

Who Will Roll Away the Stone

by Stewart Ruch

The sermon explores how our expectations of connecting with Jesus through good deeds or fearing disqualification by sin are transformed by the reality of His resurrection.

Duration: 19:41

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 26:69-75, Mark 16:1-4, Mark 16:7, Luke 10:1, Luke 24:1-6, John 20:11-18

Topics: "Resurrection"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on Mark's account of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The speaker highlights the significance of the women bringing spices to honor Jesus' body, emphasizing their responsibility and adherence to Hebrew customs. The speaker also addresses the common belief that certain wrong actions cannot be fully forgiven or overcome. The sermon emphasizes the importance of the angel's message to go and tell the disciples, specifically mentioning Peter, highlighting the power of reconciliation and forgiveness. Additionally, the speaker uses a personal anecdote to illustrate the potential conflicts that arise from clashing expectations between individuals. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the impossibility of removing the stone from the tomb, symbolizing the inability of human effort to overcome certain obstacles.

Transcript

Many years ago in the first month of Catherine's and my marriage I was coming home after being gone for the day and I walked into our little newlywed apartment and there was a kind of entryway area and then you would kind of hook around from there and Go into the kitchen, but right as I walked in the door, I was actually met by this kind of greasy fog that had an ammonia tinge to it and And it sort of rocked me I was kind of set back and wasn't sure exactly what was going on and why something that seemed so Poisonous could be in our lovely newlywed apartment I'm gonna try to figure out what could this be and Then I was reminded of a conversation. I'd had a week before that with Catherine We'd actually looked in our freezer. We've been gone for our honeymoon week And while we've been gone, I guess during the festivities somebody had put a few pounds of frozen fish in the freezer there And when I saw the frozen fish, I just said to Catherine.

Oh, that's interesting Just so you know, I Hate frozen fish. Oh She said good to know And as I went back to that flashback, I came back to the moment in the present and I realized She's baking in its own toxic juices that frozen fish now I learned in conflict class that when you have a conflict you always try to smile

and Start with a question. So I came around the corner and I had a very forced smile It was kind of creepy actually because I didn't want to smile at all Just like this and I came on the corner.

I tried to use the pet name Unless I never called her honey before I said honey Could that be frozen fish Do it's Catherine said yeah, that's what is it's frozen fish Do you remember me mentioning and we could go that I despise abhorred detest frozen fish You know, I do remember that Stewart, but I thought I'd cook it in a kind of interesting Mexican sauce and you never know what it was and They flip switched in me and I went primal something animal took me over and I literally raised my fists like this and I brought them down on the kitchen table and I bellowed in the most petulant childish moment of my life I hate frozen fish Catherine was shocked She literally stepped back. She burst into tears. She flipped open the oven door.

She pulled the fish I said if you hate frozen fish, then I'll throw it away. She threw it away into the trash I saw what I'd done. I realized what an idiot I was being I came to my senses And so I thrust my hand into the sizzling fist that was in the trash can I tried to eat it out of the trash can No, stop.

She said I mean we just came unhinged what happened What happens in moments like that They happen in marriage, but they can happen with roommates They can happen with neighbors who are right next door They can happen in the workplace. Maybe at the same volatility, but perhaps the same energy behind it What it happened between us and what so often happens between human beings that breathing significant wedge and could be Extraordinarily detrimental is that we found that we had two very clashing expectations My expectation was that if I hated something I wasn't going to eat it That seemed reasonable to me Catherine's expectation equally if not perhaps more reasonable honestly With having going up on the mission field where she saw the reality of poverty around her all the time Was if you had food it didn't matter whether you liked it or not you ate it and By the way, she also had expectation that I wouldn't throw a fit around dinner In the same way that we have expectations of one another that can profoundly clash We actually also have expectations of God We have an expectation of Jesus. Perhaps it's not one that you've ever articulated Perhaps it's one that you're living by in a way that hasn't been Clearly put in front of you But One of our driving expectations that we have around Jesus an expectation we see in motion and we see Manifested in our gospel passage today.

