

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon September 19, 2021
Luke 24: 1 – 8 “The Empty Tomb, Part 2”

50 Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. 51 He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. 54 That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. 55 And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "
8 And they remembered His words. 9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. 11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

I. Introduction

- a. 1 Corinthians 15: “if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. 20 *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep.* 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.”
- b. Today's sermon: Luke 24: 1 – 8 “The Empty Tomb, Part 1”
 1. When – The First Day Sabbath, very early in the morning v1 – Last week
 1. When: Resurrected on the Day of Firstfruits - today
 2. Who – The women v1

3. Where – To the tomb v1
 4. Why – Bringing the prepared spices v1
 5. What they found – the stone rolled away, the empty tomb v2,3
 6. Initial Response – greatly perplexed v4
 7. The Two Angels announce the Resurrection – v4-7
 8. The faith response – they remember – v8
 9. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. When – The First Day Sabbath, very early in the morning v1
- a. 1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning,
 - b. This day after the weekly Sabbath was the Feast of Firstfruits. So, Christ our Lord arose from the dead on the Feast of Firstfruits. He is our Firstfruits.
 - c. Leviticus 23:9 – 14 The Feast of Firstfruits
 1. “And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the Lord. 13 Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the Lord, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. 14 You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”
 2. About the timing of this day: v11 “on the day after the Sabbath”
 1. These verses come immediately after the Lord’s commands regarding the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.
 2. So, the Feast of Firstfruits occurred on the day immediately following the weekly Sabbath that occurred during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
 - a. The Feast of Firstfruits was therefore established by God as a fixed day within the seven Days of Unleavened Bread. Hence, even though the feast of Unleavened Bread focuses upon the atoning blood and scarcity associated with the Exodus Passover and flight, within this Feast there was always a Day pointing toward the resurrection of the Passover Lamb and the eternal resurrection abundance and peace for all those in Him.
 3. AD 30
 - a. Resurrected Sunday Nisan 17 during hours of darkness, on the day of Firstfruits Feast
 - b. In the grave for 2 Sabbath Days prior:

- i. The first Sabbath was the High Sabbath of Passover Day (Thursday evening Nisan 15, Friday day Nisan 15).
 - ii. The second Sabbath was the weekly Sabbath. (Friday evening Nisan 16, Saturday day Nisan 16)
 - c. Crucified on Day of Preparation (Thursday day, Nisan 14)
 - d. Last Supper (Wednesday evening, Nisan 14)
- 4. 1 Corinthians 15:23 “Christ the Firstfruits”
 - a. Lev 23:10 “When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.”
 - b. The newness and uncertainty of entering the land of Canaan is answered by God with “firstfruits”. The idea of “first” means there will be more to come. It is a concept filled with hope. God will give them more food over time. Their harvests will come to them in His promises.
 - i. Christ’s resurrection is the firstfruit promise of the New Covenant land. In the Old Covenant, the land of Canaan served as a type of the whole world. The harvest of the world is underway, as the unfolding fulfillment of the Resurrection Firstfruit promise.
 - c. Lev 23:11 “He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.”
 - i. The Lord accepts this firstfruit sheaf waving on behalf of the people. Christ, the Perfect Lamb, the First Grain and the Great High Priest, raised up by the Father in Heaven, presents Himself before the Father as the Firstfruit of the coming world Harvest.
 - d. Lev 23:12 “And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the Lord.”
 - i. Burnt offerings serve as an atonement event for the worshiper. Even in Christ’s Resurrection, even in the ever-looking forward hope of future resurrections, we are always looking back and remembering and celebrating Christ’s death. We must not ever be so focused upon Christ’s future hope that we forget Christ’s past sacrifice.
 - e. Lev 23:13 “Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the Lord, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin.”

- i. The grain offering symbolized consecration to God and was usually mixed with the burnt offering. The drink offering of wine brings forth both sacrifice and joy. Note the absence of leaven, as opposed to the grain offerings of Pentecost. We see in this the Body and Blood of Christ as our Firstfruit.
 - f. Lev 23:14 “You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”
 - i. The OT firstfruits feast served as an annual day of giving thanks to God for His past blessings and also future promises of blessing. In this feast we find the great principle of first expressing gratitude before partaking of God’s blessings. This is an eternal reality. We give thanks for Christ our Savior always, in all things, before all things, for all things.
- d. 1 Corinthians 15 “1 Corinthians 15: “if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. 20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.”
 1. If there is no resurrection at all, then we have no hope for the future because Christ was not resurrected. Paul contrasts no hope, total despair, with what is really ours in Christ and His resurrection. Paul says that since Christ is risen from the dead, He “has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” In this text, God shows us by His Spirit the actual fulfillment of the Feast of Firstfruits. The fulfillment is in Christ’s resurrection and all the subsequent resurrections in Christ to come.
 2. V21,22 “For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”

1. Christ's resurrection is what Firstfruits is all about, and in Christ's Life, all shall be made alive. Grain harvest points to souls resurrected.
3. V23,24 "23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power."
 1. Here Paul brings in the more specific eschatological fulfillment of the Feast of Firstfruits. See Pastor Phil Kayser's sermon "The Barley Harvest" (Rev 11:1-4) for a detailed study of the various resurrections in view. Summary:
 - a. Barley harvest resurrections AD30-AD70 "afterward those who are Christ's at His coming"
 - b. Wheat harvest resurrection end of time "Then comes the end"
 2. The final fulfillment of Firstfruits is the total victory of Christ's resurrection, ascension and reign.
4. V25-27 "25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet."
 1. Christ's resurrection began this process. He is the Firstfruit guarantee that this is now underway in the earth. He is the Resurrected One, and His Firstfruit Day of resurrection points us all to His final Day of victorious harvest.

III. Questions to know, love and obey God