

He Is Not Here, He Is Risen! – Luke 24:1-12

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – April 5, 2026

Introduction

- There are moments in life when everything changes in an instant. A phone call you didn't expect. A diagnosis that alters the future. The birth of a child. The loss of someone you love. In those moments, life divides into before and after.
- I remember one of those moments very clearly. It was January 7th, 2010, the day my dad passed away. My dad was a strong man, but by the end of his life, his body had been worn down. Years of health issues had taken their toll. And we knew the day was coming. But knowing it's coming and actually walking through it are two very different things.
- I remember being there. I remember that moment when everything changed. Just before he passed, he looked at me, gave a final sigh, and was gone. It seemed like time stood still for me; the world went on, but that moment for me stood still. And in an instant, everything shifted. Same room. Same people. Same world. But completely different.
- Many of you know exactly what that feels like. You've stood in that room. You've had that moment. You've felt the weight of it, the finality of death. Luke 24 begins in that exact place.
- But to understand this moment in Luke, you have to understand the story leading up to it. For three years, Jesus had been traveling from town to town, teaching, healing, and gathering followers. He taught with authority. He spoke about the kingdom of God as something breaking into the present. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, made the lame walk, calmed storms, fed thousands, and even raised the dead. And people began to ask, "Who is this?" Because He didn't just teach truth, He spoke as if He was the truth. "I am the light of the world." "I am the good shepherd." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." People believed in Him, trusted Him, loved Him, and followed Him.
- Then He began to say something even more shocking. He said He would suffer. He said He would be killed. And He said, on the third day, He would rise again. But no one really knew what to do with that.
- And then it happened. Jesus was arrested, beaten, and crucified. When He died, it looked like everything had fallen apart. Hope had given way to despair. Life had given way to death. All that was left was grief, loss, and confusion.
- That's where Luke 24 begins. Early in the morning, a group of women are walking to a tomb, not with anticipation, not with expectation, but with a mixture of perfumes for His body. Because, as far as they know, the life of Jesus is over. Let's step into that moment with them. Please turn to Luke 24, page 908 in the pew Bible, as we read their account together.

Luke 24:1-3 NIV

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

- They arrive . . . and something is wrong. The stone is rolled away. They go inside . . . and the body is gone. Luke says they were wondering about this, confused, disoriented, at a loss. What had happened? Because this is not how the world works. Dead people stay dead.
- Then everything begins to change.

The Resurrection Confronts Our Assumptions

Luke 24:4-6a NIV

While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. 5 In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen!

- When the women arrive at the tomb, they are not expecting a miracle; they are expecting a body. They came prepared for death, not resurrection. They brought spices, not hope. They came to mourn, not to celebrate. In their minds, the story of Jesus had already ended. What they were doing that morning was not faith; it was closure.
- And that’s why the angel’s question is so powerful: “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” It’s not just a question; it’s a confrontation. You came to the wrong place because you believed the wrong thing. You assumed Jesus was still dead. You assumed the grave had the final word.
- Before we move on too quickly, we need to see this: this is not just their mistake, it is ours as well. Because what led them to that tomb is the same thing that often directs our lives. They were living based on what they believed to be true . . . and so are we. When what we believe is off, where we go looking for life will be off as well.
- If we’re honest, we make that same mistake all the time. We look for life in places that are already marked by death. We look for satisfaction in success, only to find that it fades as quickly as it comes. We look for identity in accomplishments, only to discover they cannot carry the weight of who we are. We look for peace in comfort, control, or distraction, but it never lasts. It slips through our fingers.
- It’s like trying to charge your phone with a dead outlet. You plug it in, you set it down, you come back expecting it to be full, and nothing has changed. You check the cord, you check the connection, you try again. But the problem isn’t your effort. The problem is the source. There is no power there. And yet we keep going back. We keep returning to the same empty places, hoping this time it will be different.
- Easter steps right into that pattern and says, “You’re looking in the wrong place.” Life is not found in what is fading, broken, or temporary. Life is not found in what the world offers and then takes away. Life is found in a person. And His name is Jesus. And He is *not in the grave*.
- Which means the resurrection confronts our assumptions. It shows us that what we thought was final . . . is not final. What we thought was over . . . is not over. What we thought was dead . . . is alive. And if that is true, then we need to rethink where we are looking for life . . . and who, or what, we are trusting to give it to.

The Resurrection Confirms Everything Jesus Said

Luke 24:6b-8 NIV

Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ 8 Then they remembered his words.

