

**That's News to Me!**  
[Text -Matthew 28:1-10]

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This morning we celebrate the glorious Good News of Easter - the Good News of the Resurrection. Now I'll admit, that after 2,000 years, to refer to the Resurrection as *news*, may sound a little weird. Normally, when we talk about *news*, we mean something that's *new* - a current event that holds some specific meaning for us, or for our larger world. So this morning, I'd like us to consider how the ancient story of Jesus' Resurrection can add *tremendous* meaning to our lives today. In other words, I want us to look at how the Resurrection of Jesus Christ can actually raise-up new life and renewed purpose for you and me on this Easter morning.

The first thing I'd like us to consider, is the image of the empty tomb. In all the Gospel accounts of that first Easter morning, by the time the women arrive at the tomb, Jesus has already made his Grand Exit. Therefore, the first thing they encounter is not a Risen Christ, but an empty tomb. The point being, that the powers of hatred, fear and death cannot contain or deter the Message - or the Messenger - of Divine Love and Life. In other words, the compassion and grace that lives and flows in and through Jesus Christ, cannot be confined or stopped by *anything!*

Something for us to consider, therefore, is whether you and I are prepared to exit our *own* tombs on this Easter Day:  
To break free from the fears that would hold us captive;  
To leave behind those old trappings of past failures and disappointments;  
To roll-away the stone of selfishness and hardheartedness;  
To boldly move forward into the Light of Divine Love and Grace.  
This is a truly important consideration, especially in a world where religion is often used as a means to keep people in check; to hold

us down; or to build barriers that separate and insulate us, rather than uniting us and setting us free.

The Good News of Easter, is that you and I *are* free to live just as Jesus did - to move beyond our fears and doubts and self-imposed tombs - to trust completely in the loving care of our Gracious Heavenly Parent. The Good *News* of the Resurrection, is that each of us has the opportunity to approach Life from a *new* and open and elevated perspective; to let go of those dreary and deadly things that weigh us down; and to relate to one another in fresh and compassionate ways. Or to put it another way, we are all invited to be “Born Again!”

Now I realize that the expression “being born again” can make some of us feel a bit uncomfortable. We often associate that term with a rigid and over-zealous religious piety that judges and excludes people, rather than welcome and accept them. After all, there are some very vocal self-professed “Born Again Christians” who behave less like God’s *chosen* people, and more like God’s *frozen* people - stiff, stuffy, and extremely self-righteous. Yet if we take a moment to think about what it means to be “born”, we may come to better appreciate the beauty of what it actually means to be “Born Again”.

A baby in the womb is completely unaware of the vast array of sights and sounds, people and places that are out there, just waiting for him or her to experience. At the moment of birth, suddenly everything is different, and a whole new world is presented to that individual. Every day offers new opportunities to learn and grow and to connect with all those other fascinating life-forms around them - to discover new and exciting things - and to develop wonderfully diverse thoughts and ideas. And even though we parents can’t always protect our children from the potential problems and dangers that are out there, good parents will do

everything in their power to provide unconditional love and support for that child, as long as it is humanly possible.

Jesus Christ came to proclaim and to show us the unconditional love and support of our Heavenly Parent - the One who makes us so that we might experience Life's marvelous abundance. The One whose Eternal Love and Gracious Care never ends. And Jesus invites you and me to truly trust that our Compassionate Creator will never, ever fail us. Throughout his life, Jesus is able to do amazing things, because of his abiding trust in God's unfailing goodness. He heals the sick, feeds the hungry, lifts-up the oppressed, welcomes and accepts any and all who are willing to receive him. Jesus lives his life, and shares his life, boldly, freely and completely. And when the stiff and stodgy religious authorities insist that he stop, Jesus refuses to do so. Even though it costs him his life, Jesus Christ will not, and cannot, stop *trusting* in God's amazing love and grace - for himself and for this entire creation.

The Good News of Easter - the Good News of the Resurrection - is that the Life of Jesus Christ doesn't end at the cross or in the tomb; actually, that is where it begins anew.

It is born anew in the lives of those dazed women who first discover that the tomb is empty.

It is born again in the hearts of those frightened and dejected disciples who, at first, can't believe it, but later, can't help but believe.

And it is re-born in every subsequent generation, from that time until right now - which is what makes it *news!*

Today, on this Easter morning, the Life and Power of the Risen Christ is once again present - ready to rise-up anew in and through the lives of each of us who wishes to receive it. And so the essential question remains: Are you and I ready to abandon our own tombs - to break free from the fears that would hold us

captive - to leave behind the old trappings - and to boldly live in the Light and Love of Jesus Christ? If this is our genuine desire, then there is nothing in heaven, or on earth, that can stand in our way. This is the *Good News* that brings us new life!