems to guarantee the credibility of the account in a world that usually did not accept women's testimony as legally binding. **Were the story fabricated, only male witnesses would have appeared.** The role of the women also points to the dawning of a new age of equality among women and men in Christ

A tomb opened by an earthquake. An angel sitting on a stone. And tough Roman soldiers passed out from awe and fright.

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

The angel's sitting (v. 2) perhaps indicates a note of completion or triumph. The earthquake dislodges the rock but was not needed to enable Christ to be raised. Jesus' resurrection had already occurred, notwithstanding the massive stone barrier

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

The young man's appearance and garb are appropriately angelic: brilliant, glorious, and pure. **The whole scene terrifies the guards and temporarily paralyzes them, so that they cannot intervene**

And the angel has a message for these faithful women- He isn't here! (look at vs 5-6)

The angel takes them on a tour of the tomb, literally showing them where Jesus was supposed to be. And He is not there.

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

They are looking for a corpse, but no body remains. Jesus is resurrected, not just spiritually alive, so that the tomb is empty. His own predictions have come true (16:21; 17:23; 20:19). Contra the NIV “he has risen,” the voice of the verb ēgerthē is passive (“he was raised”). No text of Scripture ever speaks of Jesus as raising himself but always as being raised by God. The angel’s emphasis, “who was crucified” (v. 5), underlines the reality of Jesus’ death. **“Come and see the place” verifies that this is the correct tomb and correct location within the tomb, thus stressing that he really is alive.**

And the angel isn’t done with them. He tells them to go and bear witness to the disciples what they have seen and to invite the disciples to come and see the risen Jesus, in a familiar location- Galilee. (v7)

The women have a choice to make. Will they go and tell or will they refuse to believe what they have seen? What they have experienced? What they have been told to tell?

We ALL have that choice. Every day. What Jesus did in rising from the dead resonates in every one of our lives. When we believe it, it changes us! Stop and think for a moment, **how can these two Marys go back to a normal life?** They have seen something that can only be explained as a miracle.

Church I would ask you the same question. Having been changed by Jesus, how could you go back to a normal life? you are a LITERAL miracle! Jesus has delivered you. Changed you. Speaks to you! How can we not tell what He has done for us?

The two Marys don’t hesitate. They take off- and they are afraid and overjoyed. That word afraid is more about “awe” than “fear.” They have seen something that rocks them to their very core, and they are not done having those experiences yet! Church, **Jesus is never done showing up in our lives.** He is always arriving with MORE- more grace, more insight, more peace, more hope, more of Himself!

So look at vs 9-10.

He says “Hello” and they fall at His feet in worship! **You cannot see Jesus and not worship.** He is so worthy of being worshiped.

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

En route to the city, they see Jesus himself, who gives them a cheery greeting (like our hello). **Their extra-ordinary response reflects a posture and attitude of utter worship and testifies to the bodily nature of Christ’s resurrection.** Jesus repeats very closely the words of the angel in vv. 5 and 7. But he now calls the disciples his “brothers,”

And look at His instructions- He tells them to do the exact same thing the angel did. He reassures them. **Church, Jesus will never tell you to do something contrary to His Word.** You can always check and confirm the truth!

Now all of these miracles have happened. This life changing, earth shaking, era splitting occurrence has occurred. But there are some to whom this is not good news. Check out vs 11-15.

To undermine the story that the disciples were going to tell, a lie is invented.

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

They go back into town and first tell the priests what has happened (v. 11). As noted under 27:65, these are probably Roman soldiers, temporarily delegated to do the Jewish leaders’ bidding. These leaders decide to bribe the soldiers with a considerable amount of money (“large sum of” in v. 12 translates enough) to lie to their superiors

Let me tell you this morning, for some of you who do not yet know Jesus, **the resistance that is fighting the truth you are hearing is the same as this lie. We have to invent a reason not to believe this good news.**

For the guards, it's a story of being overpowered by renegade disciples determined to perpetuate a myth. **For you today it may be a push back of logic or cynicism or religious trauma, or a hundred other objections that rise to your mind.**

I get it.

