

Proclamation

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:1–8

Theme: The empty cross and tomb are God's pulpit proclaiming the way of life

Introduction — there are many things Christians can share w/ world they won't understand

- Ephesians 5 on how a husband is to love his wife & wife submit to her husband
- they will hear it, reject it, even rail against such antiquated notions
- yet they will live on in opposition to God's created and ordained order

You and I are not given all we would be curious about in Scripture as well

- many details, facts, names of people simply not given to us
- consider John the Baptist, for instance
- men who entered dungeon cell to lead him to execution: not given to us
- what they may have said to him, if anything: not given to us
- how they treated him: not given to us
- did John say anything to them as they led him away to take his head
- just wasn't made known in Holy Scripture

Take events of this weekend nearly 2,000 years ago now

- name of centurion who uttered profound statement as Jesus died: Surely, Son of God
- had he become genuine believer? What happened to him after this event?
- what about those who gambled away for Jesus' garment?
- even Barabbas, given in exchange for Jesus
- Hollywood made a movie in 1961 starring Anthony Quinn, but all made up, fictional

Yet, we are given more details given agony & death of Jesus than almost any other

- his execution: performed in traditional place of executions: outside walls of Jerusalem
- it was open to any and all spectators
- many bystanders there, including mob who wished to see Him killed, women, John
- high priests and other Jewish leaders there, mocking Him thru this ordeal
- Sanhedrin watching closely to be sure: dead, buried, guarded, no tricks played or possible
- could go on; so much that leaves no doubt: Jesus really died on the cross

Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

- God tells us His Son's death was absolutely necessary
- also that nothing arbitrary about it; not haphazard, definitely not meaningless
- nothing had been left to chance—every bit of Jesus' suffering & death ordained of God
- **Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief;**
- so, all appropriate, fitting, suitable to bring salvation to lost sinners
- all in perfect harmony with all other acts of God

Same is going to be true of Christ's resurrection as well

- all the specifics, every detail given proves accuracy of these events
- from recorded acts to many witnesses: fulfilling prophecies made centuries previously
- all this vindicates everything Christ had done & taught, even up to point of His death
- Son of God had to take on flesh to be truly man

- only a man could die; this was the penalty for man's sinful rebellions
- only God could provide perfect sacrifice for man's sins
- man had to obey God's law: perfectly, personally, perpetually
- but only Son of God could obey it personally, perfectly, perpetually
- if Christ Jesus is still dead in some old tomb, all this rendered null and void
- as Paul says later on in 1 Corinthians 15: our faith in vain, we are most to be pitied

The empty cross and tomb are God's pulpit proclaiming the way of life

Let's think about this today of all days

I. CRUCIFIXION & RESURRECTION: REAL, TRUE, HISTORICAL

- praise the Father in Heaven: Scripture & Christianity is real, true, historical
- not based upon mysticism with only select few given the secret knowledge
- do not have to scale mountainside to seek out guru in a cave for answer to life's questions
- not practiced with secret rituals or handshakes like Freemasons or others
- do not have to learn personal mantra, sit cross-legged on floor, chanting over and over
- no, events of this week, indeed, all of Scripture is rooted in history, truth and facts
- Golgotha and tomb are actual places
- disciples were real people, eyewitnesses to these events
- testimony is sure and clear

1. Cross is a declaration

- this is good news, which must be shared
- when a baby is born, what do you do?
- when Rebecca, our first, was born, used pay phone in hospital lobby to call parents
- btw, for you young people, a pay phone is one you had to use coins to make a call
- thirty-six years this week, I was ordained as minister of gospel in EFCA
- told people and friends and family attended special service at Bethel EFC, in Fargo, ND
- good news is meant to be shared, announced, proclaimed

2. News of death of Jesus, however, just seemed so wrong

- good news? You must be joking! Jesus the Messiah is dead
- two on road to Emmaus after Friday's events thought so; nothing but gloom & doom
- then Jesus, who appeared and walked with them, revealed Himself & they knew
- cross—seems horrible, but because of that day 2,000 years ago
- because of all it accomplished & how it is applied: it is good news indeed!
- we who believe it are to declare it to all who will listen

3. Can do this with confidence and faith

- events actually took place
- real people carried them out, witnessed them, and later, would bear witness to them
- history was carried out, of this there can be no doubt
- many try to deny it, but it truly is a proven thing
- declare this to any who will listen

Because of the certainty, reality, and meaning of death & resurrection of Jesus we see that the...

