

# Christ Arose

by Welcome Detweiler

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*The sermon highlights the importance of devotion to Jesus, even in the face of death, and the role of angels in the resurrection story.*

**Duration:** 36:53

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:1-2, Mark 16:5-7, Luke 1:28, Luke 22:43, John 20:15-16, Acts 1:14

**Topics:** "Resurrection Power", "Ascension Theology"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. He emphasizes that Jesus had the power to move from one place to another instantly and that He didn't need any assistance to ascend to heaven. The preacher also mentions that Jesus' body was changed after His resurrection, and this change serves as a reminder that our bodies will also be transformed. The sermon highlights the reactions of the guards at the tomb and the disciples upon realizing the truth of Jesus' resurrection. The preacher encourages the audience to personally embrace the message of Jesus' resurrection and to share it with others.

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## Transcript

Our consecutive studies in the book of Luke bring us to chapter 23 and verse 55. Luke 23, 55. And the women also which came with him from Galilee followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid.

And they returned, and prepared spices, and ointments, and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment. Now from the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher, and they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments, and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hand of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulcher, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to the rest.

It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. Let's turn to John's Gospel, chapter 20, and the first verse. The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark unto the sepulcher, and seeth a stone taken away from the sepulcher.

Verse 11, But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping, and as she wept, and stooped down, and looked upon into the sepulcher, and seeth two angels in white, standing the one on the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of the Lord was laid. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where the house laid him, that I may take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.

Matthew's Gospel, chapter 28, and beginning to read from verse 1. In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn to the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulcher. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

And for fear of him, the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. The angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said.

Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead. And behold, he goeth before you into Galilee.

There shall you see him, lo, I have told you. And Mark's Gospel, chapter 16. And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto their sepulcher at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it was very great. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, and they were affrighted.

And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted, ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. He is risen, he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him.

But goeth your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee. There shall you see him as he saith unto you. Our scripture reading has been a little longer maybe than standard length, if there is such a thing as standard length.

However, there is a possibility, a good possibility, that you have already heard the best part of the sermon. I would like to think that perhaps the saddest days that we have on record in our Bible are the days

between the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his resurrection. It might be very difficult to find anyone in the Jerusalem area who was smiling.

Everyone looked sad. You might make an exception and say, probably the devil was laughing. I don't know if he has the capacity to laugh.

I've never read of the devil laughing. I don't think he has anything to laugh about, and it's not likely that even the devil was laughing during this time. They are brokenhearted.

They are bewildered. There are sad faces. Everyone has come to the place where they have no future, they have no present, they only have the past to remember.

However, even in that condition, there are a few people that are devoted to our blessed Savior, and in Luke's gospel we read about them. There were some women who noticed where Christ was buried. They were present, and they saw Joseph of Arimathea wrapping his body in new linen cloth, and also Nicodemus bringing myrrh and aloes and wrapping his body with the myrrh and aloes, and they saw where he was laid.

One of them, Mary Magdalene, who perhaps was the president of the women's auxiliary of that day, decided that something more could be done. And the first verse that we read in Luke's gospel, the women also which came to Galilee followed after and beheld the sepulcher and how the body was laid, and they returned and prepared spices and ointments and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. These women decided if Nicodemus is going to furnish the myrrh and aloes, they were bought, no doubt.

What can we do to express our devotion for what the Savior means to us? And they decided, let's go back and make some homemade spices. That would be better than boughten spices. Let's prepare some spices and let's observe the Sabbath day.

The afternoon of the death of Christ, they prepared the spices and then obeyed the commandments and rested on the Sabbath day, which of course began on Friday night at sundown and reached till Saturday night at sundown. When the first day of the week comes, they are going to deliver the spices and they come to the sepulcher and deliver the spices. This is their way of showing their devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ.

A question may arise in our minds, who are these women? And the reason I read the four gospel accounts so we would get the names of all of the women. However, we need to turn back to Luke chapter 8 where they are brought to our attention perhaps for the first time. Luke chapter 8 and reading from verse 1. And it came to pass afterward that he went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God and of all who were within and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities Mary Magdalene, called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others which ministered unto him of their substance.

We have five women mentioned by name. We have Mary Magdalene. We have that other Mary, or the mother of James.

We have Joanna, Susanna, and Salome. Those five women are mentioned. And then it says certain others.

It's strange that our Bible doesn't tell us how many there were, and sometimes we just presume that there were only five. But I would like to suggest that there were 15. And if you ask me, where did you get the 15? The same place you got 20.

