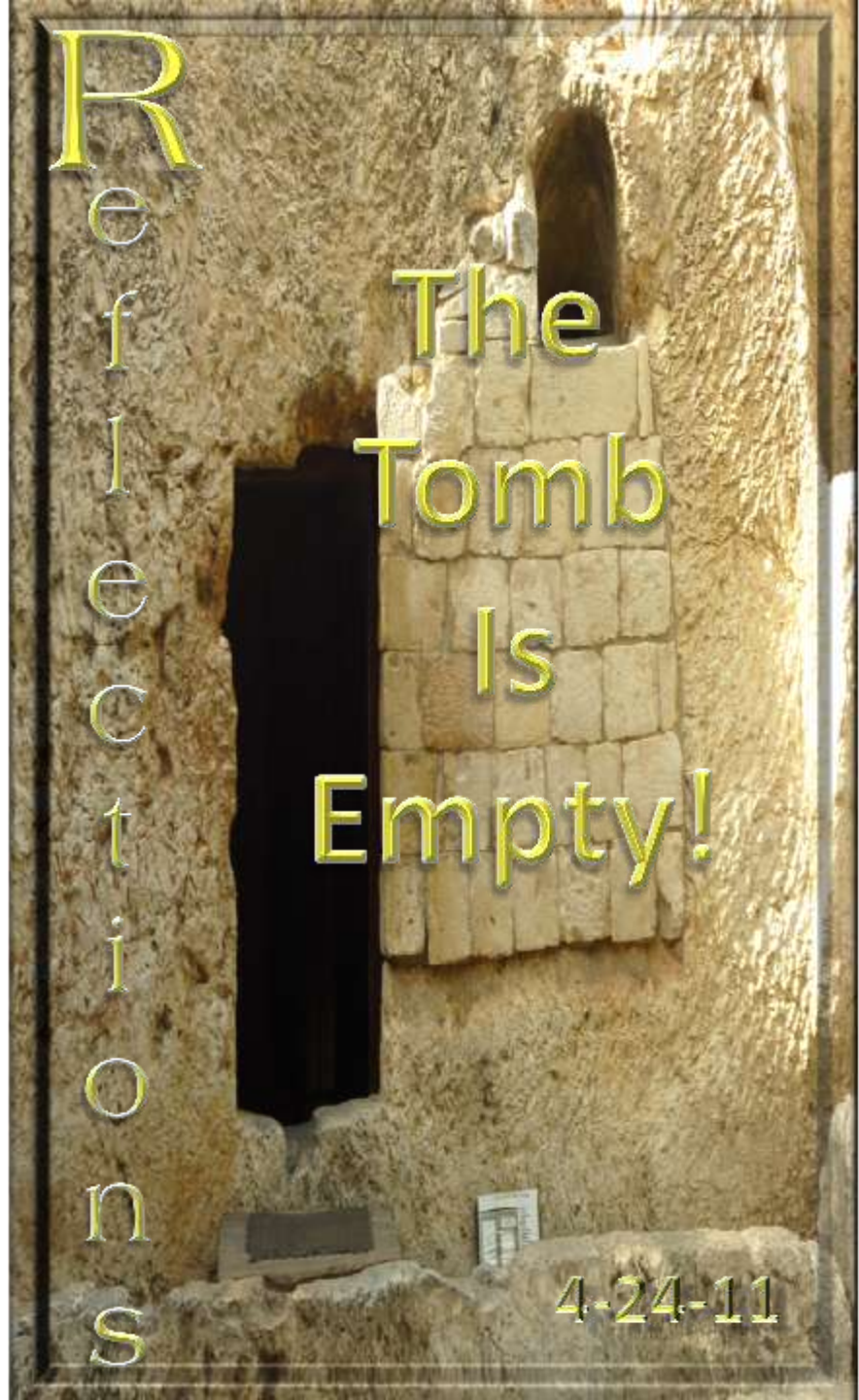


R

e
f
f
e
c
t
i
o
n
s

The
Tomb
Is
Empty!

4-24-11





Reflections

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ³ Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?" ⁶ "He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷ "saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'"⁸ ⁸ And they remembered His words.

(Luke 24:1-8 NKJ)

He is risen! They had watched Him die, they had grieved at their loss, they were in hiding from the very forces that had taken Him, and now the report that He has risen! His disciples were amazed and even confused. When the women came to them they listened but determined that the account sounded like idle tales and they did not believe them. Peter, however, ran to the tomb to see for himself and found it as the women had reported and marveled at what had happened.

Two men were travelling to Emmaus about 7 miles from Jerusalem. They were discussing the events that had just transpired with much sadness. Jesus came to them and began to explain the Scriptures that spoke of Him and when He finally revealed Himself to them, and then vanished from their sight, they recalled how His opening up the Scriptures to them impacted them deep in their hearts.

The eleven were gathered together and were also discussing these things that they had just witnessed. When Jesus appeared in their midst they were, at first, terrified, but as He reassured them and opened up the Scriptures to them they began rejoicing. They witnessed His ascension and waited to receive the promised Holy Spirit's arrival where-upon they became powerful witnesses to the world about this Jesus, the Messiah, the Redeemer, and the Lord of Lords.

When I see Resurrection Sunday approaching, I am filled with awe as I focus on the greatest event in history, the Resurrection of our Lord. I must also sadly view the world as people focus their attention on

bunnies that lay eggs and chicks that, though delightful little bundles of down, have no relationship to the real purpose for celebrating the Resurrection. They are in fact related to pagan fertility rites. Yet, as with much of what we do, the world has substituted the created for the Creator and professing wisdom, they embrace foolishness.

We worship so many things in place of Jesus, that our children grow up without believing in Him. We see them turning to worldly philosophies and watch them being captivated by that which is described in Scripture as being an abomination in the eyes of the Lord. We find the children of today glued to electronic games to the exclusion of life's many opportunities for their growth and maturity. Is it any wonder that they have been taken captive and are far from the Lord and His call on their lives? How can they hear the voice of the Holy Spirit calling them to salvation in Christ when they are "plugged in" to the voices of God's enemies? How will they come to know Christ without the voice of parents and friends speaking of Him as the risen Lord? When we do not recognize the Resurrection, how can we truly expect that our lives will be spiritually complete? By rejecting the only way to the Father, Jesus, we assure ourselves of an eternal existence without God.

Let's once again consider the empty tomb. The stone was indeed rolled away but not to release Jesus, who had already taken up His life again, but rather to let us see that it is empty. The seals of the rulers could not prevent the truth of His resurrection from being made known. Death could not prevent His resurrection. Satan could only watch with dismay as the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords defeated not only the power of Hell, but the power of death as well. The grave was not His prison but rather His proof of His deity as He left it behind Him, and He left it empty. Satan was defeated! Sin was defeated! Death was defeated! Life was made available to a spiritually enslaved world! These are the real results offered to us as He gave Himself a sacrifice for all who would receive His gift of grace.

The grave is empty! The power of the enemy is now disabled for all who will receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior! This Resurrection Sunday can be your release from sin and eternal death. Will you look to Him for your salvation or will you choose to play with bunnies and chicks that cannot save? The choice is yours. **Pastor Doug**