

Remember Jesus Christ: He Has Risen!

Grace, mercy and peace are yours, from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

When the women came to Jesus' tomb early that first Easter morning, they were greeted by two angels who spoke to them three incredible words of truth. **He has risen!** This miracle shouldn't have been surprising to them. As the angel says to the women, "**Remember how [Jesus] told you...the Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.**" (Luke 24:6,7)

St. Paul, the author of our text on this joyous morning, wrote to his young friend Timothy and also told him to remember. In this letter to Timothy, we have some of the last words that Paul ever recorded. He had been imprisoned by the Romans, and knew that the persecution that he faced for his faith would soon end in death. What might a person who is near death be remembering? Childhood memories? Happy moments with friends? Family? Their greatest accomplishments?

Paul had three things on his mind as he wrote to Timothy. **Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David.** That verb "remember" really is at the very heart of being a Christian. God's message to us about salvation is not "Go and Do," but instead "See and Believe!" That's what we remember this Easter morning; what Jesus, our Savior did for us, and the forgiveness of sins and salvation that are given to us through faith in him!

We really can't do anything else, can we? What else is there for us to do, besides go along with the women, and gaze with wonder and amazement inside the empty tomb, and see what it means for us? There's nothing for us to do, and there's nothing we need to do for our salvation. God has already done it all. He defeated the devil, sin and death. He rose on Easter morning, demonstrating to all that sin is paid for, and that those who trust in his promises will also rise again. As St. Paul says elsewhere in 1 Corinthians 15:57, he is the one "**who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**"

How could we possibly forget this? Sadly however, Jesus disciples have not changed too much over the years. We still struggle to remember, and often need reminders. We have our fears and doubts and worries. Knowing this gives greater urgency to Paul's words this morning. "**Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David.**"

I. Remember Jesus Christ

Names are pretty important. They say a lot about who we are, what we stand for, even what we do. Some names have so much attached to them, that we can immediately picture who it is. Michael Jordan. Abraham Lincoln. Martha Stewart.

The name given to the Son of God was incredibly fitting as well. God himself, through one of his angels, told Mary what to name the child when he was born. "Jesus." This name comes from the Hebrew verb *yashah* which means "to save." His name is "Savior," a name that defines everything that he did on earth. He was born to fight against the devil, and to undo all the work that he and sin had dealt out. He healed the sick, drove out demons and even raised the dead! But it was on Good Friday that this battle came to its climax. Jesus, the Savior, hung dying on a cross. He and Satan had fought it out, and it ended with Jesus dead, in the tomb. Satan thought he had won the battle.

However, death would not hold our Savior for long. He had won the victory. Through his death, sin and death were defeated. And this morning, we joyously proclaim the proof of this. Christ is not dead. Christ is risen! (*He is risen indeed*) Alleluia!

Remember also that Jesus is **the Christ**. The title of **Christ** comes from the Greek word that means "Anointed One." He is God's "Chosen One," hand-picked to be the Savior. He is the Messiah, the Hebrew word with the same meaning of "Anointed One." He is the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Savior from sin. There is no mistake. Jesus was the one, the only one, who could have done this in our place. He is *the Christ*, but not just the one chosen to live a perfect life, or to suffer and die in our place. He is also the one chosen to rise from the dead and live forever! He rose to ascend to heaven, and there he lives and rules over all things, in heaven and on earth! If he has the power to do this, to rule and command everything, then he certainly has the power to save those who believe and trust in him. Remember this!

II. Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead

If there's one word that's loaded with uncertainty, and even fear, it's the word *death*. We know that it's a part of life. We know that we all will face it sooner or later, whether it's the death of a loved one or our own death. Fear is caused by the unknown. So, if we know so much about death, why are so many afraid of it?

The fear of death comes from the knowledge of sin, whether we learn about that from the Bible, or from our own consciences. We are born with a natural knowledge of God. We know, on some level, that he exists, and that he is a holy, good, and just God. Along with that knowledge is an understanding that we have failed to meet God's standards of perfection; to love him and each other in thought, word, and deed perfectly. Scripture draws the conclusion for us. We die because of sin. This is why we are filled with fear when faced with death. We deserve it because of what we have done in rebellion against God. But it's more than just a physical death. our sin separates us from God. Because of it, we ought to be given the verdict of guilty. We deserve eternal death in hell. What could we possibly do to stop this?

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. Out of the tomb comes the one who died for our sins. He carried our sins with him to the cross and buried them in the tomb when he died. He died covered in our sin, but today he is alive! Christ is risen! (*He is risen indeed*) Alleluia!

Jesus' resurrection is the very foundation of our faith as Christians. It's what we're celebrating this morning. His life and resurrection give us 100% certainty about forgiveness, and about all the other promises that God has made! As we look at all that he has done for us, we are reassured that he can and will care for our life on earth and our eternal well-being.

As we see our risen Savior through the Word and eyes of faith, we have faith and hope that can never be shaken. No matter how bad life may be, Jesus will never change. He will never stop loving you. He will never stop watching over you. No matter how much people doubt it or try to deny it, we can always say with confidence. Christ is risen! (*He is risen indeed*) Alleluia?

What does this joyous day mean to those who do not believe? Is it simply a day off? A day to enjoy some candy, or an egg hunt, or time with family? The warm fuzzy feelings that these things bring aren't bad, but what do they offer when trouble does come? What comfort does an Easter egg offer to someone who stands at the grave of their loved one? It's in that moment, when everything on earth seems so meaningless, our faith gives us the greatest comfort in the promise of Jesus, "**I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die.**" That is your hope and joy! Even in the worst circumstances, we hold on to this hope, **remembering Jesus Christ, raised from the dead!**

III. Remember...descended from David.

Finally, **remember Jesus Christ...descended from David.** Jesus' bloodline is royal. St. Matthew testifies to this by beginning his gospel account with the genealogy of Jesus. And sure enough, as you read through, you can trace Jesus origin all the way back to King David of the Old Testament. But Jesus is more than just a king. He is THE King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He rules over all things through the power of his word. With that same power, he protects each one of us. In the same letter that our text is found in, St. Paul wrote, "**The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom.**" (2 Tim. 4:18)

But there is another reason to rejoice that Jesus is descended from David. Yes, David was a king, but he was also human. It was not just the Son of God who rose from the grave on Easter morning. It was also a human being, just like us, who left the tomb. Through his resurrection, we are given a glimpse of the glory that awaits us when our risen King Jesus calls us from the grave on the Last Day. We won't look like we do now – with bodies that slowly show how frail they are as they age. We won't feel as we do now – the physical pain, weariness, and illness that we deal with daily. We won't hurt as we do now – from past guilt and failures, heartbreak and disappointment.

Instead, as St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "**we will all be changed in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.**" (1 Cor. 15:51-52) Jesus Christ, our risen and anointed Savior, will raise all people on the Last Day, and he will glorify the bodies those who believe in him. Look at his human body when he was raised. It was not touched by rot or decay. It was not the body of another. We confess along with Job, "**After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!**" (Job 19:26-27)

So remember this gospel, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ. This is not my gospel, or yours or Paul's or Matthew, Mark, Luke or John's. It is *THE gospel* of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's the message of God, of peace and life meant for the entire world to hear. It's the message that he gave to Paul and all the others, so we know that we can trust the gospel completely. Remember this, my friends, for by it you are saved. **Remember Jesus Christ, raised from dead, descended from David.** He is the source of your salvation. He is the one who will keep you faithful to his Word. May the Lord keep us ever joyful in the presence of our resurrected Savior. Christ is risen! (*He is risen indeed*) Alleluia! Amen.