

SERMON: GOOD NEWS FROM THE GRAVEYARD

Matthew 28:5-8

(5) And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. (6) He is not here: for He is risen, as He said, Come, see the place where the Lord lay. (7) And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you. (8) And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word.

Introduction

In our world we receive good news and we receive bad news. We are all familiar with the expression, "I've got good news and I've got bad news; which one do you want to hear first?" It's great when we get good news from the doctor and the lump is benign. It is great when we get good news from the teacher and we have made an "a" in a very challenging course. However, we do not expect to receive good news from a graveyard. In fact, most of us are a little leery of cemeteries. On the first Easter morning, the angel announced the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, directly from the graveyard. Only an all-powerful God can give "genuine" good news from a graveyard. Why was it good news? Time will only permit me to give just three of the many, many reasons this was and still is good news.

Exposition

1. Christ's Resurrection Proved That His Death Was Only Temporary.

(His Death Was Not a Disaster.)
 (It Was A Planned Process.)
 (The Evil Plot Failed.)
 (Death Lost Its Sting – It Was Defeated.)

2. Christ's Resurrection Proved That Love Is Stronger Than Hate.

(God Is Love And There Is Nothing More Powerful Than God.)
 (Love Removes Obstacles-The Stone Was Rolled Away.)
 (1st Corinthians 13:13; 1st John 4:8; 1st John 4:16.)

3. Christ's Resurrection Guaranteed Our Future Resurrection.

(We Will Live With Him Forever.)
 (1st Corinthians 15:20-23; 1st Thessalonians 4:14.)
 (His Resurrection Gives Us Blessed Assurance.)

Closing thoughts

At times, many of the aspects of our lives may seem like a graveyard. Enthusiasm is dead. Hope is dead. Gratitude is dead. Just remember God can bring good news even in your “graveyard situation.” Christ’s resurrection gives comfort to the crying, hope to the hopeless, grace to the guilty, and singing to the somber.

A few years ago, there was a pun that went viral on the internet. It goes like this: question: What was the weather like on the first Easter morning? Answer: The Father was reigning and the Son was shining. While this may be corny, there is a lot of truth in it. God will reign eternally and the Son will shine forever. “Jesus died one time and He ain’t gonna die no mo’!” Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

End Note

This is the third time I have preached from this title. Each time it was preached there was a different outline, but still the same title. It was preached in 2012 and in 2017. It is one of those titles that is preached often in the Black church. Some of the other common titles are *The Eagle Stirs Its Nest* and *Picked Out To Be Picked On*. It seems as if people never get tired of hearing them. Sometimes the titles are requested. The titles are so powerful and so well-known that they will almost preach themselves.

In my humble opinion, one of the best renderings of *Good News From The Graveyard* is by the Rev. Doctor William D. Watley, the former senior pastor of Saint Phillips AME Church of Atlanta. I use some of his ideas every time I preach it. He has given me permission. We preachers share ideas anyway. Freely you receive, freely you give. Long before musical artists would sample other artists, Black preachers would share their material. It was and is a cumulative culture. Scholars call it the original form of “voice merging.” I am honored when other preachers use my material. It all belongs to God. We still have to be careful not to ignore copyright laws and not to violate the eighth commandment, which forbids stealing.

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