

2011 SERMON#5 I BELIEVE—RESURRECTION AND LIFE EVERLASTING

Matthew 28:1-10

As we celebrate Easter Sunday and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus,
We are combining together
The Lenten theme of the “I Am” statements of Jesus
And our Apostles creed sermon series this year called “I Believe”.

WE RECITE: I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting
And Jesus said: **I am the Resurrection and the life he who believes in me though he dies yet shall he live. John 11:25**

I believe we need both sayings because
Resurrection is the hardest concept to accept.
Everything we are taught and
Everything we see with our eyes is death.

Open the daily paper and we find 6-15 obituaries every day.
There are 153,000 deaths per day in the USA,
over 2million a year.
No wonder all year long we have to make time for funeral after funeral.
And if you have ever walked away from the grave of a loved one,
You know how harsh death really is.
It can erode our faith
Steal our joy,
And Leave us to wander in the wilderness of loneliness

No wonder the church gave this final affirmation in the Apostles Creed
So we can shout.

Christ is Risen, He is risen indeed.

Just to remind ourselves
That we believe death will not have final victory.
The curse of the garden will not overcome.
Easter show us that

I. DEATH IS A PART OF OUR HUMAN LIFE

Death is a fundamental human problem.
And our greatest fear.

My heart is in anguish within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Psalms 55:4

I have had more than one person tell me of their dreams of death.
And of the fear they felt.

Fables have been written about it.
Once a man made an agreement with death.
He told the Grim Reaper that he would willingly accompany him
when it came time to die, but only on one condition—
that Death would send a messenger well in advance to warn him.

Months and years went by and then one bitter winter evening, as the man was thinking about all his possessions, Death suddenly entered the room and tapped him on the shoulder.

Startled, the man cried out,

"You're here so soon and without warning! I thought we had an agreement."

Death replied, "I've more than kept my part. I've sent you many messengers.

Look in the mirror and you'll see some of them."

"Notice your hair! Once it was full and black, now it is thin and white.

Look at the way you cock your head to listen to me because you can't hear very well.

Observe how close to the mirror you must stand to see yourself clearly.

Yes, I've sent many messengers through the years.

I'm sorry you're not ready, but the time has come to leave."

Death is our greatest fear

It is so final,

So foreboding and

Shocking to our senses.

We don't even like to say the word dead.

We say that someone passed on

Or departed.

Or slipped away

To soften the blow a bit.

I am called on to go with the police department on death calls.

As they tell a family their loved one has died, airplane or auto crash, suicide or murder.

Often the deceased lives far away.

I know we need to use these words so we can soften the blow to grieving families.

But even after we have done our best

Death stands as the grim Reaper

Waiting to visit every home here sooner or later.

Is it any wonder that we ask the age old questions:

"If a man dies, shall he live again? Job 14:14

Deep down in our souls we want to know the truth.

That's why the book "Heaven is for Real" is such a popular best seller.

We grasp at anything to give us a view a glimpse of heaven.

The Apostle Paul said:

If the dead are not raised, 'let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.'" I Corinthians 15:32

If the dead are not raised,

Then why not live it up?

Why not go for the gusto

Why bother going to church,

Why bother suffering for Christ

Why serve the lord if death ends everything

I think the only way death and aging may be slowed down

Is if it had to work its way through congress.

Deep down in our souls we want to know the truth.

Does death win in the end?
 The Apostle Creed shouts out
**I believe in the resurrection of the Body.
 And the life everlasting.**

II. THE BODY WILL BE RESURRECTED

Note how specific this is.
 The resurrection of the **Body**.
 Old words were the resurrection of the **flesh**.
 This human body in which our souls dwells.

Our redemption will not be complete until the body itself
 The flesh which was corrupted by Adam's sin
 The flesh which brought the curse of death and disease
 Only until this flesh come to an end and is resurrected from the dead.
 Then will our redemption be complete.
 And the angels confirmed it to the women.

"Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Matthew 28:5-6

I just had someone ask me a week ago.
 Will we have the same body in heaven?
 Because she said I sure don't want this one there.
 But we will have the same body the same personality, but with perfection.

Television loves the makeover programs.
 From homes to clothing to hairstyles.
 We can watch Extreme makeover of Cosmetic surgery,
 To our virtual makeover of our houses, hair, cosmetic, and clothes.

Its popular because our bodies wear out.
 They sag, expand and wrinkle where we don't want them too.
 Our joints get creaky, arteries harden,
 Gravity pulls things downward.
 The heart slows down,
 The eyes grow dim,
 Teeth fall out,
 Arms grow weary.
 Our bones break and muscles weaken.

I checked out a website and found 51 signs you're getting older.
 Here are a few to twitch your memory.

1. Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt, doesn't work.
2. Your knees buckle and your belt won't
3. Your ears are harrier than your head
4. Your back goes out more than you do.
5. You have a dreams about prunes
6. That little gray haired lady who helps you across the street is your wife.

It's hard to be nostalgic when we can't remember anything.

I believe in the resurrection of the Body

The older we get the more attention we pay to diet and exercise.
 But some things are just not right.
 I went to pick up some ice cream not long ago
 The box said: it was low-carb ice cream.
 I got a pizza and the box said: Low-carb pizza.
 There ought to be a law against that stuff.
 I eat ice cream because I want the good taste of carbs and sugar.
 That's just not right
 I believe in the resurrection of the BODY

Don't get me started on exercise.
 I know it's good for you,
 But it's just hard.
 Like the little cartoon.
**Running is bad for my knees,
 But not running is bad for everything else.**

Were surrounded with runners and bikers
 We have to stay in shape.
 An elderly lady started walking five miles a day when she was 70.
 She's 87 now and we have no idea where she is.

Fashion tells our age.
 The young people are uncovering parts they want everyone to see.
 The old folks are covering up parts they don't want anyone to see.
 Well our body won't last forever.
 Like Mary Magdalene and every one of the disciples on that Easter day.
 We all have to face death.

Hebrews 9:27 It is appointed for man to die once.... Then the judgment

You have an appointment with death.

Psalms 139 says the days of your life were written while you were in your mother womb.

That also means the day of your death.

I believe in the resurrection of the Body, and the life everlasting.

III. THERE IS LIFE AMONG THE LIVING.

Christ defeated death

Christ Jesus ...abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. II Timothy 1:10

The angels confirmed it.

He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you.'" Matthew 28:7

But if we're going to find life we must stop looking for life among the dead.

The angels question is loaded with meaning.

Why do you look for the living among the dead. Luke 24:5

In one brief sentence they had told the women that Jesus is alive,
 That death has not contained him,
 Here they were looking for Jesus among the tombs.

I After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. Matthew 28:1

The Angels question challenged them
And it should challenge us today.

Why do you look for Jesus among the dead? Luke 24:5

That is the depiction of our beautiful east stained glass window.

We are all guilty of doing that at time are we not?
How? you say?
First of all we're looking for Jesus among the dead when
We read the Bible as only a historical document
A dead document with no life in it.
Just a book of the past relating only to the events of the past.

Does your Bible have anything relevant to say to you about tomorrow?

About your future?

The Bible is a living document.

Alive

Full of living truth.

It can even speak to us today from the future.

Why do you look for Jesus among the dead? Luke 24:5

Another way we look for Jesus among the dead
Is that many view Jesus as only a prophet of God.
A good man,
An example of the past who lived 2000 years ago.
But is he our living savior?
Is he our walking partner in our present life?
Or is he just someone nice who has come and gone?

Too many churches and believers take their cue
For what they believe from the denominational traditions,
Seminaries and popular religious authors.
Rather than from the Holy Spirit of Life.
From the risen Christ of the universe.

I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.

Jesus is alive and he has destroyed deaths hold on us.
When he returns death itself will be destroyed.

51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - 52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. I Corinthians 15:51-52

Don't look for the living among the dead.

The resurrection of the body is necessary to reverse the effects of sin.

Old age,

Disease, accidents

Terrible tragedy,

These things are all part of the curse upon our lives and the earth
Because of sin.

53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. I Corinthians 15:53

Easter is all about redemption of the body being complete.
Not just with the soul.
Our salvation will not be complete until our body
Becomes immortal and imperishable.

I'm not talking about reincarnation.
Friends I won't be coming back as a Chihuahua.

I will be raised as Eldon Reich
With all the destructive marks of sin removed
Those parts that annoy people will be gone forever.
The sarcastic and cynical side of me,
The impure and unholy side of me,
The ungrateful attitude
And selfish ambition.
Will all be gone.

I believe in the resurrection of the Body and the life everlasting.

Easter is great news for every one of you
That suffer from cancer, deformities,
Disabilities, depression,
Sickness, chronic illness and broken body and mind.

That day is coming when every tear will be erased,
And every sorrow will be forgotten,
And we will weep no more.

When Jesus rose from the dead.
He saved us-- every part of us,
And when we rise from the dead
We will be totally delivered from sin.
It is not **soul salvation** we believe in,
But **whole salvation**.

Sown in dishonor.... Raised in glory. I corinthinas 15:43

We know it true.
Because it has already been accomplished.
6 He is not here; he has risen! Matthew 28:6
And it is to an everlasting life.
Prepared by our Lord Jesus himself.
That why I love Easter.
That's why I love the Christian faith.
Because it affirms with eternal confidence.

I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

Christ is risen,,
He is Risen indeed.