

## Series C: Resurrection of Our Lord—Remember All That God Has Done

Seminarian Raymond Doubrava

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Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Have you ever been certain of something that anything to the contrary seems impossible? You knew for certain that you are going to be passed over again for a job promotion. You knew for certain that the next time that your child or grandchild called it would be to tell you that they and their spouse were still unable to have a child. You knew for certain that the next time you got a call from your best friend's number, it would be their spouse telling you that they died of the cancer they'd been battling for the last year. Whatever it is, you are certain that it is going to be bad. But then the boss calls you in and says that they are promoting you and giving you a raise. But then you get the phone call and your loved one who's been trying to conceive a child is three months pregnant. But then you get a phone call from your best friend telling you that the cancer is in full remission. In these circumstances, your joy seems even greater for the apparent sorrow that you were expecting.

This is like the circumstance in which the ladies in our text find themselves. They head to the tomb of Jesus to properly prepare his body for burial since they did not have time to do so three days earlier. And yet, when they get there, behold, the tomb was empty. Jesus was not there. Dead bodies do not simply get up and walk away. The women are, understandably so, perplexed. But then, as Luke records, **"While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.'"** (Lk 24:4-7). And what the ladies going to the tomb are called to do is what we are called to do. God call us to remember all that he has said and done. And specifically, He calls us to remember three things. First, God calls us to remember that He died. Second, God calls us to remember that He rose on the third day just as He promised. Finally, God calls us to remember that, because He rose from the dead, we have hope in the resurrection of our bodies.

God calls us to remember that He died. The ladies had no problem remembering that Jesus had died. That's why they were going to the tomb. They remembered that

Christ had died and that they needed to properly prepare the body according to custom. They had seen Him die. They had seen all his blood poured out so that water was flowing out of the body which only happens when all the blood is gone. They had seen His lifeless body removed from the cross. There was no doubt that Jesus was dead. But what about for us? How do we remember Christ's death on the cross? Certainly, we come together as we did on Good Friday to celebrate His death on the cross. But it isn't merely a one-day-a-year remembrance. Everyday we are called to remember Christ's death. We do so by remembering our Baptism, into which we were baptized into His death so that we might die to sin. Therefore, Christians throughout history have made the sign of the Cross on themselves so that they may remember that, through Baptism, they are made a part of that work of Christ on the Cross. Likewise, every time we come together to share the Lord's Supper, we remember Christ's death and proclaim it, as Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians. We also do it through hearing God's Word proclaimed. Paul says, **"We proclaim Christ crucified"** (1 Co 1:23). When we hear God's Word proclaimed, whether through at home study of God's Word or coming together as God commanded to hear His word proclaimed and applied personally for you in the Divine Service, we proclaim Christ's death.

But why should we remember Christ's death? If He just was dead for three days, what's the importance of that? Everything! His death made atonement for all our sins. Because He suffered and died for our sins, we don't have to. God placed the punishment we deserved on His Son. Thus, we need never think that God is punishing us for our sin. He already punished His Son. Thus, when we or our loved ones get passed over for that promotion at work again, we need not worry that God is punishing us. When we or our loved ones are unable to conceive a child, we need not worry that God is punishing us. When we or our loved ones are on our deathbed due to cancer or other disease, we need not worry that God is punishing us. He punished His Son in our stead. We often remember that Christ died for our sins; that is easy to do. But we are called also to remember Christ's death even with these seeming mundane things so that we are not led into despair but may have hope in the Cross.

And we're called to remember that Christ rose from the dead on the third day, just as He promised that He would. The ladies remember His words and that remembrance turns their mourning into joy, as it will the disciples later

that night. Christ is risen and because He is, they need not mourn but can now rejoice! Likewise, because Christ is raised from the dead, we have cause to rejoice. Now we are justified, now we are made right with God. We have new life through Baptism where the new man was born in us and in whom we rejoice. And Christ gives us His Body and Blood in the Lord's Supper for the forgiveness of sins, yes, but also to strengthen the new man and the faith that is in us. And we proclaim Christ's resurrection for it is through this resurrection that our faith is not in vain. And we remember the resurrection because in the resurrection, we find the answer even when we get passed over for the job promotion. In the resurrection, we find the answer even when we or our loved ones are unable to conceive a Child. In the Resurrection, we find the answer even when we or a loved one is near death.

Why? Because we are justified through Christ's resurrection, because we are made right with God, we are now at peace with God, a peace which is not only brings spiritual peace, but also give peace in this temporal life. Because we are peace with God, we can find peace to say, "God, I don't know why I was passed over for the promotion, but I leave everything entrusted to your care leaning on your grace and peace to be sufficient." Because we are peace with God, we can find peace to say, "God, because of the fallen state of this world, I and my wife are barren, but I leave everything entrusted to your care leaning on your grace and peace to be sufficient." Because we are peace with God, we can find peace to say, "God, because of the fallen state of this world, I am near death due to disease, but I leave every entrusted to your care leaning on your grace and peace to be sufficient." We often remember that Christ was raised from the dead; that is easy to do. But we are called also to remember Christ's resurrection even with these seeming mundane things so that we are not led into despair but may have peace in the resurrection.

And God calls us to remember that, just as He raised His Son from the dead, so too will we rise from the dead. Paul writes, **"If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ"** (1 Co 15:19-23). We remember that in Baptism, God made us members of His heavenly kingdom which has no end, where we will live eternally. There we won't be just floating spirits, but we will have our bodies, just as

we do now. We remember that in the Lord's Supper, God gives to us a foretaste of the feast to come, the eternal banquet of which all who believe and are baptized shall partake. We remember that the word proclaimed through Holy Scripture and preached and applied for you, is the eternal Word of God which shall have no end.

But why should we remember the resurrection from the dead? Because in the resurrection of the body, our entire lives receive a new focus. Our lives become ones lead both by the knowledge and understanding that the body is sacred and thus we should treat it with respect, even in death, for that very body will on the Last Day be raised from the dead. But they are also led by the understanding that this mortal life is only the first step with eternal life in Heaven with God as the final goal that we press towards. Thus, even when we are passed over for a job promotion, we can say, "Lord, I trust that you will provide me with all I need for this mortal life according to your gracious will so that I may, by your guiding, ever press on until I receive the crown of everlasting life, not just for my soul but for my body as well." Thus, even when we are or one of our loved ones are unable to conceive a child, we can say, "Lord, I trust that you will provide me with all I need for this mortal life according to your gracious will so that I may, by your guiding, ever press on until I receive the crown of everlasting life, not just for my soul but for my body as well." Thus, even when we or a loved one is facing death even from disease, we can say, "Lord, I trust that you will provide me with all I need for this mortal life according to your gracious will so that I may, by your guiding, ever press on until I receive the crown of everlasting life, not just for my soul but for my body as well." We often remember that just as Christ was raised from the dead, so too we will rise from the dead; that is easy to do. But we are called also to remember that because we will bodily rise from the dead, we live everyday pressing on towards that goal and living holy lives according to the eternal life we have in Christ Jesus.

Remember! Remember all that God has said and done. This is what He calls the women to do. This is what He calls us to do. He calls us to remember Christ's death for our atonement so that we may not despair. He calls us to remember Christ's resurrection from the dead making us right with God, so that we may have peace both in this life and in the life to come. And He calls us to remember that, since we will rise with our bodies from the dead, we are to press everyday toward that goal. May the peace of God, which was won for us in his resurrection which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.