



# Hope from the Empty Tomb

**Luke 24**

**Sermon given on April 5, 2026**

**Calvary Chapel French Valley**

**Resurrection Sunday Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# HOPE FROM THE EMPTY TOMB

## *Luke 24*

### **Welcome to Calvary Chapel French Valley's Resurrection Sunday service.**

- We are glad you could be here with us this morning.
- Also, welcome to those who are watching online.
- Turn to **Luke 24**.
- The gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of hope.
- On Friday evening Pastor David shared about how Christ's death on the cross was a victory over sin.
- On the third day, Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead claiming victory over death.
- So, we are here on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox to remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- One of the key doctrines of our faith is the resurrection of Christ.
- We believe that Jesus died for our sins.
- If He had stayed dead, we couldn't be certain that God accepted His sacrifice on our behalf.
- The fact that He rose on the third day is proof that God was satisfied by His sacrifice.
- Now we can be confident that our sins are forgiven and that we are acceptable to God. **1 John 2:2**

**He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.**

- His sacrifice covers not just my sins and your sins, but the sins of the whole world.
- So now, if anyone puts their faith in Christ, they will be saved.
- Living in this confused and chaotic world can cause us to feel drained or empty, emotionally, relationally, and physically.
- That is the devil's plan for my life and yours. **John 10:10a**

**The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.**

- That is not the life Jesus wants for us. **John 10:10b**

**I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.**

- The resurrection of Christ Jesus guarantees us the opportunity to live the abundant life, a full life.
- Let's pray and then look at God's Word. **Pray!**

## Teaching

- **Hope from the Empty Tomb**
- The Jews were waiting for someone they referred to as the Messiah, who would save them, primarily from the oppression of the Roman Empire.
- A carpenter from Nazareth shows up doing radical miracles claiming to be the Son of God.
- The religious leaders don't believe Jesus is the Messiah, but the people are convinced because of His miracles and begin to follow Him.
- The religious leaders see only one option – Jesus must die.
- They take Him, put Him through a fake trial, and condemn Him.
- They turn Him over to the Romans who give in to the pressure of the religious leaders, and they crucify Jesus on a Friday afternoon.
- All of that happened just as the Scriptures said it would.
- There was a group of people who had followed Jesus for over three years.
- They had left everything behind to follow Jesus, because they believed that He was the Messiah.
- But now He is dead – What now?
- If you could be with the disciples, you would have seen despair, discouragement, emptiness.
- This world has a way of draining people.
- After more than twenty years of pastoring I have tried to help people when they experience emptiness.
- Emptiness is what we might experience when something interrupts or prevents the abundant life Jesus came to give us.
- It can be the loss of a loved one; a parent, a child, a spouse, or anyone we cherish.
- It might be the loss of a job or an accident that disrupts your life dramatically.

- It might be struggles in relationships, marriages, family, or even in church.
- And sometimes those things come in rapid fire and stack up upon one another.
- Everyone experiences emptiness as we go through life in this fallen world.
- It is not coincidental that Jesus died, was buried, and resurrected at this time of year.
- What we refer to as Resurrection Sunday, many others in the world refer to as Easter.
- Easter is the celebration of the end of winter and the beginning of spring.
- Winter is often associated symbolically with death and spring with life.
- Along the full length of our house, we have a grape trellis.
- There are more than a dozen grape plants I planted about ten years ago.
- During the winter they drop all their leaves and they look terrible, twisted and barren.
- But then, a couple of weeks ago, little buds started to appear.
- Today, they look amazing, full of leaves and already making little clusters of grapes.
- If you saw those plants in December, January, or February you would think they were dead, empty of all life.
- But I knew, I just needed to wait, life was coming.
- Emptiness would be replaced with fullness and fruitfulness.
- The disciples of Jesus are feeling discouraged, sad, disappointed, confused, and many other things.
- They are feeling empty.
- But that is about to change.
- Jesus was crucified and died on Friday afternoon, two men, Joseph and Nicodemus, arranged to put Jesus' body in a tomb.
- They had to rush because they had to be finished before the sun went down.
- Our account takes place on Sunday morning.

