

Get A New Life: Jesus is Alive

Matthew 28:1–10

April 5, 2026 Resurrection Sunday

Rev Joe Sanders

First Baptist Church Coshocton, Ohio

Matthew 28:1–10 (NLT) Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb. Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint. Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember what I have told you.” The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message. And as they went, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they ran to him, grasped his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid! Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there.”

As a kid Easter meant three things: go to church, chocolate, and hunting for Easter eggs. If I didn’t know better I could imagine that the chocolate industry and egg industry have conspired to create a holiday known as Easter. If you are a child today, maybe even an adult that’s what Easter is: chocolate and decorated eggs.

We know a family who on Easter Sunday would give gifts to one another. The family tradition didn’t start out when they were Christians, but carried over after they meet Jesus. We were at their home on Easter Sunday. There was a feast with so much food that I was ready to take a nap when the meal was over. But, then the Easter Bunny entered. It was about six feet tall, all white with huge pink ears. He, I know who it was, couldn’t speak but had a huge basket filled with gifts. To receive a gift the kids, one at a time would sit on the bunny’s lap. It was very exciting, there was lots of laughing and cheering. Happiness was everywhere. While this is going on I thought to myself that they need to get a new life. But, I couldn’t help but laugh and share in the excitement. I eventually told them what I was thinking. They laughed.

Sometime between 30 AD and the twentieth century entered the bunny, chocolate, and eggs. A crazy combination if ever there was one. People in every generation think that Resurrection/Easter Sunday is one crazy idea. A person who died a brutal death came back to life is almost impossible to believe.

Matthew 28:5-6 (NLT) Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying.

He was beaten, mocked, and killed, now Jesus has risen and is alive forever. Look around this room and see the beautiful reminders of Jesus. The candles in worship have been reminders that God is present as He was in the Old Testament Temple worship. The flowers are signs of new life. The banners with a dove descending calls attention the Holy Spirit coming upon believers. The butterfly reminds us of new life coming out of death. The lilies with their trumpet shaped bloom can make us hear the trumpets sounding in heaven. The stained glass window is a steady reminder of the

peace we receive in Jesus Christ. The bronze cross keeps us aware of Jesus' majesty. The wooden cross with nails and a cloth make us aware of His suffering, sacrifice, and death.

All the beauty in the sanctuary and reminders of Jesus are meaningless if He's dead. We celebrate a risen and living Savior and Lord. He came back to life and He provides a new life to all who believe.

The women coming to the tomb were the first to see the empty tomb. They were present when Jesus died on the cross. They watched as His body was taken down and quickly prepared for burial. They followed to the tomb and witnessed the stone being rolled across the opening. This was late on Friday afternoon before the sunset. The Sabbath, a day of rest and worship, started at sun down and lasted until the next sun down. That would be Saturday. The second day Jesus' body laid in the tomb. The women would not venture to the tombs after sunset on Saturday. It would not be safe for women or anyone to be in that area after dark.

Instead they got up early in the morning. The sun was giving light to the day before the dawn. They traveled through the city out to the tombs in the early hours of the day. Very few people if anyone else would be out at this time. We know that they talked among themselves. They had prepared more perfumes, ointments, and salves to put on Jesus' body. They wondered how they would get into the tomb. They asked one another who would roll away the stone covering the tomb.

God had an answer as He always does. The Lord provided what was needed in their moment of faith. An angel descended from heaven. When the angel arrived there was an earthquake. It shook the rocks, ground, the people. The angel rolled the stone away. The tomb was open. The angel was there to tell the women that Jesus wasn't there. An open tomb for people to see that Jesus was gone, that He had risen from the dead, that He was alive.

Matthew 28:8 (NLT) The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy

Are we afraid and self-absorbed instead of being in awe and filled with joy? The world is guilty of being self-absorbed. It is our nature to think only of ourselves. From maintenance workers and janitors to doctors and business leaders and all those in between people are focused on themselves. We're concerned about how we're impacted by the weather to the price of gas at the pump. We're focused on what can't do. We're lost in the thoughts of our personal freedom. We want everything, all of it. We don't care about the cost, financial or emotionally or spiritually.

As a kid I often sat in the seat at church wondering when that old guy would stop talking. Not just on Easter but almost every Sunday. There was also something more beneficial to me than hearing the Word of God and worshiping Jesus. Eggs and chocolate were awaiting me. If we didn't get home soon they might disappear. The absurd attitude of a child. But children aren't the only people with this attitude of me first, me alone. It seems people never really out grow that attitude. Of course some people are less selfish than others. I'm not nearly as greedy as I once was. I've been changed from some of my childhood attitudes.

Thinking of ourselves first is automatic, right? We're afraid. We call it worry. It has become so predominate in our society that some people are anxious all the time. Their anxiety leads them to feeling out of control, which makes them depressed. We don't call it fear but it's really being terrified of the worst case scenario, being helpless, and eventually being hopeless. We need a Savior, a Redeemer, someone to deliver us from ourselves.

I see people get excited about politics and politicians. I witness folks being enthusiastic about their favorite sports teams, I'm guilty. I'm aware as parents how we put everything to one side to do what our kids want. I know that sounded a little too sharp. Maybe we get excited about what we think would be best for kids. That's a double edged sword.

Nothing spiritual excites the world, only human effort and achievement. We keep going day after day doing what we always do. If these were the days of Jesus walking the earth would we be excited? Would some man in a far away land even arouse our curiosity? Could the speeches of Jesus prompt people to faith and action? Would the miracles of Jesus make the news cycle?

