

# Melva's Corner



## Beyond Easter

April 16, 2007

(Mark 16:1-7 NLT)

**Central Truth: The church is God's embodied representation to the world. It announces and models new life.**

The next evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene and Salome and Mary the mother of James went out and purchased burial spices to put on Jesus' body. Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they came to the tomb. On the way they were discussing who would roll the stone away from the entrance to the tomb. But when they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone — a very large one — had already been rolled aside. So they entered the tomb, and there on the right sat a young man clothed in a white robe. The women were startled, but the angel said, "Do not be so surprised. You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. Now go and give this message to his disciples, including Peter: Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died!" (Mark 16:1-7 NLT)

Jesus, who shared with us our every human struggle and bore with us every human strain and endured with us every human suffering, also suffered with us our very human death . . . at our own hands. He is the crucified one. There is no escaping that. But, look, the tomb is empty. Death couldn't hold Him. Satan couldn't have Him. The tomb couldn't contain Him. His enemies couldn't crush Him. He is risen. He is alive. He is and was and is to come. Everything, everything, has changed . . . for us. He has gone ahead of you to Galilee and you will see Him, just as He said.

He said He would be rejected. He said He would be killed. And He said He would be . . . resurrected. Yes, He did say those things. Again and again He said those things. And they are true. They

have happened, just as He said. So if what He said about those things is true, then the Galilee thing must be true, too.

**But why Galilee? Why not Jerusalem? Why not Mt. Sinai?**

**Simple. Galilee is home. They will see Him at home. He will be with them . . . at home!**

**And Galilee is the place of the Gentiles . . . the place where the front porch is open to all people . . . no one is excluded. They will see Him in multi-cultural ministry shared with all and open to all people.**

**And Galilee is the place of ministry. The place they saw Him serve others. The place they learned to serve others. The place where the resurrected Jesus will be found again . . . the place where others are served by the power and in the name of the risen crucified one, the servant who gave His life as a ransom for many. The place called home, Galilee is on the inside of us.**

**And when we return home, to the front porch, to the place of ministry, to the resurrected Lord on the inside of us we will see Him there!**

**Jesus is not only raised from the dead, He is also living . . . living in us. He longs to be more than someone from the past we study. He longs to be the one whom we meet in our daily world. So let's**



**not leave this Easter season without a profound conviction that resurrection power, the resurrected Jesus, can be found . . . at home, among the common things of life, to make them less common and more glorious . . . if we will listen to those distant echoes of His promise. The Lord can be found . . . on the front porch where people are welcome no matter what their background. Jesus can be really present in us . . . in ministry, where we serve out of love, like our Master . . . the Crucified One . . . who now lives through our service to others.**

**Let's not let the echoes be so distant and faint! Let's meet Him in Galilee . . . He's waiting there for us!**

**Yes, I know you were under the impression that Easter was over. Last Sunday was the day for big crowds at church and huge**

dinners at home. But there is much more to Easter than a Sunday celebration.

Easter declares what happened in history; Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. Easter invites the rest of us into new creation; the same power that raised Jesus heals our brokenness and empowers our righteousness. Easter bears witness to the world; the Spirit's power is free to all who will receive it.

I know there are still those who argue about the historical event. There will still be people who say, "But all the tests and measures we know deny it." There is no arguing, however, with joy and gentleness, kindness and patience, concern and generosity. Hearts yield to such gentle virtues.

To say it another way, the church is God's embodied representation to the world. It announces and models new life.

The world needs to be made whole. By "made whole," I simply mean that all of us want a better life, a sense of genuine peace and courage to deal with painful realities. We have a lot of technology and gadgets. We live longer and are generally healthier. But our hearts yearn for something more than 80 or 90 years, the Internet, hip replacements, and TiVo.

We want to be connected with people by mutual respect and concern. We all want to love and be loved. We want an authentically spiritual life. The Bible has a couple of words to describe it. In the Hebrew Bible, it is shalom; in the language of Jesus, it is eternal life.

We celebrated the fact and faith of Easter last Sunday. We told the story of a little band of Jesus' followers who were, as one writer put it, "gathered at the place of impossibility, the tomb." But the Holy Spirit moved, and He was alive again and the world has never been the same.

Now we live the reality of resurrection. Jesus did not triumph over death so the church could have a doctrinal tenet to declare. He defeated death for the sake of the human race in its hopelessness and despair.

With Easter past, you are part of God's purpose to put hope on display. And that is a lifestyle change, not a single day on the calendar.

**Scriptural References:**

**"Now go and give this message to his disciples, including Peter: Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died!" (Mark 16:7 NLT)**