That was just read is that we expect that by being dutiful We expect that by doing the right thing That somehow by following through and and always trying our best that we will somehow make a connection with Jesus But we also expect that if we do a really bad thing If we do something that we thought we would never do Something that truly amounts in our thinking and in our lives and in many people's thinking a kind of really bad thing That we will never connect with Jesus Now in both cases Whether we expect that by doing the right thing will connect with Jesus or the by doing a really bad thing Will never connect with Jesus we find that those expectations are completely and absolutely pushed back by the reality of the resurrection of Jesus That Jesus in his work of being resurrected from the dead of coming back fully truly Historically and actually from the dead has had such a profound impact on our sinful nature and on the realities of this world that those expectations are Completely confronted and actually class with who Jesus really is and what he expects of you And here's the really good news that what you expect of yourself is far more onerous and far more burdensome and far more impossible and More difficult to live under than what Jesus expects of you Then what Jesus's resurrection? gives you If you have to choose a master and you do You don't want to be under the mastery of your own expectations Now the good news is you want the expectations of Jesus Let's look at that first expectation, but we see it in motion here in Mark chapter 16 mark is known for writing things in a really economical and terse way He says a lot in a few words So it's intriguing when we come to this passage that he takes eight verses to describe The most important

historical account in the Christian faith the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead in those eight verses He choose to spend four of them 50% of his textual property on a stone You see what's happening here. These women are gonna bring to Jesus spices. His body is there in the grave.

He's dead it's a Hebrew custom to do the right thing as a Hebrew you come to the grave and you You honor that body and you prepare that body for long-term burial by bringing spices There's somebody trying to be following through these these are people who are responsible they are do the right thing Give it my best type of people But as they're on the way, they actually have this discovery wait We won't be able to do what we're supposed to do We won't be able to get inside that tomb because every tomb has a massive stone Rolled in front of it. So the grave diggers and robbers can't get in there We may want to do the right thing we may try our very best But no matter how hard we try and how hard we push we'll never be able to remove that stone From the front of the tomb. It's not only a historical fact, but there's a spiritual truth behind this that for any of us like those women that want to do the right thing and follow through in a dutiful way and be Responsible the fact of the matter is we won't be able to fully accomplish it The fact that matter is we may even make a vow Okay, the way me get through this life With all the chances and all the potential fatalities and all the horrible things that could happen is I'm just gonna try to do the right Thing then maybe somehow I'll make a compact with the universe with some force out there But I've always tried to do the right thing with my children.

I've had to do the right thing with my business I I try to do the right thing all the time, but nothing bad will happen to me I'll just kind of keep the fates at bay For many of us, that's what we've chosen to get through every day Give it my best Do the right thing And it seems like a really good thing to embrace If you could do it But you can't You're too twisted You're too broken The fact of the matter is you won't always do the right thing and even when you do the right thing It'll be a mixed thing the fact of the matter is you can't give yourself the life that you're hoping to give yourself by following through and being Responsible doing the right thing you can't get life unless there was a life That was raised from the dead and had the power with his one right hand to move that stone away from the tomb He's the only one that can give you the life and the power that you desire so that you can then go through life Following through and doing your best, but your best will not be good enough, and you can't start there Who will roll away the stone?

Who will give us the help we need? The answer is the resurrected Jesus So if you're really honest, are you thinking? I'm gonna get to heaven and I'm gonna get there Because how can God say no to me when I face him and I say I did my best I'm gonna get to heaven because I try to do the right thing every time That's not enough to give you life But Jesus his expectation of you is that you're too weak. You're too broken He's The only one that can give you the life that you seek He's the only one that can give you the power That you desire to then follow through and rightly parent and rightly go about the work God's given you If you've made that kind of vow that kind of agreement if you kind of made a secret Promise that that's how you'll get through your days and your life Let me challenge you to re-examine that expectation that that will somehow ultimately connect you to God In light of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ There's another expectation that many of us can live with and that is that if I just do a really wrong thing If I really go to a place that I never thought that I would go I Will never fully be forgiven I will never ever fully get over that wrong thing that I did There's an important phrase there in verse 7 We've heard the announcement of this young man dressed in white it's an angel that's what's happening there is there's an angel bringing a message He gives the heart of the message He is risen But then he gives a message after the message that's extremely important He says go and tell his disciples and then out of the group of disciples There were 12 of them and then they were actually kind of fanned out to 70 of them and even