- The angels said, “Remember how He told you . . .” And that word, “remember,” carries significant weight. Because in this moment, faith does not come from the empty tomb alone. The empty tomb creates questions. It creates confusion. It forces you to wrestle. But it is the

words of Jesus that bring clarity. It is His voice, His promises, His teaching that makes sense of what they are seeing.

- “Remember how He told you . . .” In other words, this moment didn’t come out of nowhere. This is not random. This is not unexpected, at least, it wasn’t supposed to be. Jesus had been telling them all along. He told them He would suffer. He told them He would be handed over. He told them He would be crucified. And He told them that on the third day, He *would rise again*.
- They had heard it, but they hadn’t fully received it, because what Jesus was describing didn’t fit into any category they had. People didn’t rise like this. Not in the middle of history. Not after a brutal public execution. This wasn’t just unlikely, it was incomprehensible.
- If we’re honest, we understand that. We know how death works. We’ve stood in those rooms. We’ve felt that finality. When someone dies, we don’t expect to see them again three days later. There is a weight to death that feels absolute. That’s exactly where they were.
- Luke then says, “Then they remembered His words.” That is the turning point. Not when they saw the empty tomb, not when they heard the angels, but when the words of Jesus came back to them. Suddenly everything began to make sense.
- What once sounded confusing has now become clear. What once seemed impossible has now become undeniable. What once felt like the end was revealed as part of the plan all along.
- The resurrection doesn’t introduce something new; it confirms everything that came before it. *Everything* Jesus taught, *everything* He claimed, *everything* He promised, all stands or falls right here. If Jesus stayed in the grave, then He was just another teacher with bold claims. But if He walked out of that grave, then every word He spoke carries the full weight of truth.
- The resurrection says, “it stands.” When Jesus said He came to give His life as a ransom for many, that stands. When He said, “Your sins can be forgiven,” that stands. When He said, “Come to me . . . and I will give you rest,” that stands. When He said, “I am the resurrection and the life,” that stands.
- Romans 4:25 tells us He “was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.” The cross paid the debt. The resurrection is God’s declaration to the world: the payment was accepted, the work is finished, sin has been dealt with, and the way to the Father is open. There is hope, and it is in Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life, and the way to the Father and eternal life. Jesus told the truth, as proved by His resurrection. And because of this, you can trust Him, not partially, not cautiously, but completely.

The Resurrection Requires a Response

Luke 24:9-11 NIV

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.

- The women go back and tell the others everything they have seen and heard. They come with urgency. They come with conviction. But Luke tells us the disciples did not believe them. It sounded like nonsense. Not mistaken. Not unlikely. Nonsense. That word means foolish talk, idle tales, something you dismiss without even seriously considering it.
- That is one of the most honest details in the entire account. Even with the empty tomb, even with the angelic announcement, even with eyewitness testimony, even with people they knew and trusted telling them what had happened, belief did not automatically follow. The

resurrection was not easy for them to accept. It didn't fit their expectations. It didn't align with how they understood the world to work. And so their first response was not faith, it was skepticism.

- Maybe that's where some of you are today. You're here because it's Easter. Someone invited you. Maybe it's tradition. Maybe it's family. And if you're honest, there's a part of you that wonders, can this really be true? Can a man really rise from the dead? Is this something I can actually believe, or is this just something people hold onto because it brings them comfort?
- I want you to see that you are not alone in that. The very first people to hear this struggled with it, too. They were not naive. They were not gullible. They were not expecting a resurrection. In fact, they were just like you; they had to wrestle with it.
- But then something happened. Peter got up and ran. We don't know exactly why Peter got up and ran. Yes, he was impulsive. Yes, he was a man of action. But perhaps it was more than that. Perhaps Peter got up and ran because he remembered. Because something in him jarred him to reality. Because the words of Jesus were coming back, and his heart was suddenly full of longing.
- Longing to see Him again. Longing to hear His voice again. Longing to be near the One he loved. The One he had followed. The One he had trusted. The One he had boldly declared was the Messiah. Could it be true? Could He really be who Peter believed He was?
- And yet, this is also the One Peter had betrayed. Just days earlier, he had denied even knowing Him. Not once. Not twice. Three times. And in that moment, Jesus turned and looked at him. That look stayed with him. The weight of it. The failure. The regret that would not let go. And he wept bitterly.
- And now, the tomb is empty? Could it be true? Could Jesus really be alive? Because if He is . . . then maybe failure is not final. Maybe that last look was not the end. Maybe there is still a chance. Maybe there is still hope, even for him. This is not curiosity anymore. This is personal. This is about grace, and truth, and love, and hope. So, Peter runs.