It's just a guess. But let's at least allow the possibility that there were a number of women who were interested in the resurrection day. I wonder why these women were selected by the Savior to be the first ones to find out that Christ rose from the dead.

Last Sunday morning we were speaking on Joseph of Arimathea, and I suggested that he was a new man that comes upon the scene. We have never heard of him before. And we wonder why a new man should be interested in taking down the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We should have the same interest in asking the question, why was Mary Magdalene and these other four that are mentioned and the others that were associated with them, why were they selected to be prominent in the resurrection story? I would have guessed that if women should be at the place, why not the mother of our Savior be the prominent one that would probably be the first one to know that he rose from the dead? There is a possibility that the Lord arranged that she would fade into insignificance. Remember when Gabriel came to Mary and announced the birth of the Savior, he said, Thou art highly favored among women. In the present tense, not Thou shalt always be highly favored among women, but Thou art for the present highly favored among women.

The last time I think I'm correct that we read about the Savior is in Acts, or rather Mary's mother, is in Acts chapter 1, where there were about 120 who met in the upper room and the disciples' names are mentioned, and then the mother of the Savior. And then she fades out entirely. Our Lord probably did that intentionally so that she would never be that prominent that she would be worshiped.

In spite of him taking care of that, there are still some who are seeking to worship her. However, Mary was just a sinner like all the rest of us, and deserved to have tremendous recognition, having a wonderful privilege of being the mother of the Savior, but so far as giving her a special place at the resurrection, she seems to be absent. I suppose one of the reasons that he selected these few is because they loved him more than anyone else.

In the seventh chapter of Luke's gospel, he tells the story of the two debtors. He said a certain man had two debtors, one owed him 550 pence, and the other one 500 pence, and when he frankly forgave them both, they came and worshiped him. And then he said to Simon, which one do you think loved him most? And Simon scratched his head and said, well, I suppose it would be the one that was forgiven the most.

And he said, thou hast rightly judged. The person who has been forgiven the most probably will love him most. And there is a good possibility that of all the women that ever followed the Lord Jesus Christ, Mary Magdalene will show up at the judgment seat of Christ as the most devoted of all women.

It says that seven devils went out of her. Now that may not mean that she was an extremely wicked woman, but I suppose that devils couldn't enter into a person without getting some cooperation, perhaps permission, inviting them in. And she may in her past be, have been a rather wicked woman.

The others that are mentioned in that verse in chapter 8 and verse 2, they were forgiven of evil spirits and infirmities. So it's possible that at the judgment seat of Christ there will be a number of people showing up and will receive tremendous rewards who were never in the limelight. They are almost unknown people,

but they were devoted to the Savior.

And it's possible that for that reason our Lord arranged for Mary Magdalene and her friends to be at the tomb of our Lord Jesus Christ. I think perhaps I could call this the Ladies' Night at the Gospel Center. It's been a long time since we had special recognition for ladies, and I think that you ladies deserve it.

You have the right to stand up and say, Where were the men on the Resurrection Day? Not a man in sight so far as believers were concerned. And it may be that sometimes you feel like second-class citizens, and you wonder why there isn't more recognition given to women. Then let this encourage you, and never ask the Lord, Why did you make me a woman? The Lord had a good reason, and you ought to be thankful that you have the privilege to be associated with women who loved Him so much that they came to the tomb.

Just like Joseph of Arimathea, there wasn't a good cause to be devoted to Jesus Christ at this particular point. He's dead. You've been fighting for a lost cause.

You've been worshipping one that you thought was so great, you expected Him to set up His kingdom, and He is dead. You have reason to be sad. Isn't it strange that all of these who heard our Lord Jesus Christ talk about His crucifixion and His resurrection, not one of them remembered His words.

And we are inclined to point our fingers at them and say, Why wasn't there one person who could say, I heard Him say it. He said He was going to rise again from the dead. Not one of them.

But I don't think we dare point our fingers at the disciples or His followers for not listening. For when our Lord Jesus concludes His sermon on the mount, you remember He says that those who build their house upon the sand can stand up and boast and say, I wouldn't be in the class of the disciples of the early days and not remember what He said. But in this particular case, the women are acknowledged as the ones who at least express their love and their devotion to the Savior when there is no good reason for doing so.

They have a problem. They're going to deliver these spices and they have a good reason. They want that body to be maintained as long as possible.

