

**SERMON NOTES: APRIL 20<sup>TH</sup>**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS: I CORINTHIANS 15: 3-9, LUKE 24:1-12**

**AN IDLE TALE...**three women go to the tomb to anoint a corpse but life just got more complicated. Finding the tomb empty, they are in shock. This was too much for them. It was a crime scene. His body was stolen. Before they could flee, 2 angels in white scare them half to death...

**Why do you seek living among dead?**

It is a good question! Why do we seek the living among dead? Because we view **LIFE HORIZONTALLY**: a continuous treadmill, going nowhere. It is easy to develop tunnel vision! Easter invites us to think vertically, to look up: the **BEST IS YET TO BE**. Women sprint from the tomb in fear. When they tell the others, they dismiss the news as an idle tale. Many people still do. Christians are **IN DENIAL**; Easter is a **CONSPIRACY**, cooked up by grieving his friends. Without Easter, we have nothing: there'd be no **CHURCH HISTORY**, no record of **MARTYRS**, no hope in this life/next. Had it all been a **HOAX**, Christianity would've died in infancy. Jesus would just be a **FADED MEMORY**: a man whose words have no lasting authority.

**DOUBTING OUR DOUBT...**when Paul spoke of the resurrection, he got a similar reaction in Corinth. If Jesus hadn't been raised, their faith was in vain; they were still in sin. The most **CONVINCING TESTIMONY** he could offer: **his own life**. One thing Corinthians knew: Paul's life spoke for itself. They might question his sanity, but not his sincerity. For Paul, Easter must be seen for what **IT SAYS ABOUT CHRIST** than **WHAT IT MEANS FOR US**. God vindicated Christ's sinless life, validated that **HE WAS WHO HE SAID HE WAS**. Easter brings **GOOD NEWS** on both sides of the grave.

**NOT ONLY WAS JESUS ALIVE; HE WAS ON THE LOOSE, STILL DOING WHAT HE HAS ALWAYS DONE: GIVING HOPE, FORGIVING SIN, COFORTING GRIEVING**

**PEOPLE OF GOOD CHEER...** Easter is a **WAKE-UP CALL** to rise from graves of despair now. The world resembles **GOOD FRIDAY** more than **EASTER**. There are too many crosses, not enough signs of life. The crosses we bear feel like a tomb, so dark/final. We start with the wrong assumption: that death is **THE END**. Easter says: **NO!** Nothing is as it should be. We can't even count on death. He told his friends in advance

**"Be of Good Cheer. I have overcome the world.**

Christ has **OVERCOME THE WORLD** and in him so have we. Good cheer is not act of denial; it is an act of defiance. Easter is the **BEST NEWS EVER** but it must be **OUR GOOD NEWS**. We must make it our own. Bet your life on it! In more ways than you know, you are betting your life on it. For Christians, tomorrow is never just another day.