

## **Remember**

Luke 24: 1-12

*"<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup>but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup>While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. <sup>5</sup>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? <sup>6</sup>He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: <sup>7</sup>'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" <sup>8</sup>Then they remembered his words. <sup>9</sup>When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. <sup>10</sup>It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup>But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. <sup>12</sup>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."*

Remembering all that we have heard, or seen, is not always easy. Especially, as we age and our minds are filled with the vast knowledge and events from many years of life. It doesn't matter how young or old we are.

### **Let's test our memories a little:**

***This all-time best-selling coin-op video game was inspired by a pizza with a missing piece.***

Pac Man

***In 1985, which drink company tried to launch a new flavor out into the world?***

Coca Cola - Coke stashed the "Old formula" in a vault and came out with a new one which flopped and they ran to get the old formula back out.

***On January 7, 1963, the U.S. Post Office raised the cost of mailing a letter.***

***What was the new cost of a first-class stamp?*** 5 cents

***Which legendary St. Louis Cardinal baseball player retired in 1963?***

Stan Musial

***This television series had a person who was the epitome of "cool." One snap of his fingers and girls would magically appear. What was the name of this television series?***

Happy Days

***There were two kinds of bell bottom pants. One was called Bell Bottoms, but what was the other kind called?***

Elephant Ears

***This fad was very popular among girls, as well as guys. It was raved as "psychedelic" for the cool designs and colors. What was this fad?***

Platform shoes

Was there anyone who knew all of these? I'll would bet, at some time in life, some of you would have known all of these, perhaps several years ago. But, as we age, we add to our knowledge many new tidbits of information, and as we do, our limited minds hold only that which we think is important, pushing other information either to the back, or out of our memories completely.

However, there are certain facts we need to remember, and occasionally revisit, so that we don't forget what they mean to us. Facts based upon the Word of God placed in our minds and hearts, as we do our best to commit it to memory God's Word. From time to time, we should revisit the many stories found in His Word, in an effort to helps us stay on track. The truth is, all of us need to store God's Word within our hearts and minds. It helps us to reflect on what is truly important in our lives.

***This is Easter Morning!***

Some of us were up early, possibly, maybe you went to Sunrise service, or out to breakfast with your family, and later today, will spend time with family or friends for the day. However, right now, we are here to celebrate Easter with your church family. A special day for Christians for generations.

It will remain a special day for Christians, as long as we, His children, remember what took place two thousand years ago, and why He did, what He did. The gift of life, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the foundation of what we believe. So, I want us to look briefly at a passage we have read many times in the past.

*As we do let's answering this question: **What do we see, or, remember from this story?***

***First - Is there living among the dead***

*"While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that, gleamed like lightning, stood beside them. 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."*

***Interesting question, isn't it?***

As I read this passage, the last verse jumped out at me. *"Why do you look for the living among the dead."* ***That is a really good question*** - Why did they look for the living among the dead? Isn't that just exactly what so many are trying to do in this world. They are looking for life, for hope, for meaning, for purpose, while looking into a dead world. Searching through a lost world trying to find hope, which is only found in Christ! You know what? They haven't found the answer, have they? It, hit me, they are ***"looking for the living, among the dead."*** They'll never find it there.

In this story, the women in Jesus' life, Mary, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them, (v.10), were seeking for what they were familiar with in this world. They were searching for the body of a Savior they loved, at the place human hands placed Him.

In a barrowed tomb.

They had little or no idea of what they would find. More likely what they thought they would find was a buried man, laying in a grave. They sought with worldly understanding, and they found nothing. Boy, that is no more-true then, than it is now. When our eyes, hearts and minds are fixed on this world, we will not find the risen Savior, or, the hope we so desperately need to make it through this life.

Generation after generation, has continued searching, seeking for answers, looking among the dead, looking among the people of this world, discovering only the lost, lonely people without answers.

