

⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said.

Matthew 28:5-6 NKJV



Berean Bible Church

Service of
Worship & Communion

Sunday, 2 April, 2017

Sunday School 9:30am
Morning Worship - 10:40am | Evening Service - 6:00pm
Midweek Service (Wednesday) - 7:30pm
Hothersal Turning, St. Michael | Rev. Ronald Trotman - Pastor
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ALL ARE WELCOME!

The Triumph of Joy

“Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him.” (Mark 16:6)

The word on the street that Sunday in the Holy City was almost too good to be true. This was so unexpected, so stupendous, such a dramatic reversal of the heartbreak and devastation of the previous three days. This would take days to sink in. Weeks even. In some ways, it would take his disciples the rest of their lives to grasp the impact of this news. He has risen. Indeed, for all eternity his people still will stand in awe of the love of God on display in Christ’s death, and the power of God bursting forth in his resurrection.

The Sheep Had Scattered

No one truly saw this coming, except Jesus himself. He told his disciples plainly that he would be killed, then rise again (Mark 8:31; Matthew 17:22-23; Luke 9:22). He had hinted at it as early as the first temple cleaning (John 2:19). At his trial some testified against him that he’d made such an outlandish claim (Mark 14:58; Matthew 26:61; 27:63). Then there were his references to “the sign of Jonah” (Matthew 12:39; 16:4), and the rejected one becoming the cornerstone (Matthew 21:42).

But as much as he’d done to prepare his disciples for it, a literal crucifixion was so contrary to their paradigm that they had no meaningful way to bring it into their minds and hearts. It was “a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling” (Isaiah 8:14) for the long-awaited Messiah to go out like this. His men had abandoned their master in his most critical hour, leaving him alone to carry the weight of the world’s sin. And the greatest burden of all — being forsaken by his Father.

One of his own had betrayed him. The chief among his men had denied him three times. After his death, the disciples dispersed. “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered” (Zechariah 13:7). Their doors were locked (John 20:19). Two even took to the road and were on their way out of Jerusalem (Luke 24:13).

When news came from the women, it seemed like sheer fantasy. “These words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them” (Luke 24:11). It was beyond their imagination, but not beyond God. Could such a dream become reality? Might there be, after all, some deep magic that could turn back time? Better, might there be a power magnanimous enough to bring in a whole new age — the age of resurrection — and triumph over the final enemy, death itself?

Seized with Astonishment

The initial report left them in shock. Mark tells us the women “went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid” (Mark 16:8). Astonishment seized them. Had the news been less spectacular, perhaps they would have celebrated right way. But this was far too big, and too surprising, to melt into immediate rejoicing. They were stunned. That’s what Easter does to the human soul when we own up to the reality of its message. That’s how explosive, how cataclysmic, how world-shattering it is that Jesus is alive.

It is a joy too great for instant gratification. First there is utter astonishment. Then comes the mingling of “fear with great joy,” and finally the freedom to rejoice and tell others (Matthew 28:8).

Sadness Comes Untrue

But what now of his passion? What of his excruciating agony at Golgotha? Yes, as C.S. Lewis says, the dawning of this resurrection age “will turn even that agony into a glory.” Now Joy has triumphed over sorrow. Day finally has dominion over night. Light has thrashed against the darkness. Christ, through death, has destroyed the one who had the power of death (Hebrews 2:14). Death is swallowed up in victory (1 Corinthians 15:54).

Easter now has become our annual dress rehearsal for that great coming Day. When our perishable bodies will put on the imperishable. When the mortal finally puts on immortality. When we join in the triumph song with the prophets and the apostles,

“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (Hosea 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:55)

Just as rehearsing the details of Jesus’s final days leading up to the cross prepares us for the fiery trial coming on us, so also Easter readies us for the triumph that will follow. Easter is our foretaste of glory divine.

Christ has been raised. Day no longer is fading to black, but night is awakening to the brightness. Darkness is not suffocating the sun, but light is chasing away the shadows. Sin is not winning, but death is swallowed up in victory.

More Than Conquerors

Indeed, even agony will turn to glory, but Easter doesn’t suppress our pain. It doesn’t minimize our loss. It bids our burdens stand as they are, in all their weight, with all their threats. And this risen Christ, with the brilliance of indestructible life in his eyes, says, “These too I will claim in the victory. These too will serve your joy. These too, even these, I can make an occasion for rejoicing. I have overcome, and you will more than conquer.”

Easter is not an occasion to repress whatever ails you and put on a happy face. Rather, the joy of Easter speaks tenderly to the pains that plague you. Whatever loss you lament, whatever burden weighs you down, Easter says, “It will not always be this way for you. The new age has begun. Jesus has risen, and the kingdom of the Messiah is here. He has conquered death and sin and hell. He is alive and on his throne. And he is putting your enemies, all your enemies, under his feet.”

Not only will he remedy what’s wrong in your life and bring glorious order to the mess and vanquish your foe, but he will make your pain, your grief, your loss, your burden, through the deep mystery of resurrection, to be a real ingredient in your everlasting joy. You will not only conquer this one day soon, but you will be more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37).

When he wipes away every tear, our faces glisten more brilliantly than if we never would have cried. Such power is too great to simply return us to the Garden. He ushers us into a garden-city, the New Jerusalem. Easter announces, in the voice of the risen Christ, “Your sorrow will turn into joy” (John 16:20) and “no one will take your joy from you” (John 16:22).

The Resurrection says that the One who has conquered death has now made it the servant of our joy.

Order of Service

Ministry of Music – Choir

Invocation

Hymn 864

Hymn 814

1st Scripture: Psalm 107 : 8 - 21

Chorus 750,

Chorus - We've Got a Great...

Hymn - My God How Wonderful...

Prayer

Notices – Offering

Ministry of Music – Choir

Hymn 421

Sermon – Pastor Dan McGhee

Hymn

Distribution of Elements

Special Offering

2nd Scripture: Ephesians 2 : 1 - 10

Ministry of Music - Mixed Group

Benediction – Choir



PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR:

- Spiritual growth of the church in 2017
- God's guidance for the Pastor, board and all who are in leadership positions and the expansion of our ministries
- For the youth of our church and the wider Hothersal community
- Our new Converts in Christ
- For the healing of the sick
- For employment for the unemployed
- For the members of Government that we may continue to live in peace
- For the peace of Jerusalem

LIFE & FAMILY BIBLE CONFERENCE | APRIL 2 - 8

SUNDAY EVENING: Worship Leaders' Seminar & Final Counsellors' Training

MONDAY - WEDNESDAY: Men's & Women's Seminars:

For Pastors and Male Church Leadership: *"A Call to Biblical Leadership"*

For Pastors' Wives and Female Church Leadership: *"A Call to Biblical Womanhood"*

TUESDAY: *"Becoming a Woman of Titus"*

WEDNESDAY: *"Dealing with Grief in the Life of a Godly Woman"*

FRIDAY: Banquet & Fellowship, IXORA Restaurant \$65

SATURDAY: Outreach on the Beach

EVENING SESSIONS: Monday - Thursday

Please see notice board for more information or visit: www.bereanbarbados.org

April Birthdays

4th – Anita Eastmond	15th – Naomi Williams	23rd – Chirlene Black
8th – Signe Watson	17th – Charmaine Brathwaite	– Dazil Blackman
12th – Leonie Forbes-Scott	22nd – Joy-Ann Beckles	24th – Susan Greenidge
15th – Angela Griffith	– Tanya Lowe	– Nadia Maycock
– Kenny St Cyr		27th – Marlene Skinner

Anniversaries

18th – Ricardo & Julia Licorish