

## A New Reality

Scripture Text: Mark 16:1-7

<sup>1</sup>When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. <sup>2</sup>Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb <sup>3</sup>and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

<sup>4</sup>But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. <sup>5</sup>As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

<sup>6</sup>"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. <sup>7</sup>But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' "

### Introduction

It is Easter. We celebrate *A New Reality!* Something new has happened! This has never been done before! Death seems to be the end to every life, but the first Easter proved otherwise. Our Lord Jesus resurrected three days after His death on the Cross. He has become the ultimate conqueror over death.

The resurrection of Christ provides proof to three fundamental truths:

#### 1. **Easter proves Jesus is True! Let us believe and trust in Him.**

The fundamental question to ask about Christianity is not 'Does Christianity make me feel better?', 'Does Christianity lead me to be with a nicer bunch of people?' or 'Does Christianity give me a greater sense of purpose and peace?'

The fundamental question is 'Is it true?' Some people relate to truth by how they *feel* about it. Many people felt better following the Nazi dictator, Adolf Hitler, or cult groups, or after they listened to their lawyers' promises, bankers' guarantees, or doctors' assurances. But are these sources absolutely truthful and reliable?

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The question is not how you feel, or whether it suits you, or settles well with your lifestyle. The question is 'Is it true or not?' At the very heart of Easter is the affirmation of God: 'It is true, because it is based on Jesus and Jesus is the Son of God raised from the dead.'" (Donald English, *Why Believe in Jesus*)

Thus, during the 40 Days of Community season ahead of us, let us seek the truth. Knowing the truth sets us free. Let us turn around from lies or false beliefs and let us seek Jesus together: He is the truth, the way and the life.

**2. Easter means Jesus is Alive! Let us relate with Him.**

Jesus is different from all the other teachers, leaders or prophets you have ever known or will ever know – Mao Zedong, Lenin, Napoleon Bonaparte, to name a few. All these great leaders exerted a large influence during their lifetimes but in the end, death seized their lives and today, they lay merely remembered in their tombs.

On the other hand, Jesus is different. What Jesus claimed about His Lordship while He was on earth is true. In Jerusalem today lies an empty tomb with a sign that says of Jesus: "He is not here, He is risen!" Nowhere in the world have we heard of a great leader who has defied death! This is the new reality at Easter that we celebrate! *We serve a Risen Saviour!*

Thus, Christianity is not a set of laws or cultural norms. It is about entering into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. In this season ahead, let us relate to Jesus: read His personal Word, make time to meet God individually and in groups, and journal or reflect on our journey with Jesus. Let us come with expectant hearts to meet Jesus; and be attentive and open to how God will work in our lives.

**3. Easter Challenges us to God's Purpose! Let us obey and serve Him.**

Death is not the victor. In Christ we now have eternal life. In Galatians 2:20, Paul exhorts us to live for Christ: 'I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'



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With this new reality, life is no more limited to the physical life. Just like the disciples, our lives will be changed after encountering a risen Lord. We live life with eternity in mind. We are going to face Jesus again during His second coming. This makes the phrase we recite during Holy Communion so meaningful: 'Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again.' We have a new purpose in Christ.

Thus, let us follow the risen Christ and obey God's purposes. In the days ahead, we are called to community; take time to be **built up** as God's family; take time to fellowship and be united in love. We also called to serve; let us take time to **reach out** to others, fulfilling the vision: "What on earth are we here for?"

### **Conclusion**

Family of God, we are an **Easter people!** Today, we no longer follow the Jewish Sabbath. We now worship God on the Lord's Day or Sunday. The Lord's Day reminds us of the new reality that Jesus is true. Our belief is founded not on tradition, world view or a feel-good factor. But let us cling to the truth of Jesus, relate to Him personally, and follow and obey Him.

*- By Rev Lim Jen Huat*