

# AMITY BIBLE CHURCH

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*"To Know God and To Make Him Known"*

## SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY NOTES

— April 1, 2018 —

*Pastor Les Smith*

**SERIES: Resurrection Sunday**

**SERMON: The Tomb is Still Empty**

**TEXT: John 14:16-19**

### Central Message:

Jesus Christ is unique, in that he was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, was crucified so we could be saved, rose from the dead, and then after spending forty days with the people, ascended into heaven. But without the Resurrection and the empty tomb, there would be no Christianity. If Jesus Christ had not risen from the dead, we would have no hope and Christianity would lack any real substance. Without the Resurrection, Christianity would be fake news, fake religion, and false hope. But He is risen, and the tomb is still empty!

Who but God could have conceived of such a world-changing event for our salvation? Who but God could have taken the beating, scourging, spitting, and mocking, all while remaining silent and praying for His captors' forgiveness? Yes, our Lord Jesus Christ humbled himself and became like us so we would have a way to live forever with Him. He came here for one purpose, and He fulfilled His Father's plan. What historical religious figure has ever done what Jesus did? Be encouraged! When Jesus walked out of the tomb, he began clearing a path for you. I believe that we sometimes fail to realize the battle is won, He is victorious, and we need to step into victory. We need to walk in that victory. We need to stop allowing our circumstances to steal our joy. When everyone else abandons you, Jesus is there, and will always be there for you. Jesus is *the comforter* when you are grieving and cannot stop crying. Jesus is *the peacemaker* of our souls. He

stands guard over our heartaches, sufferings, and times of hopelessness. He escorts us through the valley of sorrows and lifts us up. He is the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah! He endows boldness and courage when our first thought is to run or hide. He is our Lord! And, those who believe in Him will experience eternal life. He is alive, and the tomb is still empty!

But, how can we really and truly know that the tomb is still empty. There are three clear indicators at which we can look.

**Indicator #1: We know that the tomb is still empty because we have the power of God's indwelling Spirit. (John 14:16-17)**

*"<sup>16</sup> I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper that He may be with you forever; <sup>17</sup> that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."*

Because the Spirit of God has come to live inside of us, we have the power to not only endure our suffering but to grow in spite of that suffering. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". Paul was not saying that he could stop time from moving forward or stop the wind from blowing or the rain from falling. He was saying that because of the indwelling Christ, he was content with whatever situation in which he found himself. He was declaring that he had surrendered his will to the Father and was available for whatever God wanted to accomplish through him. Paul knew that no power on earth could stand against God's program. Indeed, he could do *all things* through Christ.

We can also be assured that because we have the indwelling Christ, death holds no fear over us. Therefore, we can walk through the valley of death and fear no evil. That is what Holy Ghost power looks like!

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Because the tomb is still empty, we have the strength to find contentment in every situation. It is like having a car with a powerful engine. If we need to pass another car, we press the accelerator, the engine revs, and the car responds. That is what it is like to have Christ living in us. We don't have to want for anything because He has already given us everything.

**Indicator #2: We know that the tomb is still empty because His promise is still reliable.** (John 14:1-4)

*“Do not let your heart be troubled; <sup>[a]</sup>believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup>In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup>And you know the way where I am going.” <sup>5</sup>Thomas \*said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” <sup>6</sup>Jesus \*said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”*

As Jesus was preparing to go to the cross, He told His disciples that He was going away to prepare a place for them, and He promised to return for them so that they could be with Him. Most of His friends were too distraught about His leaving to be comforted by the promise of His return. But, what the disciples did not know was that, though Jesus would be crucified at the hands of His tormentors, He would be raised on the third day by the power of His Father. It was not until the disciples saw the empty tomb and touched His resurrected body that they were convinced that Jesus was indeed alive.

He is alive today and the tomb is still empty as it was that first Easter morning. But, more importantly, that tomb has been empty for the last 2,000 Easters, and it will continue to remain empty because His promises are reliable.

**Indicator #3: We know that the tomb is still empty because our hope is still real.** (John 14:19)

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*"<sup>19</sup> After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also."*

Most people understand hope as wishful thinking, as in "I hope something will happen." This is not what the Bible means by hope. The biblical definition of *hope* is "confident expectation." Hope is a firm assurance regarding things that are unclear and unknown ([Romans 8:24-25](#); [Hebrews 11:1, 7](#)). Hope is a fundamental component of the life of the righteous ([Proverbs 23:18](#)). Without hope, life loses its meaning ([Lamentations 3:18](#); [Job 7:6](#)). In death, there is no hope ([Isaiah 38:18](#); [Job 17:15](#)). The righteous who trust or put their hope in God will be helped ([Psalm 28:7](#)), and they will not be confounded, put to shame, or disappointed ([Isaiah 49:23](#)). The righteous, who have this trustful hope in God, have a general confidence in God's protection and help ([Jeremiah 29:11](#)) and are free from fear and anxiety ([Psalm 46:2-3](#)).

The New Testament idea of hope is the recognition that in Christ is found the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises ([Matthew 12:21](#), [1 Peter 1:3](#)). Christian hope is rooted in faith of the divine salvation in Christ ([Galatians 5:5](#)). Hope of Christians is brought into being through the presence of the promised Holy Spirit ([Romans 8:24-25](#)). It is the future hope of the resurrection of the dead ([Acts 23:6](#)), the promises given to Israel ([Acts 26:6-7](#)), the redemption of the body and of the whole creation ([Romans 8:23-25](#)), eternal glory ([Colossians 1:27](#)), eternal life and the inheritance of the saints ([Titus 3:5-7](#)), the return of Christ ([Titus 2:11-14](#)), transformation into the likeness of Christ ([1 John 3:2-3](#)), the salvation of God ([1 Timothy 4:10](#)), and simply Christ Himself ([1 Timothy 1:1](#)).

The certainty of this blessed future is guaranteed through the indwelling of the Spirit ([Romans 8:23-25](#)), Christ in us ([Colossians 1:27](#)), and the resurrection of Christ ([Acts 2:26](#)). Hope is produced by endurance through suffering ([Romans 5:2-5](#)) and is the inspiration behind endurance ([1 Thessalonians 1:3](#); [Hebrews 6:11](#)).

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Those who hope in Christ will see Christ exalted in life and in death ([Philippians 1:20](#)). Trustworthy promises from God give us hope ([Hebrews 6:18-19](#)), and we may boast in this hope ([Hebrews 3:6](#)) and exhibit great boldness in our faith ([2 Corinthians 3:12](#)). By contrast, those who do not place their trust in God are said to be without hope ([Ephesians 2:12](#), [1 Thessalonians 4:13](#)).