



“SEEING BEYOND THE EMPTY TOMB”
JOHN 20: 1-9

WITH ALL OF THE BAD AND NEGATIVE THINGS GOING ON IN OUR WORLD AND SOCIETY, AND IN OUR OWN PERSONAL LIVES, WE NEED TO HEAR SOME GOOD NEWS THIS MORNING. FORTUNATELY, GOD HAS SOME FOR US. CHRIST IS ALIVE, BUT WHAT DOES EASTER MEAN FOR US? HOW CAN ITS MEANING SPEAK TO US.

I. EASTER HELPS US SEE BEYOND SUFFERING

SUFFERING WAS, AND IS, ONE OF THE MOST DISTURBING FACTS OF LIFE. NOBODY WANTS IT. NOBODY UNDERSTANDS IT. WHY DO PEOPLE SUFFER? WE WONDER. SO DID THE DISCIPLES. FOR A WHILE, CHRIST SEEMED TO BE DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT BY HEALING SO MANY PEOPLE. THEN, ALL OF A SUDDEN, CHRIST HIMSELF WAS OVERWHELMED BY SUFFERING ON HIS OWN, AND IT WAS ALL UNDESERVED SUFFERING. HE HAD DONE NOTHING TO EARN THE CRUELITIES OF BEING BEATEN AND NAILED TO A CROSS TO DIE.

WE UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WENT THROUGH. WE HAVE ALL WALKED THROUGH THE VALLEY OF SUFFERING, AND WHILE WE ARE GOING THROUGH IT, WE TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF IT.

WITHOUT EASTER, WE HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO SUFFERING. BUT WITH THE MESSAGE OF EASTER, WE SEE THAT THE LORD HAS OVERCOME SUFFERING. HE HAS OVERCOME PAIN.

WHILE WE NEVER GET A COMPLETE ANSWER TO *WHY* WE SUFFER, EASTER GIVES US A COMPLETE ANSWER TO *HOW* WE CAN DEAL WITH IT. WE CAN DEAL WITH OUR SUFFERING WITH THE HELP OF CHRIST. CHRIST OVERCAME HIS SUFFERING, AND HE CAN HELP US OVERCOME OURS.

II. EASTER HELPS US SEE BEYOND DISAPPOINTMENT

THE DISCIPLES WERE HEARTBROKEN WHEN CHRIST WAS TAKEN, BECAUSE THEY HAD TRUSTED THEIR LIVES TO HIM. THEY THOUGHT HE WOULD BRING IN THE KINGDOM, BUT NOW THEIR HOPES WERE GONE. THEIR DREAMS WERE IN VAIN. THEY DID NOT EXPECT THIS, THEY DIDN'T WANT IT TO END LIKE THIS, AND THEY DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO HANDLE IT.

DISAPPOINTMENT IS SOMETHING WE'RE FAMILIAR WITH, ALSO, ISN'T IT? WE MAY BE HEARTBROKEN BECAUSE LIFE IS NOT GOING FOR US AS WE WISH IT WOULD GO. OUR JOBS, OUR HEALTH, OUR FAMILY LIFE---ANY OR ALL OF THOSE THINGS AND MORE CAN DISAPPOINT US TO THE DEGREE OF DESPAIR.

BUT THE MESSAGE AND THE TRUTH OF EASTER CAN HELP US OVERCOME THE DISAPPOINTMENTS OF LIFE. THE TOMB IS EMPTY! OUR LORD AND SAVIOR IS ALIVE! THERE IS MORE TO LIFE THAN JUST THE *DOWN* EXPERIENCES. THERE ARE LOTS OF *UP* EXPERIENCES. WHEN THE DISCIPLES DISCOVERED THAT CHRIST WAS ALIVE, THEY CHANGED FROM COWARDLY TO COURAGEOUS. NO LONGER WERE THEY OVERCOME WITH DESPAIR. THEY NOW BEGAN TO SING “HALLELUJAH!” NO LONGER DID THEY LIVE IN DISAPPOINTMENT. THEY COULD NOW LIVE IN THE CONFIDENCE THAT WHATEVER THEY HAD TO FACE, CHRIST WOULD BE THERE TO HELP THEM THROUGH IT. WE CAN DO THE SAME.

Presented by Dr. Jimmy Hilton

**SOUTH POINT
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Finding God's Direction for Life



III. EASTER HELPS US SEE BEYOND DEATH

BEING ABLE TO SEE BEYOND DEATH IS THE CENTER OF THE RESURRECTION STORY. THE DISCIPLES REALLY DID NOT BELIEVE CHRIST WOULD RISE AGAIN. THEY THOUGHT DEATH WAS THE END.

FOR US, SOMETIMES DEATH SEEMS TO BE THE END OF IT TOO. WE NEED TO HEAR THE EASTER MESSAGE. BECAUSE HE LIVES, SO WILL WE! WHEN THE DISCIPLES HEARD THAT JESUS WAS ALIVE, WHAT A DIFFERENCE IT MADE.

WE WILL ALL FACE DEATH SOMEDAY(UNLESS CHRIST RETURNS FIRST). BUT CHRIST DIED SO WE COULD SEE BEYOND DEATH. BECAUSE HE IS ALIVE EVEN NOW, HE CAN HELP US OVERCOME ALL OF THE ADVERSITY WE HAVE TO FACE IN OUR EVERYDAY LIFE.

THE RESURRECTION STORY OF EASTER MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THE DISCIPLES, AND EVERY DISCIPLE SINCE, AND IT CAN DO SO FOR US THIS MORNING AND FOREVER!