- Some of the women who had been with Jesus went to the tomb to finish the work of preparing Jesus' body for death.
  - They were not prepared for what they found.
  - **Luke 24:1-8**
  - They came to the tomb expecting to find a dead man.
  - Instead, they found an empty tomb and then two men (angels) ask them why they are there.
  - Why are you looking for the living among the dead?
  - Don't you remember that Jesus told you He was going to be crucified and then on the third day rise from the dead?
  - They might have remembered Jesus saying it, but they either didn't understand or they didn't believe.
  - Here is the spiritual application for us.
  - Everyone is going to experience emptiness periodically, even 'good' Christians.
  - Where should we go to fill that emptiness.
  - Where we don't want to go is seek the living among the dead.
  - When we receive Christ we are changed. **Ephesians 2:4-5**
- <sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...**
- Before Christ we were spiritually dead, incapable of experiencing the fulness of God.
  - Now you are spiritually alive in Christ.
  - But the rest of the world is still dead in their sins.
  - Not only can the world or the unsaved people in the world not experience the fulness of God, but they also cannot help us to experience it.
  - You need to go to the living, the living God, His living Word, and His people who are living in Christ.
  - There you will find what you need to fill the emptiness.
  - The women go back and tell the disciples.
  - **Luke 24:9-12**
  - They are marveling, but they still do not believe.
  - But why are they struggling to believe?
  - Because the reality they want is different than the reality that is!

- Jesus told them what was going to happen.
- He told them He would be betrayed into the hands of the Jewish leaders, handed over to the Romans, beaten, scourged, and crucified.

**Luke 9:20-22**

**<sup>20</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God.” <sup>21</sup> And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, <sup>22</sup> saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”**

- But they had a different vision for how things were going to go.
- Sometimes the struggles we have in life are because things are not going the way we think they should.
- One of the things that can rob us of the life Jesus came to give us is believing we have some level of sovereign control over the things that influence or affect our lives.
- Only God is sovereign over all things, only He is in control.
- Jesus knows what is going to happen in your life.
- Do you trust Him?
- Everything that happened to Jesus was part of God’s plan to save you and me.
- Everything that happens in your life is part of God’s plan to make you more like Jesus.
- On that Sunday morning almost two thousand years ago, the followers of Christ woke up hopeless.
- When the women and then the disciples saw the tomb was empty tomb they were confused.
- When they saw the risen Christ, they were amazed.
- Once they believed it, they were unstoppable.
- No matter where you are this morning, hopeless, confused, or wondering about what God is doing.
- One thing is certain; the tomb of Jesus is empty.
- If Jesus had victory over the grave, He will be victorious in whatever thing you bring to Him.
- The text goes on to describe two men trying to process what happened in Jerusalem.
- This is a long read, so bear with me.
- **Luke 24:13-34**

- These two guys go through all stages; hopelessness, confusion, wondering about this guy they were talking to, and belief.
- The empty tomb changes everything. Jesus had to die on the cross because God's greatest creation, you and I were lost in our own desires and plans for our lives.
- We were so lost that we had no idea there was a problem. **1 Timothy 1:15a**

**<sup>15</sup> This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...**

- Jesus' death on the cross paid our penalty for our sin.
- His resurrection was the proof that God accepted Christ's sacrifice for our sins.
- The empty tomb points to our hope, the risen Christ.
- Now, anyone who will believe will be saved. **Acts 10:39-43**

**<sup>39</sup> And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.**

**<sup>40</sup> Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."**

- Every year, we take a weekend and talk about the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ Jesus.
- There is no more important topic in all of life.
- In a minute or two I am going to pray.
- If you are not sure if you believe, open your heart and mind to what God might want to do in you.
- God loves you and what He wants for you is good, He wants the abundant life for you.
- That begins when you choose to believe that Jesus died for your sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day.
- Do that and you will begin a journey that leads to the good, abundant life you were created for.
- He is risen!
- **Pray! Last Song!**