

Easter 2024 - Hope Not Pity

It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and several other women who told the apostles what had happened. **But the story sounded like nonsense to the men, so they didn't believe it.** However, Peter jumped up and ran to the tomb to look. Stooping, he peered in and saw the empty linen wrappings; then he went home again, wondering what had happened. **Luke 24:10-12 (NLT)**

As evening approached, Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea who had become a follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. And Pilate issued an order to release it to him. Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long sheet of clean linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb, which had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance and left. **Both Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting across from the tomb and watching.** **Matthew 27:57-61 (NLT)**

Because of Jesus' resurrection we have hope and not pity, regardless of what we might endure.

For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! **And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.** But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

1 Corinthians 15:13-20 (NLT)

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, **lives in you.** And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. **Romans 8:11 (NLT)**

The Resurrection Power Gives Hope For:

- **Those who of us who grew up in homes that didn't work well.**

So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.

Romans 8:15-16 (NLT)

- **Those in need of healing because of a devastating loss.**

You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book. My enemies will retreat when I call to you for help. This I know: God is on my side!

Psalms 56:8-9 (NLT)

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. **Romans 8:18-21 (NLT)**

- **Those crippled by a destructive secret habit.**

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

Romans 8:12-13 (NLT)

- **Those with the case of the ordinary.**

*For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory. **What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?** Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself.*

Romans 8:29-33 (NLT)

And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

1 Corinthians 15:19-20 (NLT)