

Make Your Way *Matthew 28:1–10*

Once again, let us greet one another with Easter joy: Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! May the joy of the resurrection fill our hearts and overflow into our lives each day.

Our Easter story begins with an earthquake and an open tomb. And of course, people ask questions: Did it really happen like that? Can the resurrection be proved? Those are understandable questions. But Easter is not only something to analyze. It is a word from God to hear.

And what does God say through the resurrection? God says that death is not the end. Despair is not the end. Guilt is not the end. Whatever feels buried in your life is not the end. The stone is rolled away because God is opening what we thought was closed. The earth shakes because God is breaking the power of death itself. Easter means that hope is stronger than despair and life is stronger than death. That is why we do not give up. That is why we keep walking. That is why we make our way toward new life.

Now look for a moment at the cross in front of us. Throughout this Lenten season, week by week, we brought before God the brokenness of our hearts and the burdens of our lives. We named them honestly. We offered them to Christ. And little by little, those broken pieces became part of the mosaic cross we see before us now.

This cross says something beautiful. Christ does not reject what is broken. Christ receives it. Christ holds it. And in love, Christ begins to make something new out of it. That too is part of the message of Easter.

Easter does not pretend our wounds are not real. It does not deny grief. It does not erase sorrow. The cross is real. Our pain is real. The losses we carry are real. But Easter tells us that brokenness is not the end of the story. The love of God is real too. The grace of God is real too. And the life of God is stronger still.

Resurrection means that what is broken can be gathered up, held in mercy, and transformed by grace. And that grace does not leave us standing at the tomb. It sends us forward. So the angel says to the women, “Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.”

Why Galilee? Galilee was where it all began. It was the place where the disciples first heard the call of Jesus. It was also the place of ordinary life—where they worked, struggled, hoped, failed, and followed.

And that matters, because the risen Christ does not stay far away from ordinary life. The risen Christ goes ahead of us into the very places where we actually live. That is good news, because most of life is lived in ordinary places. We do not spend most of our lives on mountaintops. We live in kitchens and waiting rooms, in hospitals and offices, at tables and in traffic, in joyful days and weary days, in seasons when faith comes easily and seasons when we are simply trying to keep going.

And the good news of Easter is this: the risen Christ is already there. Christ goes ahead of us into the ordinary, into the routine, into the unfinished parts of our lives, into the places where we laugh and the places where we grieve. The risen Christ goes ahead of us there.

At the end of the film *The Way*, there is a powerful scene. Tom, the main character, finally arrives at Santiago Cathedral, the destination he had longed for. But that is not really the end of his journey. He packs his bag again and goes on to the sea. There, with the horizon stretched out before him, he scatters his son’s ashes and finally finds a kind of freedom.

Somewhere along the journey, something in him changed. His wounds did not simply disappear, but they no longer held him in the same way. His heart had opened. Healing had begun. He had become someone different from the man who first started walking.

In a similar way, the risen Christ invites us to move beyond the tomb-like realities of regret, guilt, and despair, and into the wide, open grace of God. That is what resurrection life looks like.

It does not mean we never hurt or grieve. It does not mean life suddenly becomes easy. It means that death does not rule us anymore. Fear does not define us anymore. The past does not imprison us anymore. Because Christ is risen, there is a way forward. Because Christ is risen, there is still a future. Because Christ is risen, we do not have to stay where sorrow left us. In his book *Why Did Jesus Have to Die?*, Adam Hamilton says that the death and resurrection of Jesus are like a seed planted in the ground. Jesus left behind only 120 disciples. But on the day of Pentecost, those disciples went out into the streets carrying the seed of resurrection in their hearts, and three thousand people came to believe.

Think about that. A small group, touched by the risen Christ, became a blessing to thousands. And maybe that is how resurrection still works. It is often said that over the course of our lives, we interact with roughly eighty thousand people—enough to fill a football stadium. So is it really so hard to believe that at least some of those people might encounter love and kindness through us? Is it really impossible that through our words, our generosity, our patience, our faithfulness, someone might catch a glimpse of Christ?

To live the resurrection life is not only to say, “Christ is risen.” It is to make the risen Christ visible. When we offer kindness in a harsh world, we make Christ visible. When we keep serving instead of giving up, we make Christ visible. When we choose compassion over cynicism, we make Christ visible. When we forgive, encourage, welcome, and love, we make Christ visible. That is resurrection life.

My beloved Asbury family, do not remain at the tomb. Christ is risen. Christ is already going ahead of you. So make your way—toward hope, toward grace, toward the people who need your love, and toward the new life God is opening before you. Christ is risen indeed. Thanks be to God. Amen.