



FROM GARDEN TO EMPTY TOMB

From the Garden of Gethsemane to the empty tomb, Easter represents the most profound moment in human history – the fulfilment of God’s redemptive plan through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we contemplate this holy season, we witness divine love conquering death itself, offering humanity the greatest gift imaginable: eternal salvation through our risen Lord.

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life’ (John 3:16). This familiar verse takes on renewed meaning as we journey through the events of Holy Week, understanding the depth of sacrifice that God’s love required.

The path to Easter begins in the shadow of betrayal. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus demonstrated perfect submission to the Father’s will, even as his soul was ‘overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death’ (Mark 14:34). Despite Christ knowing the suffering that awaited him, his prayer reflects unwavering obedience: ‘Yet not what I will, but what you will’ (Mark 14:36). This moment of supreme surrender teaches us that true faith means trusting God’s plan even in our darkest hours.

The events that followed – the mock trial, the cruel scourging and the journey to Golgotha – reveal the depths of human sin and the heights of divine love. As Isaiah prophesied centuries earlier: ‘But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed’ (Isaiah 53:5). Every lash, every thorn, every nail bore witness to the price of our redemption.

At Calvary, we witness both the horror of sin and the wonder of grace. The Cross stands as the ultimate symbol of sacrificial love, where the sinless Son of God bore the weight of all of humanity’s transgressions. ‘God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God’ (2 Corinthians 5:21). As Jesus declared ‘It is finished’ (John 19:30), he fulfilled every prophecy, satisfied divine justice, and bridged the chasm between God and man.

But the Cross is not the end of the story. If Christ’s death were the final chapter, our faith would be in vain. As Paul wrote: ‘And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith’ (1 Corinthians 15:14). The Resurrection transforms everything. When Mary Magdalene and the other women approached the tomb early on Sunday morning, they discovered the greatest miracle in history – the stone rolled away and death defeated.

The angel’s proclamation rings through the ages: ‘He is not here; he has risen, just as he said’ (Matthew 28:6). These words changed the course of human history and continue to transform lives today. The Resurrection validates every claim that Jesus made about his identity and mission. It proves he is indeed the Son of God, with power over death itself. As Romans 1:4 declares, he ‘was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead’.



The implications of the Resurrection are profound and personal. Because Christ lives, we too shall live. His victory becomes our victory, his life our life. 'But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep' (1 Corinthians 15:20). The Resurrection guarantees that death has lost its sting and the grave has been defeated. We serve a living Saviour who promises 'Because I live, you also will live' (John 14:19).

Easter morning ushers in a new creation. The power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that transforms believers' lives today. As Paul explains: 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!' (2 Corinthians 5:17). The Resurrection isn't merely a historical event to commemorate – it's a present reality that offers hope, purpose and new life to all who believe.

This Easter victory extends beyond personal salvation to cosmic significance. Christ's resurrection initiates the restoration of all creation, as God begins to make all things new. The empty tomb declares that sin, death and Satan are defeated foes. Though we still battle against evil in this present age, the war has been decisively won. As Paul triumphantly proclaims: 'But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Corinthians 15:57).

The Resurrection also empowers believers for Christian service. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwells in believers, enabling us to live victoriously and serve effectively. As Paul prayed, we can know 'his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead' (Ephesians 1:19-20).

The living Christ commissions us to share this good news with a world in desperate need of hope. The women at the tomb received the first evangelical mandate: 'Go quickly and tell his disciples: "He has risen from the dead"' (Matthew 28:7). That commission extends to all believers today. We are witnesses of his resurrection, called to proclaim the message of Easter to every corner of the earth.

This Easter season, let us rejoice in our risen Lord who has conquered death and secured our eternal salvation. Let us embrace the power of his resurrection in our daily lives, allowing his victory to transform our defeats into triumphs. As we celebrate the empty tomb, may we echo the words of the ancient Christian greeting: 'He is risen! He is risen indeed!'

The beauty of Easter lies not just in the historical events we commemorate, but in their continuing power to transform lives today. Because he lives, we can face tomorrow with confidence, knowing that nothing can separate us from his love. As Paul declared: 'In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us' (Romans 8:37).

May this Easter fill our hearts with renewed joy in our risen Saviour, deeper gratitude for his sacrifice and fresh commitment to his service. The tomb is empty, death is defeated and Christ reigns victorious. This is the glory of Easter – not just a past event, but a present reality that offers hope, purpose and eternal life to all who believe in the risen Lord.



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‘Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen’ (Hebrews 13:20-21).

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