

Our devotion is an outline of the message at Belfield Baptist Church for April 04, 2021.

The First Easter: JOHN 20:1-9

This morning we come here to celebrate the greatest event in history. We come to celebrate:

- our risen Lord and Christ.
- our salvation.
- forgiveness of sin.
- victory over death.
- the gift of eternal life.

That's just a few of the things we have to celebrate because Jesus rose from the grave.

In all of these accounts, the first thing the visitors to the tomb saw was that the huge stone covering the entrance had been rolled away.

I. What if the stone still covered the entrance to the tomb that morning? What if it had not been rolled away? How would these people have felt? If that stone had not been rolled away, then those visitors to the

tomb that morning would have had a problem. It was big and it had a government seal on it, sealing the stone and tomb.

But praise God, the stone was not in place. It was rolled away.

But a question I ask today is "Why was the stone rolled away?"

Well, now, that is a pretty silly question you might say. The stone was rolled away because Jesus came out of the tomb. The stone was rolled away because He had risen.

II. But I do not think that is the reason the stone was rolled away. Look what happened later that same Sunday evening. **John 20:19-20:** **¹⁹Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. ²⁰And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.**

Jesus came into a room where the doors were shut and locked. Jesus just walked right on in. If He could do that, couldn't he have come out of the tomb with the stone still in place?

III. THE STONE WAS NOT ROLLED AWAY FOR HIM TO COME OUT. We can be sure that whatever the nature of His resurrected body, He needed no door. No wall could hold Him out. And no stone could hold him in.

IV. The stone was rolled away that morning so that the visitors to the tomb could go in. The open tomb was not the means of His exit, it was the means of their entrance. The women went in and saw that Jesus was not there. Peter and John went in and saw the same.

God rolled away the stone, not so Jesus could rise, but so we could know that He had risen. The open tomb makes it possible for us to go in, to see the discarded grave clothes, to see that He is not there.

That is why the stone was rolled away.

1. The stone was rolled away so that we could look in.
2. It was rolled away so that the empty tomb could be visible to all.

3. The empty tomb is the greatest evidence of the resurrection of Jesus. That

empty tomb still stands as evidence to all that Jesus is not dead. He is alive

today. We can look inside the dark, scary tomb to see if Jesus is there.

4. He is not. Christ is risen! He is alive. The empty tomb is impressive and unforgettable evidence that Jesus is alive!

V. Because of the resurrection, you and I have life—a new life now as a believer in Christ and a future in heaven in the presence of Almighty God that will never end. The resurrection caused those who visited the tomb that morning to run and tell the rest of Jesus' followers about it.

VI. How should the resurrection affect us?

We need to realize that, "for the Christians, for those of us with resurrection faith, the good news is that we can share the joy of our faith with others, every day of our lives."

He is risen! This is what we need to proclaim.

Every day we should be able to stand up and sing the words to a familiar old hymn. Hymn # 193 "One Day", Living He Loved Me, Dying He Saved Me, Buried He Carried My Sins Far Away. Rising He Justified, Freely Forever. One Day He's Coming. O Glorious Day.

As we think about the first Easter, we need to look at our lives and see how it effects our lives today. Jesus paid the price for our forgiveness through His shed blood, what are we giving back. Are we faithful to Him?

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