

**Refuge City Church — April 9, 2023**  
**Easter Sunday — “We *will* see Jesus” (John 20)**

***Introduction***

- On Palm Sunday, we addressed 4 statements or questions that were uttered around the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem.
  - “Who is this?”
  - “Why are you doing this?”
  - “We wish to see Jesus.”
  - “Rebuke your disciples!”
- On Good Friday, we addressed those same statements from the perspective of the cross.
- On this Easter morning, we can eliminate two of those statements by the mere fact of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead!
  - Defeating death *proves* who He is, and puts an exclamation point on why He came.
  - Yet, there are a lot of people who have not been introduced to Jesus or know who He is.
  - Because of His resurrection, He stands alone as the only one who has conquered death, with the eye witnesses to prove it.
    - Hundreds of people saw Jesus after He rose from the grave, and one day, we can too.

***“I need to see for myself” [John 20:1-10]***

“Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes.”

- Jesus had been crucified, and the disciples had gone into hiding due to fear and grief.
- They still did not have a complete understanding of why Jesus had to die, even though He told them of His impending death, and more specifically, His resurrection.
  - **Verse 9**, “for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.”
  - **Verse 19**, “On the evening of that day...the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews...”

- **Mark 16:10**, “...as they mourned and wept.”
- So when they had received the news that Jesus was not in the tomb, they didn’t believe it. [**Luke 24:11**, “but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.”]
- Even though they were told by these women they had served Jesus with. They had to go see for themselves.
- When Peter and John got to the tomb, they initially looked in and saw that Jesus was not there.
  - The evidence presented to them dictated that Jesus was gone, but his body wasn’t stolen.
  - **Verse 5:** John *saw* [Greek=blepo] the linen cloths lying there...it was a first glance.
  - **Verse 6:** Peter *saw* [Greek=theoreo] the linen cloths, along with the face cloth, folded neatly in a place by itself... this was observation.
  - **Verse 8:** John went into the tomb and *saw* [Greek=eidon] and believed... this was confirmation.
    - This is the same use of the word we find when the Wise Men *saw* the star, they rejoiced, and when they *saw* baby Jesus with Mary, they fell down and worshipped Him.
    - This is the same use of the word we find when some friends brought their paralytic friend to be healed. When Jesus *saw* their faith, He healed their friend.
    - It’s a deeper concentration of the word that goes beyond what our physical eyes see. It’s what we know to be true!

### **“I have seen Jesus!” [John 20:11-18]**

“But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.”

- Mary has a similar experience after Peter and John went back home.
- In her confusion and fear, she initially stoops to look into the tomb... it was a glancing look.
  - She found something completely different than the disciples.
  - She sees [observes] two angels sitting where Jesus had been lying.

- She then turns around and sees [observes] Jesus, but did not recognize Him.
- In her grief, possibly her eyes so full of tears that she couldn't see clearly, Jesus reveals Himself by calling her name.
- Jesus gives her instruction to go and tell the disciples.
  - **Verse 18:** "I have *seen* the Lord" [Greek=horao]... this goes beyond observation and knowledge. She glanced, observed, heard, spoke to, touched/hugged, listened, and then obeyed. This is experience!

### **"Do you need to see to believe?" [John 20:19-29]**

"On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord..."

- They were glad when they *saw* the Lord.
  - This is the deepest level of seeing. They knew immediately who He was!
    - This was confirming, and solidified the truth of who Jesus is and what He came to do [prophecy, scripture, and promises fulfilled]!
  - This is the deepest level of *gladness*. This is rejoicing. This is delight. This is joy!
  - **Psalm 22:22-24**, "I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you: You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him."

"Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." [Greek=horao; experience] But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

- The disciples told Thomas they had visibly seen the Lord, but he wouldn't have it.
  - Just as Peter and John didn't believe Mary when she told them.
  - He needed not only visible proof, but experiential proof. He wanted to touch Jesus.
  - **QUOTE:** "Jesus did not rebuke him for his doubts. He rebuked him for unbelief...Doubt is often an intellectual problem: we want to believe, but the faith is overwhelmed by problems and questions. Unbelief is a moral problem; we simply will not believe." [Warren Wiersbe]
- **QUESTION:** How important is it for us to stay in constant fellowship with one another?
  - Thomas could have experienced Jesus with the rest of his friends a week earlier, but chose to remain by himself.

- **Hebrews 3:12-13**, “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”
- **Hebrews 10:24-25**, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”
- **Verse 29**: “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”
  - Our response to the *unconditional* love of Jesus expressed on the cross, should not be *conditional* servitude [“Jesus, prove to me and only then will I...”]
    - **2 Corinthians 5:7**, “for we walk by faith, not by sight.”
  - In the immediacy after Jesus ascended, the Apostles went out to establish the church and make disciples, and this truth became necessary to understand.
    - **1 Peter 1:8**, “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,”
- What do you need in order to see Jesus in a way that brings you an experience of joy? **Faith**.
- How can you accomplish this when you have not yet seen Him in the flesh?
  - **1 John 1:1-3**, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”
  - We can experience the same joy as the apostles if we have been born again into a spiritual relationship with Jesus. [**John 3:3**, “...unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”; Greek=*eidon*; knowledge]
  - Jesus’ own words confirm that we can have this experience by placing our trust in Him.
    - **John 17:3**, “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”
    - It’s an intimate knowledge we can achieve through faith, His indwelling Spirit within us, and abiding in His Word.
  - **John 20:31**, “but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”
    - This is how we experience Jesus here and now, while clinging to Him with the hope that the day will come when we get to **see** Him face to face.

## Conclusion

- **Romans 10:13-14, 17**, “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?... So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
  - Knowing His name comes by hearing the Word of God.

- Believing in the name of Jesus comes by calling on His name.
- You don't have to see Him to believe in Him.
- But when you come to believe in Him, you will see Him more clearly than ever before!
- In that way, we get to experience the living Jesus here and now.