

THE EXCHANGE
“Dead End for Never End”
April 20, 2025

INTRO.: Good morning! Welcome to Resurrection Sunday! He is risen! This morning is our concluding message on our Easter series, **THE EXCHANGE**. We began with the exchange of “Never End for Dead End” in the Garden of Eden where sin entered the human race through Adam and Eve. The result was what God had promised it would be:

Genesis 2:16–17 And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

There were several consequences after they sinned including spiritual and physical death. They were now separated from God, the One who had previously walked with them in the Garden. They would eventually also experience physical death. The sin nature and its consequences would pass down from Adam.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—

Even with the judgment of God in Genesis there is also a prediction that a deliver would come.

Last week the exchange was “Glory for Sacrifice,” as we celebrated the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey as prophesied some 500 years earlier by the prophet Zechariah (Zechariah 9:9). Jesus was in total control, telling the two disciples where they could find this colt, what they were to say to the owner when questioned about taking it, even down to the detail that it had never been ridden, being reserved for the Lord. The disciples responded in obedience, the crowd worshipped, and the religious leaders commanded Jesus to silence the crowd. Jesus responded to their command by telling them that the rocks would cry out if the crowd was silenced. We see Jesus weeping over Jerusalem for their unwillingness to recognize the Messiah, the Deliverer. This was all pointing to the mission of Jesus Christ, to die for our sins.

At the Maundy Thursday service, the exchange was “Sin for Salvation,” In Romans 3 salvation is proclaimed, shown to be available through faith in Jesus Christ, with the basis of salvation being the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

That brings us to this morning, resurrection Sunday. What do all these signs (three slides) communicate? You can’t go any further. What can you do to change that? NOTHING!! This brings us to our last exchange in this series: “Dead End for Never End.” What did Adam & Eve’s sin bring upon every one of us? We are spiritually dead, with no way in and of ourselves to change that.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,

There would have to be something miraculously happen for us to be made spiritually alive, to have our sins forgiven. We could not do enough good works to overcome our sin, to pay the penalty for our sins. We needed a Messiah, someone who could pay the penalty for our sins.

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

But not only did this Messiah have to pay the penalty for our sins, dying in our place, He had to raise again, defeating death. How would this even be possible? If Messiah were to come and die in our place but not raise from the dead what good would that do? The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, says that without the resurrection we are wasting our time, our faith is futile, we’re still in our sins, and we should be most pitied above all men. This is how important the resurrection is to the follower of Christ. Without the resurrection we have nothing! Praise God, He is risen!

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

With this in mind we’re going to look at the following 3 things today, in reference to the resurrection: **THE REPORT** (by the religious leaders); **THE RESURRECTION** (what are the facts); and **THE RESULTS** (what difference does the resurrection make).

THE REPORT

Matthew 27:62-66

This whole situation is filled with irony. See if you can pick up some of it as I read these verses, and you follow along (page 1549 in the pew Bible).

Matthew 27:62–66 The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.” “Take a guard,” Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

“the next day:” the religious leaders were coming to Pilate on the Sabbath. This is not just any Sabbath, it was the sabbath during the Passover, which is referred to as one of the high holy days. They should not have been doing this! They were desperate and, just like when they had Jesus crucified, they were willing to even break the Mosaic law.

John 19:31 Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.

“chief priests and Pharisees:” these two groups had serious theological differences. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection which is why they were “sad you see” and the Pharisees were all about keeping the law of Moses (as they interpreted it) but were willing to break it to put an end to this Jesus problem. The only other time in Scripture where these two groups are together is in Matthew 21:45.

Matthew 21:45–46 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

They were willing to work together to get rid of Jesus! The next sentence clearly reveals how they felt about Jesus.

“that deceiver:” they don’t say Jesus or the one who claimed to be the Messiah. It looks like they didn’t even want to say His name. In Philippians 2, we are told:

Philippians 2:9–11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

“so give the order for the tomb to be made secure:” they are once again telling Pilate what to do, as they had in inciting the crowd to yell “Crucify Him,” the day before.

“otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body:” I find this quite interesting because the disciples were nowhere to be found, and they hadn’t understood what Jesus had been saying when he had told them He would die and raise again.

Mark 8:31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

Mark 9:31 because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.”