The greatest thing has happened. A man came back to life. He went into the tomb dead on Friday. His body was in there all day Saturday. Then very early in the morning of Sunday He came back to life. Jesus didn't live for just a few days, He lives forever. Jesus came alive with a new resurrected body no longer impacted by the pain and suffering of this life. Praise the Lord. Thank God. Thank You Jesus!

Matthew 28:9 (NLT) And as they went, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they ran to him, grasped his feet, and worshiped him.

To know Jesus is to embrace Him and worship Him. These women were followers and believers of Jesus. They had spent time ministering to Jesus as they traveled with Him. They were faithful to Him day after day. Even though they weren't always around as Jesus was teaching, they heard Him speak. They were aware that Jesus spoke about His coming death and resurrection. They listened as Jesus promised the religious leaders were plotting to kill Him. They knew that Jesus proclaimed He would rise from the dead.

Their attitude was more than emotionally clinging to their Savior. Their response to Jesus meeting them on the road filled them with hope. Words could not describe the joy that flowed from their hearts. Their hearts were filled with wonder as they could not find the words to express the delight of their souls.

People might claim that the resurrection didn't happen. A person dying then raising again requires faith. This is in the range of the impossible. Resurrection requires proof, evidence, and facts. One person claiming Jesus is alive would create doubt. Skepticism would grow quickly. Cynics would outnumber believers. Two people claiming Jesus being alive would make some curious. Even though some doubters would be curious, uncertainty would still reign. This uncertainty might drive some to seek proof.

But the women who met Jesus knew this was not a dream. They know Jesus was not some illusion. Their experience was true. What happened in their lives was without doubt. There was certainty in the body, mind, and soul. Jesus is alive and the women shared their respect, admiration, adoration, and love for Him. Being in the presence of the risen Savior and Lord created joy in their soul. The peace of heaven filled their lives. The majesty and glory of the eternal Savior entered their hearts. Praise and worship echoed from their lips. Their mouths proclaimed words of devotion and honor. Reverence and devotion proclaimed over and over again. Their worship of the risen Savior Jesus Christ was spoken publicly. Out loud their mouths were open. Expressions of respect came from their lips. Every part of who they were acknowledged Jesus as the risen Lord of all.

I have met the risen Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. I may not have touched Him, grasped His hands, feet and His body. But I know the presence of His Spirit. I know that He is alive. Those who hear the

call of Jesus know that He is alive. For every person is filled with joy who has acknowledges Jesus has risen from the dead. Through faith in Jesus as the risen Lord we experience peace. Every person who trusts in Jesus is filled with love that is beyond understanding.

Matthew 28:10(NLT) Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid! Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there.”

Get a new life and meet Jesus, He is waiting for you. The life you are living without Jesus is nothing compared to the life you will live with Jesus. Worry and fear are natural reactions. With Jesus they aren’t lasting reactions. The new life He gives is filled with hope in the midst of uncertainty. The new life given by Jesus is filled with peace while the world is in chaos. Anger and sadness are part of the human experience. With Jesus they aren’t in control of your life. Jesus produces in you a fruit known as gentleness, another called kindness, and another called patience. When Jesus enters your life He produces the fruit of faithfulness, self-control, joy, and love.

If you were offered a gift that changed your life you would take it. Some of you would ask what’s the catch? Others would want to know more details. Then there would be those of you who take it without question. You are being offered by Jesus a life changing opportunity. He is giving you a new life. You will be born again. You will be made a new creation. You will be set free. You will be empowered.

Jesus wants you to have a new life. He decided that you needed a new life so badly that He gave you His life. He could see before you were born that you would never get this new life on your own. You have tried day after day to make your life better, but it doesn’t happen. You have worried about today, tomorrow, and yesterday. You have lived in fear of all the things you don’t understand. All of this has driven you to say and do some stupid, idiotic, foolish things.

You have been angry. The littlest thing to the biggest problems set you off. Everyone around you pays the price. You have been unwilling to admit your anger because you’re too proud. When the anger didn’t help, you became discouraged, then depressed. You don’t admit this to anyone. You hold it inside yourself. It drags you down. It becomes harder to make yourself believe that you’re happy, that you’re okay.

Jesus knows this about you. All of this is sin, which is a lack of trust in God. Everything in your life is sin. Everything you have tried to do that isn’t trusting God is sin. All your worry, fear, anger, sadness, and selfishness is sin. You may have been what you call good last week, but what about that one moment? You might be able to hide your sins from our neighbors or your family.

Jesus sees you and He isn’t trying to get rid of you. Jesus wants to spend eternity with you. Jesus loves you. Jesus took your sin upon Himself. Jesus became my sin and your sin, all our sin from the beginning to the end of human history. That sin killed Jesus. My sin nailed Jesus to the cross. Your sin brought about the death of Jesus.

Jesus isn’t dead. He is alive. The angel announced it. The women saw Him and touched Him. The other disciples saw Jesus, heard Jesus, and ate food with Jesus. As a result of Jesus loving you, dying, and rising again you can experience the love of Jesus and the forgiveness of your sins. You can have a new life. You can live forever in heaven with Jesus.

Now, you can ponder what I’ve said, think about it. Better yet, you can choose Jesus today. Using your words tell Jesus you have not been trusting Him. Tell Jesus that you trust Him, you love Him with your whole body, mind, and spirit. Invite Jesus to enter into you and give you a new life.