II. CRUCIFIXION & RESURRECTION: NEWS THAT MUST BE PROCLAIMED

- on day my three children were each born, I didn't offer tips, advice on fatherhood
- no Five Steps to Surviving Birth of a Child came from these lips that day

- all I wanted to do is tell anyone who would care or listen
- stand before you here today to tell you: Jesus died, was buried but He is alive!
- salvation is purchased and secured for all who believe—it is finished!
- everyone who hears this needs to proclaim it; it is good news!

1. This is why we gather every Sunday since that day He rose from dead

- we gather to proclaim this good news
- to rejoice in our Great Substitute who exchanged our sin for His righteousness
- we declare His humiliation in life & death
- we sing of the satisfaction of the heavenly Father at Christ's life, obedience, and sacrifice
- this is what we proclaim
- we deliver to you as of first importance for we received it in order to pass it on
- here it is: Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures
- that He was buried, and was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

2. Many of you love this good news

- you love to sing of it
- you sit and listen to Word opened as I preach it
- you even enjoy telling others because you know they need to hear it
- but some of you still wonder, "What's the big deal?"
- **1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**
- and this is why I preach
- **1 Corinthians 2:2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.**
- to the living in Christ, I preach to encourage and strengthen your faith in the living Christ
- to the dying in this world, I preach to warn and call to come to Christ
- so, come to Christ, set aside your pride and run to cross
- if a believer, this is what you should do also: proclaim this message
- whether sitting at table or walking along the way
- whether at home or at work
- at some point, proclaim Jesus crucified, dead, buried, and raised to new glorious life
- to those who do not trust Christ, this cross has saving power: come and cling to it for life
- to those who believe, Calvary sanctifies as we grow in knowledge of this Jesus

3. Jesus commanded us to proclaim this message

- **Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**
- half of twofold purpose of Albion EFC
- we exist to obey the Great Commandment and to carry out the Great Commission
- whatever you learn of benefits and blessings of this cross of Jesus: tell others
- if you love them, tell them; if they are enemies, tell them
- **be prepared in season and out of season, 2 Timothy 4.2**
- **always be prepared to make a defense to any who ask you for a reason for the hope within you**

Conclusion – Believe, Receive, Proclaim It

- so, know this good news, then tell it
- I wonder: imagine a man who tells you he's been fishing for 20, 30 years
- rods, reels, lures, bait, depth finders, top of line fishing boats, all the best works for fishing
- but—just imagine how ridiculous—if he told you: “I don't know a thing about fishing”

- imagine man with tools, hoists and jacks, fully equipped shop
- has had all this for years, but doesn't know a thing about repairing automobiles

- or even imagine a woman who owns all ingredients, equipment and such to make bread
- fancy, expensive mixer, organic ingredients to make best of homemade bread
- been baking for nearly entire life
- but cannot tell you how to make bread

- so imagine it, if you will, it's not that difficult, sadly
- imagine man, woman, teen, youth who's been going to church all their life
- heard sermon and after sermon, attending & involved in Bible studies
- even sung gospel songs Sunday after Sunday
- they have many unsaved relatives and friends
- but they cannot tell you what the gospel is, the simple gospel

Brothers and sisters in Christ: know the gospel

- do not have to be scholar, theologian with degrees, or even a pastor
- you have to believe this good news, have received it as your very life...for it is
- and then, all you need do is proclaim it, tell others about it
- you are not responsible for saving them...that's God the Holy Spirit's work
- no, you just need to open your mouth and let them know
- **that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures**