



DON'T BE AFRAID ... EVER ...

We return to Matthew's account of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Son of God and find our faithful women at the open tomb of their resurrected Lord ...

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 3 And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 And the guards quaked from fear of him and became like dead men. 5 And the angel answered and said to the women, **"Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified."** 6 He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. 7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you."

And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. 9 And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, **"Do not be afraid; go and report to My brothers to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."**

(Matthew 28:1-10 LSB)

These faithful women were still reeling from the crucifixion of their Lord two days prior on Friday afternoon. But they lived by a very important principle that they had learned from Jesus himself ... When in doubt, follow Jesus. When afraid and confused, follow Jesus. When you don't know what else to do, follow Jesus. Always follow Jesus.

- (John 12:26 LSB) If anyone serves Me, **he must follow Me**; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.
- (John 10:27 LSB) My sheep hear My voice, **and I know them, and they follow Me.**

And in following Jesus they would eventually come to discover what the apostles discovered—the powerful reality of what happened on that afternoon ...

This was the power of God for salvation ...

- (1 Corinthians 1:18 LSB) For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, **but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.**

This was our righteousness in the making ...

- (2 Corinthians 5:21 LSB) **He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

So they followed Jesus right up to the tomb.

- (Matthew 28:1 LSB) Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, **Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.**

We cannot be sure why they came to the grave. It is very possible that they came to look at the grave, further prepare his body ... and hope against hope for a miracle ...

- (Luke 23:55–56 LSB) Now the women, who had come with Him from Galilee, **followed** and beheld the tomb and how His body was laid. 56 Then after they returned, they **prepared** spices and perfumes. **And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.**

Whatever their reasons they came to the grave to show their love for the Lord by caring for his dead body. So what a wonderful surprise to find an empty tomb and an angel announcing to them that ... “He has risen” ...

- (Matthew 28:2–7 LSB) And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 3 And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 **And the guards quaked from fear of him and became like dead men.** 5 And the angel answered and said to the women, **“Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified.** 6 **He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said.** Come, see the place where He was lying. 7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.”

BECAUSE THESE FAITHFUL WOMEN FOLLOWED AND SERVED THE LORD JESUS THEY WERE ...

1. **The first ones to witness the empty tomb.**
2. **They would be the first to announce his resurrection.**
3. **And ... they were the recipients of the very first message from God delivered to the followers of Jesus after the resurrection.**

The angel said, “Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified.”

So what did these women do? They obeyed the instructions they had been given and left the tomb quickly.

- (Matthew 28:8–10 LSB) And **they left the tomb quickly** with fear and great joy **and ran to report it to His disciples.** 9 And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, **“Do not be afraid;** go and report to My brothers to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

We have good reason to not be afraid ... ever ... of anything ... based on the saving work of Jesus Christ on a Friday afternoon outside of Jerusalem in ancient Israel and culminating with his resurrection on that Sunday.

- (Romans 8:31–32 LSB) **What then shall we say to these things?** If God is for us, who is against us? 32 **He who indeed did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?**