Worldly philosophy... It doesn't hold its water

Worldly morality...There is no such thing

Worldly religion... that is a joke, no man-made religion can lead us to where we need to go.

Still, many feel the answer is within them, or, within this world. How sad, not just for them, but for the many, the thousands, the millions, who will follow them - as they reject the truth of God's Word.

### **Illustration:**

*A teacher asked her class of elementary students what the initials R. I. P. stood for on a tombstone. None of the children seemed to know. After a time of silence, she encouraged her class to just guess. One brave boy raised his hand and tentatively answered, "RETURN IF POSSIBLE."*

**R. I. P.** could have very well been the seal on the stone that covered the tomb of Jesus. Some may have thought, if it was possible for Jesus to return from the grave, all of history would change. The powerful message of Easter is, ***that it was possible for Jesus to do what no other man could do, raise from the grave!*** He did just that! Think about it...

Jesus offers the same possibility to all who follow him. New Life. His followers can REST IN PEACE, because RETURN IS POSSIBLE, through the power of our resurrected Lord. The message from this, ***"Stop looking for the living among the dead."*** Look to Christ and LIVE...

### ***Second - God's Word must be fulfilled***

*"The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again. They remembered His Words." (vv.7-8)*

As we read this passage, I am reminded that what took place was not something that caught our Lord off guard. In fact, Jesus had told His disciples exactly what was to happen, prior to it taking place, and it wasn't until after it took place, that it said, ***"Then they remembered His Words."***

Whether they forgot, or, simply chose not to acknowledge what He was saying, I don't know. I know this, most humans today have that same short sidedness when it comes to listening to God. The question has come to me several times, "**Do we believe that God still speaks verbally to man?**" My answers, "**Yes!**" But not always with words.

I personally, have had dreams where I knew that that Lord was speaking to me, yet, I wasn't certain what He wanted me to do. But I am certain that it was the Lord speaking. Just as God spoke to some in His Word, through dreams, I know I have heard Him speak to me through dreams, other people, and situations, without others even knowing it. Statements someone would make, as I was praying for God to answer me, were exactly what I needed to hear. It was God speaking - not with His own voice directly, yet, directly to me.

There are many ways the Lord speaks to us today. The real question is, or, the concern I have for most is, "**Are we listening to Him?**" More importantly, "**Do we want to listen to Him?**" It is much easier to tell ourselves that God doesn't speak, except through His Word, so then if we don't read it, we don't have to worry about what He is saying to us. Right? – **WRONG!** The Lord speaks to us today, perhaps even right now, in many different ways. Are we listening to Him?

He speaks to His children all the time. Trust me, He does so, so that His will, will be fulfilled, regardless of our paying attention, or not. The men of that day thought they were doing something to stop Christianity from spreading. The truth was, they were fulling the will of God, and causing it to spread even faster. His Word went even further than it had ever gone before. Nothing catches God off guard, for His will can, and will, be fulfilled. Augustine said, "**If you believe what you like in the Gospel, and reject what you do not like, it is not the Gospel you believe in, but yourself.**" (repeat it)

### **Illustration:**

*According to a report I read, a man in Dadeville, Alabama, shot and killed another man. The reason given for the murder? It seems that the first man lost an argument over the wording of a particular verse of Scripture. One commentator said: "**One of the amazing religious facts of the ages is that people can have a head full of Scripture without allowing it to have any effect upon their lives.**" Lord help us.*

Listen to God, allow His word to sink in and speak to us. Allow His leading, to speak to our hearts and lives. Give Him permission to lead us. His Word will change us, if we allow Him to lead.