But they noticed when the burial was taking place that Nicodemus and Joseph had to work real hard to get that stone across the entrance of the cave. And they said, We may not be able to deliver these goods. They were concerned about who would roll back the stone.

Oh, it's possible that in those days it was like today, and I hope you will allow me to imagine things. Women don't come standard. They come in all sizes.

And there may have been one of these who was a bit more muscular, and her name was Bessie, and maybe they said, Bessie, we're counting on you when we get there to roll that stone away. And Bessie said, Well, I'll do my best. I'll help you to push that stone away.

But they were concerned all the way. They had in mind the possibility that we may have to come back and the spices will never be delivered. And by the way, I have to ask you the question, What happened to those spices? There's a good Bible study for you.

See if you can find out what happened to the spices. It wasn't because the stone was across the door, but when they got there, the stone was rolled away. Was it rolled away to let the Savior out? Never.

He came out before the stone was rolled away. The reason the stone was rolled away was to let the disciples look in and see this miracle. Jesus Christ arose from the dead.

Their concern about the stone was not necessary. One of the things that are noticeable in our reading is that they had the privilege of talking with angels. Have you ever had that privilege of talking to an angel? Get up and tell us about it.

I'd like to hear about it. I've never had the opportunity of talking to an angel. But that should have helped them, at least.

Mary Magdalene should have said, Well, the day wasn't misspent. I didn't find the Savior. But I had the privilege of talking to an angel.

Angels are very prominent in the life of Christ. You will remember that it began with an announcement of Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she should conceive and bear a son. An angel from heaven came to make that announcement.

Then you will remember the second chapter of Luke when the baby is born. You have an angel again coming and giving the good news. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord.

That was an angel who pronounced that. And I guess I should remind you again that he didn't come to a noted person. Shepherds watching over their flocks by night.

And an angel appeared to them. The third time an angel appears in the life of Christ is perhaps when he is about two years of age when Herod is slaying the male children in the area. An angel comes to Joseph and says, I want you to flee down into Egypt and stay there until Herod is dead.

Then the fourth time that an angel comes in the life of Christ is just as he enters his public ministry he is tempted by Satan in the wilderness. He hasn't had anything to eat for forty days. And because of his human weakness we read at a certain point that an angel came and ministered unto him.

I think perhaps the next time that angels are mentioned associated with the life of Christ is in the garden of Gethsemane. And you will read there, while he is in agony, it's not the cross, but it's the anticipation of the cross. And he is sweating, as it were, great drops of blood.

At the end, we read that an angel came and strengthened him. And then, of course, the next time is what we have read about tonight. And that is the three angels that were seen at the tomb of Christ.

Two of them inside, one where his head had been and where his feet had been. And we can presume that those angels probably were there all the time from the time that Joseph and Nicodemus closed the tomb, the angels stayed there watching over the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Angels are powerful people.

They are demonstrated in the Bible. If the angel rolled away the stone, I would like to think that he did it with his little finger, just putting it on there and pushing the stone away. An interesting thing that Matthew brings out is that there were keepers or guards there.

You will remember that none of the believers remembered what he said. Isn't it strange that unbelievers did remember and in Matthew's gospel we will read that the chief priests went back to Pilate after he is buried and said, we've got another problem. We want that tomb sealed and we want to have a watch there

because there's a possibility that his disciples will come and steal his body and then put the report out that he was raised from the dead and if that would be the case, that would be worse than now.

Make sure about that. And Pilate says, make it as sure as you can. The keepers, the guards are there.

And listen what we read in verse 4 of Matthew 28. And for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men. Guards as dead men.

I don't know how to describe them unless they are scared stiff like dead men standing there, immovable, stiff, scared. The power of the angel. Poor guards were they not.

But let's remember too that at his resurrection, at his ascension rather, angels also came upon the scene and they said, why stand ye here gazing into heaven? This same Jesus that ye have seen go up into heaven shall so come in like manner. Angels appeared like men. They had the power to appear and the power to disappear.

And they came upon the scene. And I don't want you to think that we are finished with angels when our Lord Jesus Christ leaves this scene. For throughout the book of the Acts the angels are active.

Remember when Peter was in prison. The angel of the Lord came that night and opened the prison door and let Peter out. And I need to remind you too that we as believers should keep our eyes on the fact that the angels are still watching over us.

You may not have seen an angel but I think you can point back in your life's experience when you were in a point of danger at a certain point and I read in Psalm 34 and verse 7 the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them. When you get to heaven you may be able to find out how many times an angel took care of you in the midst of some period of danger. I raise the question again were these women were they really disciples of our Lord? I can't scold them.

