

Sermon Series: “At the Foot of the Cross” — Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—3/23/2008

Title: “Cheer up!”

Text: Mark 16: 1-8

Intro.: Ills. Wellington defeated . . .”

Theme: Jesus’ resurrection will take away the fears of our life, if we will let the good news message sing into our hearts.

Get a grip!—before one gets one on you

- Living in the grip of fear
 1. The woman came expecting a dead Jesus and afraid they couldn’t do the proper burial because of the rock (vs. 1-3)
 2. The disciples were holed up back in the room because of their guilt and fear of denying and deserting Jesus
 3. Is denial and guilt ruling and ruining your lives?
 - a. Afraid to re-engage a family member, today, because of past hurt given or received
 - b. Living under the pall of depression because of a self-imposed exile for past indiscretions, ill-advised choices
 - c. Crushed by hopelessness of a loved one lost to death, an dream unrealized, or a security or worth **MIA**
 - d. For many of us fear, guilt, and despondency have cast a fog of death over us and we have run the ship aground
 - e. **Ills.: Why so downcast?**
- Have your forgotten “what he said?” (***Just as He told you! vs. 7***)
 1. The angel in reporter-like fashion reviews the evidence which demands a verdict—
 - a. Jesus, the one you seek, the Nazarene, the one having been crucified, has risen. He is not here. See the empty burial clothes and slab!” (vs. 6)
 - b. We miss God’s living promise all around us because we focus on the tomb and not the resurrection in our lives
 2. Listen to the promises which God speaks to you through the mouth of the empty tomb
 - a. *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Romans 8:32*
 - b. “. . .neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:39
 - c. *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philip. 4:19*
 - d. *Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. 2 Cor 1: 9-10*
 - e. *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26*

Living in the grasp of a living Savior

- Don’t be afraid to expect to see God’s resurrection miracle
 1. Isn’t it amazing that the women were amazed to see a resurrection scene just like Jesus told them (vs. 4-5)
 2. If Jesus’ lives, do you expect him to show up in your life in miraculous ways? (Reconciliation, deliverance, etc.)
 - a. **Ills.: Let the Easter Bells Ring!**
- Don’t be afraid to show and tell it now that you have (vs. 7)
 1. Angels word to women was, “Don’t keep this a secret. Let the disciples know so they too can stop living in fear.”
 2. Easter is the Christian Church’s best kept secret — so let it out so others can know a living Savior, like you do
- Move beyond your paralysis of fear

1. When all was said and done, the women still “*fled...because they were afraid*” (vs.8)
 - a. Maybe, afraid because they had this heavenly encounter and didn’t know whether to believe it
 - b. Maybe afraid of the Jews or 11 disciples and what they would do or say to them
 - c. Could they have been afraid that they might just come across the risen Jesus?
2. So what are you and I going to do with our fear?
 - a. *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:18*
 - b. Take it to the “***one who has been crucified and is risen***” for you
 - c. *"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation." Therefore you will joyously draw water From the springs of salvation. And in that day you will say, "Give thanks to the LORD, call on His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; Make them remember that His name is exalted." Isaiah 12:2-4*

Wellington Defeat the Enemy

When the battle of Waterloo was being fought all England, waiting in anxiety for the result of that day, was dependent for news upon the signals flashed from station to station by signal flags. One of these stations was on the tower of Winchester Cathedral. Late in the day it received the signal. At that moment a fog bank had obscured the view of the tower, and the message read below was, “Wellington defeated.” The disastrous news quickly circulated in the city. After a little while it reached London, and the whole land was in gloom bordering on despair. Then the fog began to lift and the full content of the message could be read: “Wellington defeated the enemy.” Now sorrow was immediately turned into joy and defeat into victory.

Why so downcast?

When Martin Luther was especially downcast and cheerless for a number of days, due to the many cares and sorrows that had entered his career, his wife dressed in mourning and came into his study. Startled at her strange appearance, Luther inquired: “Who has died?” “Jesus Christ has died,” she replied, “and I am preparing to mourn for him.” “But, surely,” said Luther, “Jesus Christ cannot die.” “That’s what I always believed,” replied his wife, “But when I observed how downcast and cheerless you have been, I concluded that Jesus Christ must have died and was in the grave.” Thanking his wife for her valuable lesson she taught him and filled with renewed courage, Luther took a piece of chalk and wrote on his desk, “Vivit!” the Latin word for “He lives!”

Let the Bells of Easter Ring!

During the Napoleonic conquest of Austria his army advanced to within six miles of Feldkirch. It looked as though the troops would take Feldkirch without a shadow of resistance. But as Napoleon’s men advanced by night toward their objective, the Christians of Feldkirch gathered in a little church to pray. It was Easter Eve. The next morning at sunrise the bells of the village pealed out across the countryside. Napoleon’s army, not realizing it was Easter Sunday, thought that the Austrian army had moved into Feldkirch in the night and that the bells were ringing in jubilation. Napoleon ordered a retreat, and the battle of Feldkirch never took place. The Easter bells had caused the enemy to retreat, and peace reigned in the Austrian countryside.

Mark 16:1-8

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

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

⁶"Stop being afraid," 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.

⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, *just as he told you.*' "

⁸Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.