

“Why Seek Ye The Living Among The Dead?”

Luke 24:1-8 (text v. 5)

Several women who followed Jesus came to His tomb on that first Easter morning to anoint His body. What a surprise these women discovered—The tomb was empty (v. 3). They were “*perplexed*” (v. 4) and “*afraid*” (v. 5).

Two angels greeted them with a startling question—“***Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen...***”

When you think about this profound question, it is kinda humorous—Who goes to a graveyard looking for someone who is alive? *Duh!?*

The mistake of these women is the same mistake made by multitudes today. They were looking for life in the wrong place—“***Why seek ye the living among the dead?***”

So typical of mankind... Man seeks for life—real life; abundant life; satisfying life; everlasting life—where life does not exist. You don’t go to a cemetery to find life... Life cannot be propagated from the dead. Life is only generated from the living.

➡ Where are you seeking to find life? “***Why seek ye the living among the dead?***”

I. Some seek life in the tomb of RELIGION.

- “But, aren’t you religious?” Yes, but being religious did not give me life!
- The Lord said to the church at Sardis— “*...thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead*” (Rev. 3:1). They had **form without force... religion without reality...** It was **all show, but no go!**
- HUMOR: An ambulance was called to a liberal church because someone died in the service. The paramedics carried out five people before they found the person who was actually dead!

A. Man is incurably religious. There is not a place on earth that you won’t find man worshipping something.

1. The fact man has this inner need to worship proves there is a God.
2. So man worships the sun, moon, stars; pictures on walls; objects of stone, wood, plastic, or gold—They have no heart to love... no ears to hear... no hands to help... because there is no life in them.

- B. Religion cannot impart life—Buddhism; Hinduism, Islam, Catholicism; Protestantism; Mormonism and all the other “isms.” Their founders are still in the grave (Buddha, Mohammad, Confucius, Peter, Joseph Smith)!

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?”

1. Being a Baptist will not give you life (neither will being a Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Catholic, Mormon, or Jehovah’s Witness)
 - ➡ “My religion is just as good as yours...” That may be so, but if all you have is religion, you still don’t have life (see 1 John 5:12).
2. There is a big difference in RELIGION and SALVATION—
 - **Religion** is what man does to buy favor with God. **Salvation** is what God does for man through faith.

ILLUS— Martin Luther was a Roman Catholic monk. He observed all the sacraments and traditions of Catholicism. Yet, he had no assurance of eternal life. No matter how hard he worked, he was terrified at the thought of what would happen to him after death. When salvation is based on works, there can be no assurance of eternal life because you never know if you’ve done enough or you’ve been good enough.

During a trip to Rome, Luther climbed the 28 steps of the holy stairs. As he climbed, he kissed each stair and praying an “Our Father” at each step. Romans 1:17 began to run across his mind—*“The just shall live by faith...”* Finally, he rose to his feet and went home thinking, “Could it be true that righteousness comes by faith alone and not by works?” He studied Paul’s epistles and came to the conclusion that man is saved by grace through faith, apart from works. Luther then realized that **life was not found in religion or works, but faith in the person of Jesus Christ.**

➡ Life is not found in sacraments... baptism... church membership... religious rituals and ceremonies... or good deeds.

➡ You will not find eternal life in the cold, dark, gloomy tomb or religion.

II. **Some seek life in the tomb of the WORLD** (1 John 2:15-17).

➡ 3 elements of the world:

- A. *“the lust of the flesh”*—The craving for PLEASURE (compelling urge to DO).
1. The pleasures of sin are short lived.

2. People go from one pleasure to another like a bee goes from flower to flower only to find themselves empty and disappointed.
 3. 1 Tim. 5:6—*“she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.”* Life is not found in drugs, a bottle, entertainment, or a pill. [“Gos-Pill”]
- B. *“the lust of the eyes”*—The craving for POSSESSIONS (compelling urge to HAVE).
1. “If I could just have that, I will be fulfilled in life.” (see Luke 12:15-21)
 2. Money may buy many things, but there are some things cannot buy:
 - Money can buy a bed, but not rest,
 - Money can buy "things," but not friends,
 - Money can buy entertainment, but not joy.
 - Money can buy an earthly house, but not a heavenly home.
 - Money can pay your debts to man, but not your debt to God.
 - Money may provide social security, but not eternal security.
- ➡ ILLUS— Solomon in Eccl. 2:1-10
- C. *“the pride of life”*—The craving of POSITION (compelling urge to BE).
1. How many millionaires, movie stars, and athletes have committed suicide because fame and success did not bring them fulfillment?
 2. Jesus said, *“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, [do anything he wanted... have anything he wanted... be anything he wanted to be] and lose his own soul?”* (Mk. 8:36).

➡ ***“Why seek ye the living among the dead?”***

III. The tomb of CHRIST.

- Let’s look at the tomb of our text. We are faced with the same startling question—***“Why seek ye the living among the dead?”***
- A. A **DIRECT** question.
1. Personal— Where are YOU seeking Christ / Life?
 2. Powerful— The tomb is empty! Christ is alive!

One Easter Sunday morning a third grade Sunday School teacher brought L’eggs pantyhose containers to her class. Each child was given one and instructed to go outside and find a symbol of new life, and put it in the L’eggs container.

After searching around the church property, the children returned to the class and placed their L’eggs containers on a table. Surround-

ed by the children, the teacher began to open them one by one. One held a flower, another a butterfly, or leaf. Finally one was opened that was empty. The children exclaimed, "Somebody didn't do their assignment."

One boy spoke up, "That one's mine."

"Philip, couldn't you find anything that represented new life?" the teacher asked.

The boy answered, "Yes. It's empty because Jesus' tomb is empty! An empty tomb means there is NEW LIFE!"

- B. A **DISCOVERING** question—"*REMEMBER how he spake unto you...*" They forgot what Jesus said (v. 7).
1. What did Jesus say? "*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.*"
 2. When we forget what Jesus said, doubts and fears will fill our mind. A bad situation will often distract us from what God said and we only think is how bad things are now.
- C. A **DETERMINING** question—It will determine your eternal destiny.

SUMMATION: Where are you seeking for life? Are you looking among the rituals of religion... the relics / riches of the world? You are looking for life in the wrong places, that will only **disappoint** you and **leave you empty**.

Come to the living Christ and receive real life... abundant life... eternal life—
"He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life!"

WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?