### ***Third - Three women, and others....***

Ladies, and gentlemen, I am going to address something that stood out to me as I read this passage. Not that I had ever spent much time thinking about before now, but listen: **Jesus came into this world via a woman - Mary the wife to be of Joseph. Now the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection, comes to the world by who, three women, who went to the tomb to**

***prepare His body for burial. God choose women to be the bearer of the news of His coming, twice. I think that this is significant for us to understand.***

In a world where male dominance is seen as the traditional way of life, the God we serve, used women as a major part of announcing his arrival. ***I also see this as a great responsibility.***

Perhaps one message from this story we seldom stop to consider carefully. Whether we are male or female, we have a huge responsibility to declare the presence of God. Male or female, young or old, we all are called to spread the NEWS.

The truth is, as men within this world, both back then and today, some have advocated their responsibility to do what God created us to do, be spiritual leaders, leading our families to Him. Thus, many women were and are being used to bring the message of life to the world where they live. I can tell you, some men really don't like to hear this, yet, it is part of His Word for us today.

Due to the absence of the father (*Godly male role models*)— many mothers have had to tell their families about God's love for them. In that, God is using women to teach the very foundation of the church - our children.

Perhaps it is because, most women are able to deal with their emotional side better than men. Not better than all men, but most men. Thus, there is a side of their lives, which allows them to see things from an entirely different perspective. They are more apt to see things from the heart, not just the head. I believe that is why the Lord called men and women together to form the home as we raise our children? A balance between the two? Something to think about?

While reading this story, we discover that God sent these women to go tell His disciples of His resurrection. Back then, the task of preparing the body for burial was often performed by the women, not the men. However, if God had wanted men to announce it, then he could have caused the disciples, or some other male believers, to go to the grave and find Him, thus discovering that He had risen. Instead, God used Mary, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and others – to the usual task of preparation of His body, thus, to announce that Jesus had done what He told them all He would do, ***ROSE from the grave.***

As I look at the church today, we have to openly admit that if it were not for godly women, who, in spite of the opposition by many in the church, women who continued to worship God – listening to his call, the church (at large) may not have had Sunday Schools, many missions outreach ministries, and other ministry and activities we have today. Godly women have played a huge roll in moving the church forward.

Now here are some of the dangers, I see in this.

***•Most women were not created to carry the load that most men can carry.***

Not saying they can't, I just believe that God made women different than men. I am not saying that there are some women who had to carry the load, they had to, I just don't believe that was God's plan.

Over time, women have had to leading in the home, hold down a job, provide all that God commands of her to give, to her husband, to her children, and work, it can and often does, overwhelm her. That can be a danger for many.

•***Another danger could be, the lack of credibility due to cultural settings.***

In those days women were not look upon as they should have been. Perhaps, that is partly why the passage says, ***“But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed like nonsense.”*** They didn’t believe them. However, Peter gets up and runs to the tomb to verify the story. Peter must have heard with ears ready to receive, thus, he had to verify it for himself.

Thank you, God, for these women and the many women You have placed within our lives, so that we might know, see, and be prompted, to do what we must. Helping to show us, what is valuable in your plan for life. Lord, I pray that You reveal to us an understand of our roles in life, as You created them to be, and how they are working together for your glory.

I believe each person sitting here today, is here by His design. We will be and are being used to make a difference in the lives people we know, love and people we come into contact with us. Some of us are and will be sent to others outside of our sphere of influence by God’s leading, to share the Word of HOPE.

Thank you, Father, for every man, women, child and person listening today. For their sensitivity to be used by You, God. Thank you, Father, for your compassion and wisdom given to each of us to use our gifts for Your Glory. Thank you for a willing heart to allow the Holy Spirit to help us discover what the Lord desires of our lives. To see that the Easter message, and all that the Lord has included within it. It amazes me Father, that there are churches who don’t see how God uses everyone, men, women, youth and children to lead many to You.

***This is the Easter message given to us.***

God came, lived, died, and was raised, to become our Savior. He died and rose from the grave to save us, YOU and ME, and all who will listen to Him. Using each and every one, who will listen and follow, to bring the message of hope to mankind.

EASTER is one of the greatest needs in our world today!  
What are we willing to do about it?

**Prayer:**