

When the women arrived at the tomb early Easter morning, angels greeted them with three unbelievable words: **He has risen!** Then one of the angels told them this should have come as no surprise, because he reminded them: **“Remember how Jesus told you.”**

Remember! How many times did Jesus say: **“Remember”** to his followers? Probably not enough, especially for followers who were described as: **slow to believe ... afraid ... people with doubts.**

Our lesson at St. Paul’s on this Easter Sunday, are words from St. Paul. They’re some of the last words he ever wrote. His work on earth was coming to an end. He would face a martyr’s death. What does a person think about when they’re about to die? A happy childhood? Athletic success? Raising a family? Professional accomplishments? Friends?

Here’s what was on St. Paul’s mind and what he tells young Pastor Timothy and us: **“Remember ... Jesus Christ ... Raised from the dead ... Descended from David.”**

At the heart of the Christian faith is **remembering** — remembering what God has done for us. The main message that God has for us is not *“Go and do!”* but *“See and believe!”* That’s what we **remember** this Easter —the great things our Savior Jesus has done for us.

We really can’t do anything else, can we? What else can we do but go to the empty tomb, look inside, and then in amazement **remember** what this means for us? Through faith in Jesus we have the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

There’s nothing else we can do. There’s nothing else we need to do. God has done everything for us. He defeated sin, death and hell. He rose in victory — to guarantee that sin is paid for and to guarantee that all who trust in him will also rise in victory one day.

How could we possibly forget these amazing truths? Jesus certainly hasn’t changed over the centuries, and neither have his followers. We have fears. We have doubts. We are slow to believe. All the more reason to: **“Remember Jesus Christ”** every morning.

Remember ... JESUS! God the Father gave that name to his Son. It means *“Savior.”* Jesus came to this earth on a silent night for a violent mission. He came to battle the forces of sin, death and hell.

During his time on this earth he undid what sin and Satan had done. He healed the sick, drove out demons, raised the dead. But it was on Good Friday that the battle reached that fatal and final hour. On the cross, remember, how the Light of the world went toe-to-toe with the prince of darkness for possession of your soul. It was a struggle to the death. And by the end of the day, Jesus lay dead in a tomb.

But that’s not way things remained to Satan’s disappointment. When all was said and done — Jesus is alive! Death is dead!

Remember that Jesus is the CHRIST! *“Christ”* means God’s hand-picked champion, the only one with God’s approval. All the prophecies of Scripture are fulfilled in him. There’s absolutely no doubt in our minds that our Christian faith is the right one. Not only is Jesus Christ the one God appointed to suffer and die, he’s also the one God appointed to rise and rule all things forever. If he has the power to do that, he has power to save those who believe in him.

Remember Jesus Christ ... RAISED FROM THE DEAD. If there’s one word that creates more doubt, more uncertainty and more fear than any other, it’s the word *death*. We know it’s part of life. We know it’s coming — to friends, to family, to spouse, to ourselves. It’s said that fear is caused by the unknown. Death is well known, but it still fills us with fear. Why?

The fear of death comes from the knowledge of sin, which we learn from the Bible, or from our own conscience. Deep down we know there's a God who is holy and just. Deep down we also know that we've failed to perfectly do what he requires - love him and everyone else. Scripture draws this unavoidable conclusion: **You sin! You die!**

That's what scares us. We were created to live in harmony with God, but our sins separate us from God and his love, peace and joy.

Remember Jesus Christ ... RAISED FROM THE DEAD. Out of the tomb came the One who carried all of our sins to the cross and then left them in the tomb. Your sins are gone - dead and buried! Jesus Christ is alive - proof that God has accepted his payment.

Jesus' resurrection is the foundation of our faith. It creates an unshakable hope no matter what happens in life. Around 1930, a communist leader named Bukharin travelled to Kiev to address a huge gathering. His subject: Atheism. For two solid hours he attacked and ridiculed Christianity. When he finished, he was so confident that he had crushed the faith of every man and woman there, that he arrogantly asked if there were any questions. Only one stood and asked for permission to speak. He climbed the platform. He looked over the crowd. Finally, he shouted the ancient greeting, **"The Lord is risen!"** Immediately, the entire assembly stood and responded: **"Christ is risen indeed!"** The speaker was crushed.

Don't you wonder what the sceptics and the nonbelievers do on Easter? The Christian church parties on Easter because of our Savior's bold promise: **"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die,"** is a promise kept. This is your faith, hope and joy — even on your darkest day.

Remember Jesus Christ DESCENDED FROM DAVID. He comes from a king. He is a king. As we'll so beautifully discover at the conclusion of this morning's celebration — he's the King of kings

and Lord of lords who commands and rules all things power, and protects you with his love.

David was a king, and he was also a man. So is Jesus Christ. It wasn't just the Son of God who left that tomb, the Son of Man did too. So, his resurrection gives us a glimpse of the glory that one day will be ours when Jesus calls us out of our graves.

- We won't look like we do now — an aging body that wears down and grows weak.
- We won't feel like we do now — the hurts, the pains, the handicaps, the illnesses, the diseases, the death.
- We won't ache like we do now — from broken hearts and dreams, from shortcomings and disappointments.

Researchers tried to measure how much of a presenter's message sticks in the minds of the audience. They found that immediately after a 15-minute presentation, (like this morning's message) listeners only remembered 50% of what was said. By the next day that had dropped to 25%, and a week later it was 10%.

The researchers also identified ways to make sure that 10% is saved in their memory. They suggested a tool using the acronym S-A-V-E-R:

STORIES: People pass on learning and God created our brains so that stories stick - Jesus coming back from the dead - a story that sticks!

ANALOGIES: Comparing something to a familiar thing is easier to remember. Jesus used parables. St. Paul used death and King David.

VISUALS: We're all visual learners. Pictures stay in our minds. The empty cross and Easter lilies make a memorable impression.

EXAMPLES: They makes things real. The impact the resurrection had on Paul is evident in today's words and all his writings.

REPETITION: Winston Churchill said, *"If you have an important point to make, don't try to be subtle. Use a pile driver. Hit the point once. Then come back and hit it again. Then hit it a third time -a tremendous whack."* Christ has

risen! The children sang it. The readers told us.
The choir sang it. You sang it yourselves. St.
Paul told us and I reminded you of it, too.

You **Remember** what we talked about this morning
... **Jesus Christ Raised from the dead**
Descended from David but you'll want to come
back in another week to refresh your memory of
this amazing and eternal truth!