Mark 10:33–34 “We are going up to Jerusalem,” he said, “and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”

“Take a guard,” Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.: this is almost funny, it is so ridiculous. A seal and some guards are going to keep Jesus in the grave? In His resurrected body Jesus walked through a locked door, so how is a stone going to keep Him in the tomb? It reminds me of Adam and Eve trying to hide from God after they had sinned by disobeying God. After the report given by the religious leaders to Pilate we read of the resurrection which we are going to read together..

THE RESURRECTION

Matthew 28:1-11

Matthew 28:1–10 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. **4** The

guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said 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. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

In the gospel of Mark, as these women are on the way to the tomb, to anoint the body of Jesus, in their conversation they asked, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

We need to remember that the stone didn't have to be rolled away for Jesus to get out, but for people to get in. Can you imagine being there?

The guards' reaction was one of fear, so much so they shook like dead men. They were paralyzed with fear. The earth was shaking and so were they. So much for the stone, the seal, and the guards! No problem for God! Those without Jesus truly have reason to be afraid!

What is the first thing the angel says to the women? "*Don't be afraid:*" this is in the form of a command. Why don't they need to be afraid? It is because Jesus is risen! The follower of Jesus does not need to face life with fear because Jesus has conquered sin and death.

The angel points the women to the evidence of the resurrection. "*Come and see the place where He lay:*" the word, "see" is in the form of a command. The angel shows them the evidence for the resurrection.

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Our faith is not blind faith. There is abundant proof of the resurrection! All the arguments against the resurrection make absolutely no sense!

*He only swooned and wasn't really dead. The problem: the Romans were professional killers and made sure Jesus was dead

*The disciples stole the body. The problem: they had fled and didn't even comprehend what Jesus had told them earlier about His death and resurrection. Also, all but one died torturous deaths because of their faith. Also, the guards knew their life was on the line if the body was stolen.

*People that saw Him after He rose from the dead were hallucinating. Problem: that is a lot of people who had the same hallucination!

1 Corinthians 15:3–8 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, **5** and that he **appeared to Peter**, and **then to the Twelve**. **6** After that, **he appeared to more than five hundred** of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. **7** Then **he appeared to James**, **then to all the apostles**, **8** and last of all **he appeared to me also**, as to one abnormally born.

Several people have set out to disprove the resurrection without success. In my lifetime two people come to mind who set out to disprove Christianity and ended up coming to faith in Christ. One was Josh McDowell, who as a college student, searching for meaning and purpose to life noticed a small group of students who were different: "they seemed to know who they were and where they were going." As he sat with them one day, he asked, "Tell me, why are you so different from all the other students and faculty on this campus? What changed your life?" Without hesitation or embarrassment she looked me straight in the eye, deadly serious, and uttered two words I never expected to hear in an intelligent discussion on a university campus: "Jesus Christ." Josh continued, "Then my new friends issued a challenge I couldn't believe. They challenged me to make rigorous, intellectual examinations of the claims of Jesus Christ – that He is God's Son; that He inhabited a human body and lived among real men and women; that He died on the cross for the sins of humanity; that He was buried and was resurrected three days later; and that He is still alive and can change a person's life even today." Through this investigation, Josh came to faith in Christ and was radically changed by the gospel. He has written several books including "Evidence that Demands a Verdict," and "More Evidence that Demands a Verdict."

Then there is Lee Strobel. He was a legal affairs newspaper reporter for the Chicago Tribune. Strobel was an avowed atheist, convinced that "people created God because they were afraid of death," and his lifestyle reflected that. After his wife came to faith in Christ he was so upset he set out to disprove Christianity, and in particular the resurrection. After a thorough investigation he came to the conclusion that Jesus Christ is who He says He is and He is the risen Savior. He came to faith in Christ and has since written several books. I would recommend you watch the movie, "The Case for Christ," which highlights his journey to faith.

I challenge you today, if you have never come to faith in Christ, ask God to show His truth, as you read the Bible, God's Word to us.

"then go quickly and tell his disciple: he has risen from the dead...:" the word "tell" is also in the form of a command. This reminds us that you and I have a mission! Jesus gave the mission at the end of Matthew.

Matthew 28:19–20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We see the report (from the chief priests (Sadducees) and the Pharisees), the resurrection (He is Risen), and lastly:

THE RESULTS

1 Corinthians 15:20-28

This highlights the importance of the resurrection. In verses 12-19 the Apostle Paul has an extensive list of the consequences if Christ has not been raised:

- *Our preaching and our faith is useless
- *We are false witnesses (liars)
- *Our faith is futile
- *We are still in our sins
- *Believers who have already died are lost
- *We should be most pitied

Verse 20 brings a huge transition:

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead:" This is an emphatic contrast to what had gone before. He has indeed been raised from the dead!