You know the worst thing that could have happened to those angels or those women was to find the body of our Savior. That would have been disastrous. They didn't find his body and that was their sorrow.

However, all of us probably would have expressed the same at that particular time. The women worshipped him and brought their spices because they loved him. One more thing is necessary to mention about these women is that they were commissioned to go and spread the message that they heard.

Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to those women especially to Mary. There are a number of questions that will rise regarding the resurrection body of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 52 we are told that his visage was so marred more than any man.

As we look upon the cross, we can say that his face was so marred that you couldn't recognize who he was. Now, here he is in a resurrection body. Will he have the same marred body? Evidently not because he spoke to Mary and she looked at him and supposing him to be the gardener.

So his resurrection body was entirely different. In certain respects, perhaps the same, she did recognize his voice. Mary, and he had a certain way of saying it, a tender way of saying it, but so far as his visage was concerned, it was entirely different.

I don't think you want to meet the Savior in heaven wearing that abused face throughout all eternity and I don't think perhaps you'll find him that way. How his body will be changed we have no idea. But his

resurrection body was different and for 40 days there is the evidence of him being on the earth.

He is not limited to the laws of gravity. He is able to come into a room without opening the door just as he was able to come out of the tomb without the stone being rolled away. He has power to move from one geographical point over to the other in a flash of a second.

He appears on a scene and he disappears and he doesn't need a robot to or something to take him up to heaven. He is able to ascend. A celestial body.

I don't want anyone to come to me after the meeting and say describe more in detail what his body was like because I can't. I don't know what it's like. But I do know that his body was changed and some of the limitations that he had in his pre-crucifixion body are now gone.

And it would remind us that our bodies are also going to be changed. In Luke, in rather 1 Corinthians 15, our Lord Jesus tries to explain what the change of body is like. And he says it's like a grain of wheat that is buried in the ground and it disintegrates.

But one like that, and many like that, come out of that grain that is sown. With all these explanations it's still difficult for us to grasp that new body that is going to be given to each one of us. But let's remember that this day begins as a very sad day, but one by one they realize the truth of the fact Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

I don't think it came to them on a flash. It didn't come as a flash to Mary Magdalene. She looked in.

The tomb is empty and the angel has said he is not here. He is risen. She's in a daze.

What is she saying? It becomes clearer and clearer and clearer. And eventually she is able to run to Peter and to John and to say, guess what? The Lord is risen. Risen indeed.

What a message. And by the way, she was commissioned to tell that to the disciples. How will I get out of this? The first women preachers after the resurrection were these women.

And the first worship meeting was carried on by women. Now, I guess the only way I can explain that, the church wasn't formed yet, so you women will have to keep your place. But at that particular point, women had the privilege of conveying this message.

And I must remind you that we still are in that same dispensation and to us is given a tremendous responsibility of still telling those around about us that Jesus Christ is living and that he is able and willing to save everyone that will trust in him. Our responsibility is to go to tell those who are not saved that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only Savior. You must trust him for there is no alternative.

You must come to him in simple faith. Believe that he died for you. Believe that he bore your sins when he hung on Calvary's cross.

And I want to send you home with this on your hearts. The job isn't finished yet. The work that those women were commissioned to do, go and tell this message, has not been completed yet.

And until Jesus Christ comes, each one of us should receive personally this obligation, this invitation to tell others. I raised the question, where were the men? I want to raise the question, where are the men today, so far as the mission field is concerned? The missionaries that we have on the mission field will probably

be two-to-one women. And missionary boards are raising the question still, where are the men? The men are hard-boiled.

They are not devoted, generally speaking. And women will carry on the message of the gospel. But let's take it personally.

There are still men and women living around you, perhaps neighbors, who need to hear this message. And we ought to go out and tell the good news. There is one Savior, only one.

He is adequate, he is sufficient, and he can save every guilty sinner that will put his faith in him. If there is an unsaved one here tonight and you would like to talk to me about this wonderful Savior, or allow me to tell you more about him, I would consider that a privilege. Our gracious Father, we thank thee again for the wonderful story of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank thee for those faithful women who loved him, who were devoted to him, and we ask thy blessing on all the women in our meeting and pray that they may take seriously the opportunity of witnessing for thee. We pray this may be true of all of us, that we may have the joy of leading souls to the Savior continually. We give thee thanks once more for a risen Christ that we can serve.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen. Immediate discussion.

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