



Looking for God among the Dead

Luke 24: 1-8 NIV

*On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, **“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!** Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” Then they remembered his words.*

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, I pray that you will give me wisdom, knowledge and understanding to know that Christ is alive in the life of all believers, I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

The women brought **spices to the tomb as we would bring flowers** - as a sign of love and respect. The women went home and kept the Sabbath as the law required, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, before gathering up their spices and perfumes and returning to the tomb.

Verse 1 says that **“On the first day of the week, (Sunday)** very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb”. The two angels (appearing as “two men . . . clothed in dazzling robes”) asked the women why they were looking in a tomb for someone who was alive.

Reality of the Message

Often we run into people who are looking for God among the dead. They study the Bible as a mere historical document and go to church as if going to a memorial service. But Jesus is not among the dead - he lives! He reigns in the hearts of Christians, and he is the head of his church.

Do you look for Jesus among the living? Do you expect him to be active in the world and in the church? Look for signs of his power - they are all around you.

The angels reminded the women that Jesus had accurately predicted all that had happened to him

Verse 6 - 7: Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' Then they remembered his words

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the central fact of Christian history. On it, the church is built; without it, there would be no Christian church today. Jesus' resurrection is unique. Other religions have strong ethical systems, concepts about paradise and the afterlife, and various holy scriptures. **Only Christianity has a God who became human, literally died for his people, and was raised again in power and glory to rule his church forever.**

Why is the Resurrection so important?

- (1) Because Christ was raised from the dead, we know that **God's mighty power is at work destroying sin, creating new lives, and preparing us for Jesus' second coming.**
- (2) Because of the Resurrection, we know that death has been conquered and **we, too, will be raised from the dead to live forever with Christ.**
- (3) **The Resurrection gives authority to the church's witness in the world.** Look at the early evangelistic sermons in the book of Acts: The apostles' most important message was the proclamation that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead!

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- (4) **The Resurrection helps us find meaning even in great tragedy.** No matter what happens to us as we walk with the Lord, the Resurrection gives us hope for the future.
- (5) **The Resurrection assures us that Christ is alive and ruling his Kingdom.** He is not a legend; he is alive and real.
- (6) **God's power that brought Jesus back from the dead is available to us so** that we can live for him in an evil world.
- (7) **The Resurrection gives meaning to the church's Lord's Supper.** Like Jesus' followers on the Emmaus Road, we break bread with our risen Lord, who comes in power to save us.

Christians can look very different from one another, and they can hold widely varying beliefs about politics, lifestyle, and even theology. But one central belief unites and inspires all true Christians: **Jesus Christ rose from the dead!** (For more on the importance of the Resurrection, see 1 Corinthians 15:3-7, 12-58.)