The only thing that can overcome that fight is the Spirit of God. You can give in to the objections over and over again, but one thing will remain consistent, God will not leave you alone. **You will be confronted with the truth of Jesus, until God wears down your defenses. He will not quit on you.**

You can even bribe yourself- as the guards were bribed- trying to fill the hole of that falsehood with something that makes it feel better- a job, a spouse, a bank account, a spirituality, on and on...but **that truth will not let you go.** Anne Lamott described it like this:

“everywhere I went, I had the feeling that a little cat was following me, wanting me to reach down and pick it up, wanting me to open the door and let it in. But I knew what would happen: you let a cat in one time, give it a little milk, and then it stays forever. So I tried to keep one step ahead of it, slamming my houseboat door when I entered or left.

And one week later, when I went back to church, I was so hungover that I couldn't stand up for the songs, and this time I stayed for the sermon, which I just thought was so ridiculous, like someone trying to convince me of the existence of extraterrestrials, but the last song was so deep and raw and pure that I could not escape. It was as if the people were singing in between the notes, weeping and joyful at the same time, and I felt like their voices or something was rocking me in its bosom, holding me like a scared kid, and I opened up to that feeling—and it washed over me.

I began to cry and left before the benediction, and I raced home and felt the little cat running along at my heels, and I walked down the dock

past dozens of potted flowers, under a sky as blue as one of God's own dreams, and I opened the door to my houseboat, and I stood there a minute, and then I hung my head and said, "I quit." I took a long deep breath and said out loud, "All right. You can come in."

So this was my beautiful moment of conversion." - **Anne Lamott**,
Traveling Mercies

But this amazing story does not end with 2 women going to spread the story or a group of guards agreeing to tell a lie. **It ends, in the Gospel of Matthew, with a commission to the faithful followers who Jesus had prepared for this moment.** And today, that calling is handed down to us, as the people who have believed Jesus and given Him our lives.

Look at verses 16-20. (a weekish later)

First, Jesus is right where He said He would be. You will find that when Jesus says something He follows thru. He means what He says.

Second, Jesus tells the disciples that He has the authority to give them instructions. Jesus is once again reminding them, He is in charge. Nothing has changed about who He is or what He has been called to do after His resurrection. He is the boss.

Matthew 2. Resurrection! (28:1–20)

Because of this authority, Jesus has the right to issue his followers their "marching orders," but he also has the ability to help them carry out those orders.

And His command is really specific:

- make disciples of ALL nations- no one is left out!- *The verb "make disciples" also commands a kind of evangelism that does not stop after someone makes a profession of faith*

Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 431.

- baptize them- *identify them with the family of God and the church- The first of these will be a once-for-all, decisive initiation into Christian community*

Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 431.

- teach them what God expects His followers to do and be- *Teaching obedience to all of Jesus' commands forms the heart of disciple making. Evangelism must be holistic. If non-Christians are not hearing the gospel and not being challenged to make a decision for Christ, then the church has disobeyed one part of Jesus' commission. If new converts are not faithfully and lovingly nurtured in the whole counsel of God's revelation, then the church has disobeyed the other part*

Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 432.

When are we to do this? **AS WE ARE GOING!!** It is a continual, ongoing lifestyle of proclaiming the Kingdom. Sharing the Good News. Helping people to meet Jesus.

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To “make disciples of all nations” does require many people to leave their homelands, but **Jesus' main focus remains on the task of all believers to duplicate themselves wherever they may be**

And finally, we are not alone. Jesus says He is with us to the end.

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Matthew closes his Gospel with Jesus' promise to be spiritually present with his followers until the end of this age, that is, until his return, when he will once again be present bodily

Now church, I am about done. And we are going to worship again in response to this amazing good news. But I want to ask you...**what are you doing as you are going? you are going anyway. what are you taking with you? What news are you spreading?**

Now let me ask you one more question. What kind of news does your world need? Think for a moment about where you go every day. What kind of news do the people you are around need?

Now go and take it to them.