

The Power Points of Life:
“The Power to Rise Again”
Mark 16:1-8

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A church organist made a horrible blunder on Easter Sunday. He failed to set his alarm and managed to sleep right through the first service. The congregation forgave him. His colleagues teased him. The senior pastor pondered it all in his heart and one year later phoned the organist at 4:00 a.m. When the organist answered the phone, the pastor said, “IT’S EASTER! CHRIST IS RISEN! YOU SHOULD DO THE SAME!”

It’s Easter. Christ is risen and best of all, we can do the same. As the early Church scrambled to understand the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, they made an incredible discovery. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead was available to them. So Paul says to the Christians at Ephesus, “*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened to the incomparable great power for us who believe, the same power exerted in Christ when he was raised from the dead.*” So on this Easter Sunday, I have powerful news for all of us. The news is not about political power, not about nuclear power, not even about will power. It’s about the power of the Resurrection available to you and me.

RESURRECTION POWER WILL HELP US GET UP

I love Easter. I loved it as a kid. I didn’t love Easter because we got new clothes. We were too poor for that. I didn’t love Easter because I heard great choirs sing. The church of my childhood was too small for that. I loved Easter because that little congregation would always begin by singing “Low in the grave, he lay, Jesus my Savior.” Then as we got to the refrain, the congregation would shout together:

Up from the grave he arose,
With a mighty triumph o’er his foes,
Hallelujah! Christ arose.

Even as a kid it seemed clear to me that Christ was alive. When Satan had done his worst, God reared back and did his best—He raised his only Son from the dead. But here’s the best news. That same power that stirred in the soul of Jesus on that great “gettin’ up” morning is available to you and me. We who are dead in our trespasses and sins can find new life in Christ. We who are walking through the valley of the shadow of death can find a Savior who walks beside us. We, who quit living before we died, settled down to just survive, who are still marking time, but missing life – we, too, can rise again! “*For Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly*” (John 10:10).

RESURRECTION POWER WILL HELP US BREAK FREE

The question on the mind of the women that first Easter morning was “*Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?*” It’s one thing to get up. It’s another thing to get out.

Randal McCloy went home from the hospital a couple of weeks ago. He was the only one of twelve miners in Morgantown, West Virginia, to survive 41 hours underground last January. His doctor, Russel Biundo said, "It was almost like he was resurrected." The rural road on which Randal and his family live was renamed "Miracle Road." Randal McCloy got out.

One click on the Web produces numerous sites to help us break free from the habits that hurt us:

- Break free from affairs
- Break free from domestic violence
- Break free from time-wasting television
- Break free from your constant frenzy
- Break free from shoplifting or smoking, from alcohol or anorexia, from gambling or greed, from pornography or pedophilia.

Freedom is more than a self-help group. Freedom is found in Christ who brought us out of slavery, paid our ransom on a cross, and rolled the stone away. *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed"* (John 8:36).

- I am a child of God.
- The devil has no hold on me.
- I repent of my sins.
- I claim the power of Jesus.
- I am free. Amen.

RESURRECTION POWER WILL HELP US RESTORE RELATIONSHIPS

"The angel said to the women, 'He has risen. He is not here. Go tell his disciples and Peter.'" Go tell Peter – Peter, so brash, so confident, so cocky. Yet, at crunch time, he blows it. He denies his Lord. Disappointed, devastated, destroyed, he heads toward Lake Galilee to shed his tears and lick his wounds. The angel says to the women... "tell his disciples and Peter, 'I'll meet you up in Galilee.'" As John tells the story, Jesus finds Peter on the lake. He's fished all night and caught nothing. There, in the fresh breeze of the morning mist, two old friends get back together again. A relationship is restored.

It's Easter. I don't know what calls you need to make, or what letters you need to write. Things happen over the years. Hurtful words are spoken. Different views become disagreements that escalate into conflicts that become feuds. Jesus understands broken relationships. He knows when things become difficult. He helps us mend the fences and when reconciliation is not possible, He grieves the loss with us. He cares, because He's been there Himself. He will help us heal.

RESURRECTION POWER WILL HELP US LIVE FOREVER

Brad Paisley has a new song with lyrics that say:

- When I get where I'm going,
- There'll be only happy tears.

I will shed the sins and struggles
I've carried all these years.
And I'll leave my heart wide open,
I will love and have no fear.
When I get where I'm going,
Don't cry for me down here.

So whatever you are facing today, don't be defeated. Don't wave the white flag of surrender. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead will give you eternal life. Sickness does not come to stay, it comes to pass. No trouble enjoys eternal life. Every problem has a life span. Christians do not live "under the circumstances." They stand on the promises.

When trouble comes, as it surely does, when life has stripped me of every worldly possession, and left my body a bundle of sores, as it surely can, when friends make fun of me and wonder what awful wrong I did to deserve this, when life is gone, **Hope will last.** And I will say with Job of old, "*I know that my Redeemer lives and in the end He will stand upon the earth, and I will see Him with my own eyes.*"

It's Easter. I'm going to ask that no one leave this Sanctuary now. The incredible power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is available to you. I'm going to ask you to claim it. I'm going to ask you to get up out of your pews, take a step of faith, kneel or stand at these altars, and receive this Resurrection power.

Maybe you are a member of this church. Maybe you've never been to church before. Maybe you've practiced the faith for years; maybe you have no faith at all.

Maybe you're tired. Maybe you're broken. Maybe you need assurance of eternal life. Maybe you just want to say with Peter, "*I love you Lord.*"

"Arise, my love. Arise, my love. The grave no longer has a hold on you."