more He says go and tell his disciples, but then he uses one proper name He says and Peter Why Would the angel single out one of the disciples among so many of the disciples Well, you may or may not know the story but Peter was the one that Jesus had chosen to be the leader of the band of Disciples who he was empowering to go and turn the world Upside down with the power of the resurrection Peter was the one that he had identified. He gave him a name.

He called him rock. He would be so sturdy so dependable so Responsible and indeed everyone would learn to always look to Peter We don't have specific verses that show this but it's very likely that as would be natural Between a leader and their second leader that a kind of bond existed between Jesus and Peter That possibly they like friends had some inside jokes that they shared between them as part of their close friendship and partnership Maybe they had moments when the disciples were acting like idiots and Peter would lock eyes with Jesus and Jesus Peter and Peter be kind of Like I know what are you gonna do? You wonder there are moments when they would camp almost every night They're on the campfire. The other guys were asleep.

Peter would pull his mat a little bit closer to Jesus. They would just sit there Look at the stars together Jesus would tell Peter about his father in heaven so it is unimaginable you could hardly craft in a novel a worse and more despicable Moment that that man that Jesus had invested so much in and had publicly named as his leader Would on the night when Jesus needed him most on the night when Jesus was spiraling into the crucifixion That on that night Peter would say not once not twice, but three times I don't even know that man and I want nothing to do with him.

I have no part with him at all That that bond was absolutely split asunder in that moment and that sin of betrayal It's not even a greater sin than a sexual sin a greater sin than a financial sin a kind of mind-boggling betrayal The kind of worst sin that you would carry in your heart for the rest of your life and say in that moment I disqualified myself from being and living in Jesus in his resurrection It will never be for me And is it possible that you have committed some act You've done something along the way or you've thought something along the way and if you're honest you think That one that one could never be forgiven that one could never be wiped clean That one will always keep me on the periphery of Christianity Because your expectation is that you do something really bad Jesus will never be able to fully forgive it And let me tell you that he absolutely Challenges that expectation that he wants to take your worst moments your most heinous sin The time that you did something you thought that you would never ever do and he wants to grab that worst moment He wants to put it in front of you with love and honesty and say this is why you need me I want to take your worst moment and I want to transform it into the most profound Connection with me go and tell the disciples and Peter Because I'm not done with Peter Because I don't do things in the way that Peter thinks I don't do things in the way that the world thinks I've risen from The dead I've overcome sin and the devil I've overcome your sin your worst sin and I can actually use it To bring you close to me and to pour my resurrected life into you Whose expectation would you rather live under?

Yours that enough good efforts Will finally get you connected to Jesus Yours that one horrible sin will forever disconnect you from Jesus Or Jesus's expectation That he must die and rise again so that he could heal you of your pride and of your sin Just be quiet for a moment Just close your eyes bow your head on this morning as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus if you have made any kind of Maybe didn't even know it was like a vow or any kind of promise that the way you would get through this life would not be Depending on the resurrection of Jesus, but would be depending on your own best effort And you're realizing the futility of that you're you're just seeing the pride of that I want you just like with your hands in

your lap even just in a bodily way of engaging to break that vow to break that Agreement you made with some kind of impersonal force and maybe somehow that would protect you and get you through this life As you break that vow then open your hands To receive the one who had the power to move away the stone who had the power to overcome death and the grave Or if you have committed a sin you've never told anyone else because you're just too ashamed Tell Jesus right now Tell him what you did Tell him what you thought and Then believe what the Bible says If you will confess that sin Jesus is faithful and he has the power to overcome that sin and to draw you close and To never mark you with and by that sin again We pray all these things in the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28808.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stewart-ruch/who-will-roll-away-the-stone/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net