"been raised:" this is in the perfect tense indicating an action in the past with ongoing results. Jesus Christ has indeed been raised from the dead and continues to be alive.

"first fruits:" *The firstfruits* point us to the first sheaf of the harvest, which was brought to the temple and offered to God (Lev. 23:10f.); it consecrated the whole harvest. Moreover, *firstfruits* imply later fruits. Both thoughts are to the point here. Christ was not the first to rise from the dead. Indeed, he had himself raised some. But they would die in due course. His resurrection was to a life that knows no death, and in that sense he was the first and the forerunner of all those who were to be in him; 'the resurrection of Christ is a pledge and proof of the resurrection of his people' (Charles Hodge).

1 Corinthians 15:21–22 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. **22** For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

Through Jesus Christ the dead end has been reversed! Death no longer has the final say. The resurrection brings us to the final exchange of this series: *"dead end for never end."* This exchange is available to all who come to faith in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

"to be destroyed:" this is a present tense: death continues to be destroyed (to abolish, to wipe out, to set aside). It is a passive verb which mean somebody else is doing the destroying. Death cannot be conquered apart from Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

"he has put:" past tense indicating it has been accomplished

"has been put:" perfect tense indicating action in the past with ongoing results

We witnessed several baptisms this morning. Baptism is a picture of what Jesus Christ has done. Going under the water represents the death of Christ and coming up out of the water represents His resurrection. Going under the water is a picture of the old man and coming up out of the water represents the new man.

The resurrection provides victory over sin and death. Those who come to faith in Christ experience the exchange: dead end for never end. Not only has their eternal destiny changed but their life is changed. The believer has a new master and has the Holy Spirit living inside them giving them power to live for Jesus. The goal is to become more like Jesus.

SO WHAT???

*What about me? Where do I stand with Jesus?

Josh MacDowell, even after having examined the truth, and being convinced that Jesus Christ is who He says He is, hesitated to place his faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. In his own words:

“There were two reasons for my reluctance: pleasure and pride. I thought that becoming a Christian meant giving up the good life and giving up control. I couldn’t think of any faster way to ruin my good times. I was really miserable. I was a walking battlefield. My mind was telling me that Christianity was true, but my will was resisting it with all the energy it could muster.

Then there was the pride problem. At that time the thought of becoming a Christian shattered my ego. I had just proved that all my previous thinking had been wrong and my friends had been right. But I couldn’t let go of the problem. I had to do something before it drove me out of my mind.

During my second year at the university, I became a Christian.

Somebody asked me, “How do you know you became a Christian?” There are several answers, but one was simple: “It changed my life.”

It is this transformation that assures me of the validity of my conversion. That night I prayed four things to establish a relationship with the resurrected, living Christ, and I am grateful that those prayers have been answered.

First, I said, “Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for me.”

Second, I said, “I confess those things in my life that aren’t pleasing to you and ask you to forgive and cleanse me.” God tells us, “No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow” (Isaiah 1:18, paraphrased).

Third, I said: “Right now, in the best way I know how, I open the door of my heart and life and trust you as my Savior and Lord. Take control of my life. Change me from the inside out. Make me the type of person you created me to be.”

The last thing I prayed was, “Thank you for coming into my life by faith.” It was faith based not on ignorance but on evidence, the facts of history, and God’s Word.

The change was not immediate, but it was real.

*If I know Christ as Savior and Lord what is the evidence in my life?

Since the resurrection of Jesus Christ is true and since the believer is also going to be resurrected, this is the Apostle Paul’s challenge to believers.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NKJV) — 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

“*be:*” present tense command. This is to be ongoing in our lives.

Is this the description of how I am living my life?

*The resurrection gives meaning and purpose to life

The best is yet to come! I can live with eternity to mind. Life can be hard, trials difficult, and discouragement all around but God brings meaning and purpose to all of life.

*The believer has reason to rejoice! Celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Do people I am around know of the sure hope I have in Jesus? As we celebrate today make it more than just a feast of food, make it a feast of fellowship with God and one another, make it a feast of praise to God. As families may we make Jesus Christ central to our celebration. Take some time this week to read through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John’s accounts of the death and resurrection of Christ.

The tomb is empty!

He is risen!