Luke 24:12 NIV

Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

- He doesn't sit back and dismiss it. He doesn't stay where he is. He moves toward it. He runs to the tomb. He looks in. He sees the linen lying there. And Luke tells us he walks away wondering. Not fully convinced, but he is no longer dismissing it. Something has shifted. He leans in. He investigates, He looks for himself.
- That is such an important moment, because for many people, that is where faith begins, not with full certainty, but with a willingness to move toward the truth. A willingness to look. A willingness to consider. A willingness to say, "What if this is real?"
- Because the resurrection does not allow us to be neutral. You cannot simply just ignore it. You cannot file it away as one idea among many. It is either nonsense . . . or it is the most important truth in the world. The most important event in the world.
- If it's nonsense, then it changes nothing. But if it's true, if Jesus really walked out of that grave, then it changes everything. It validates who He is. It validates what He said. It validates what He promised. This moment confronts and challenges all things: your past, your present, and your future. If this is for real, then everything about Him is for real. Every word, every event, every claim.
- And that means every one of us has to respond to this. Not necessarily with everything figured out. Not all at once. Peter didn't. He walked away wondering. But you must deal with this

evidence. You cannot dismiss it, you cannot ignore it, you must deal with it and what it means. What it means for your past, this moment, and the implications for the rest of your life, and what happens in eternity.

- What will I do with it?

Conclusion

- So let's bring this home. The resurrection is not just something that happened back then; it speaks directly into our lives right now. Because if we're honest, there is something in all of us that is not right. Not just around us, but in us. We've all sinned. We've all fallen short. We've all said things we regret, done things we wish we could undo, and carried things we cannot fix on our own. No amount of effort, religion, or good intentions can remove that. Our sins need a Savior. And that is exactly why Jesus came.
- Scripture tells us that Jesus bore our sins in His body on the cross. He didn't come just to teach or inspire; He came to rescue and redeem. He came to do for us what we could never do for ourselves. And the resurrection tells us that His work was enough. It was accepted. The debt was paid in full.
- Which means forgiveness is not something you earn; it is something you receive. It means you can be made new. It means your past does not have the final word. And because Jesus walked out of that grave, death does not have the final word either.
- This is where it becomes personal. Because it is possible to know about Jesus and still not know Him. To agree with Him, to respect Him, to even attend church and celebrate Easter, and still keep Him at a distance. To treat Him as important, but not ultimate. To admire His teaching, but never actually submit your life to it.
- Jesus did not rise from the dead so that you would simply know about Him. He rose so that you would *know Him*. So that you would entrust your life to Him. So that you would follow Him. So that His words would shape your life, your decisions, your priorities, your future. Not part of your life. All of it.
- The question is not just, "Did this happen?" The question is, "Do I know Him? Have I truly entrusted myself to Him?" Scripture says that if you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. New life and a new way of living can start now.
- What we are about to see is a picture of that. Baptism is a picture of death and resurrection. Going under the water represents death. Coming up represents new life. It is a declaration: "I have entrusted my life to Jesus. My old life is gone. My new life has begun."
- The people you are about to hear from are not saying they are perfect. They are saying, "I knew about Him, but now I know Him. I have trusted Him. I am following Him." Their stories are living proof that Jesus is not in the grave. He is alive. And He is still calling people, not just to believe in Him, but to follow Him.
- So as you watch, don't just observe. Come to Him. Entrust yourself to Him. Give your life to Him. Because our sin needed a Savior, and His name is Jesus. Remember, the question is: Will you trust Him? Will you believe Him, will you truly and fully follow Him?

Our prayer team is available to pray with you after the service, near the "prayer" sign at the front of the sanctuary, and in the prayer room next to the offices. Also, you can send your prayer request to prayer@crosspointrockford.com

Questions for Growth Groups

1. What part of the Easter message stood out to you the most this week, and why?
2. The angels asked, “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” (Luke 24:5) Where do people today tend to look for life, identity, or fulfillment that ultimately cannot give it?
3. The sermon compared this to trying to charge a phone from a dead outlet. Where have you personally experienced something that promised life but didn’t deliver?
4. Luke says, “Then they remembered His words.” (Luke 24:8) Why is it important to interpret life through Jesus’s words rather than just our experiences?
5. The disciples initially thought the resurrection sounded like “nonsense,” but Peter ran to investigate. What do you think moved Peter from dismissal to action? How would you have responded?
6. The sermon emphasized that it is possible to know about Jesus and still not know Him. What is the difference between those two, and how can someone move from one to the other?
7. The sermon ended with the question: “What will I do with Jesus?” How would you answer that question right now? What is one step you sense God calling you to take?