

# AMAZEMENT Mark 16:1-8

Pastor Bill Mosley 4-4-2021 Easter Sunday, The Resurrection of Our Lord

An elementary teacher asked her students to write a short essay on their plans for Easter. After a few minutes, a boy raised his hand and asked, Teacher, how do you spell gun? Well, the teacher tried to avoid violent subjects in class, so she couldn't write the new word on the board, as usual.

Instead, she leaned over to him and said, G-U-N. A few minutes later his hand was up again.

Teacher, how do you spell die?

Quietly, she spelled, D-I-E. Then curiosity and worry got the better of her. She had to ask, what exactly are you going to do?

"I'm GUN DYE Easter eggs." 786 Ho

Even our most innocent moments are tinted with fear. For ourselves or someone else. Mass shootings. The border crisis. Covid 19. Fuel prices going up. The economy in shambles. The government in debt and wanting to spend more. The erosion of the Bill of Rights. Some say it may mean the death of our society.

What is the answer to fear?

The Amazement of Easter.

*Christmas tells us the tale of his birth;  
History records that he walked on earth;  
Everyone knows that he suffered & bled,  
But do you believe that he didn't stay dead?*

Like the passion of Christ, the resurrection of Jesus is an emotional event. It's full of amazement.

He didn't stay dead. He's not there.

If we truly believe that Jesus rose and because Jesus rose we have eternal life, what is there to be afraid of? We don't have to fear the loss of this moment because we have eternity.

What are you afraid of? The moment, the message, the mystery?

Gun? Die? Not a thing to be afraid of. Jesus has risen. The moment we approach the empty tomb is not something to be afraid of. But maybe, the message of Jesus is.

For after all, the empty tomb ratifies his message.

In death there is life.

If the seed dies, then it can live.

He who loses his life for Jesus' sake will find it. Destroy this temple and in 3 days I will raise it up.

The message, that we don't have to be afraid, frees us. But that too is scary.

In the Dark Ages a man was caught in a crime. He was sent to the king for punishment. The king told him he had a choice. He could be hung by a rope or take what's behind an iron door. The criminal chose the rope. On the gallows, he turned to the king and asked. "what was behind that door?" The king laughed and said: "it's funny, I offer everyone the same choice, and nearly everyone picks the rope." the criminal said, "So, What's behind the door? I mean, I won't tell anyone," he said, pointing to the noose around his neck. The king paused then answered, "Freedom, but it seems people are so afraid of the unknown

that they immediately take the rope.”

We don't seem to want to use the freedom that we are given. We aren't locked in a casket anymore. But here's the king ready to set us free, to make us new creatures, to give us new life.

But that message scares a lot of us.

The man in the white robe at the tomb said, Go to Galilee.

You can almost feel his annoyance. He said all this -- he's going to be in Galilee. That's where you will see him. In your ordinary daily life. Not necessarily in JERUSALEM.

Aren't we like these women? He said lots of things We're supposed to learn and act on. But we hold back.

And that's a fear, timidity, that keeps us choosing the rope.

And if we aren't afraid for the moments of life, or afraid of the message this man brought and now has dramatically ratified that we might believe, we might be afraid of the mystery.

A mystery is something we don't know the answer to: Life, Death, Birth, the soul, Heaven, Hell. Our biggest fear is fear of the unknown.

And if things of life and death are unknown, the resurrection is even more unknown.

He IS NOT Here! HE is RISEN! And that makes us amazed and afraid. But it should not make us timid.

This mystery can only mean one thing. The story is not over.

Hiram Haydn tells about sharing an office with writer William Faulkner. He says Faulkner would write one page at a table, carry it to a typewriter and supposedly rewrite what he had just written. Haydn confesses that when the great writer left the office he would examine Faulkner's

work.

Twice he found that the page ended in the middle of a sentence, once with the word 'and,' and once midway in a prepositional phrase.

Finally he asked Faulkner about this process. He said, "I just suppose it's more interesting this way. If you stop at 'and,' why you can go anywhere." That's what we all want isn't it? To feel that we can go anywhere?

The mystery of the resurrection means we're in the middle of the sentence & we can go anywhere.

Death is defeated. So what are we afraid of? Like the Women we are afraid at the tomb, afraid to believe, afraid to say what we believe; afraid to live like we believe he's not there, but he is here.

We need not fear. We can lay hold on life for we have eternal life. The story is not over. How does it end? It doesn't.

You write the ending. That's the mystery of new life -- the joy of Easter, And its amazement.

*Christmas tells us the tale of his birth;  
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I think part of the problem is that we are a little afraid of our feelings about Jesus, his cross and his empty tomb. It's just too amazing. It's just too frightening. It's fantastic.

Have no fear. Choose the door. Finish the sentence. It's so exciting I can't keep it in. He is risen, he IS here!

*Lord, help us in our amazement to say no to everything  
that makes it more difficult to say yes to you.* 1062 words