

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE  
James M. Duncan, Pastor

APRIL 12, 2020

Series #2 - LIVING ABOVE OUR FEARS

“FEAR NOT –  
Because we have The Empty Promises of Easter”

**Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 27:1-8**

Did you notice how that “fear” played a role in that first Easter morning? I am doing a new series of messages titled: “**Living Above our Fears.**” This is my second message on: “**Fear Not – Because we have the Empty Promises of Easter.**” The words “FEAR NOT” are used 63 times in the Bible- 48 in the O.T. and 15 in the N.T. and most of the N.T. uses are centered around our Lord's birth and His death.

Instead of promises full of emptiness, on Easter, **our Lord gave us emptiness that is full of promise.** This morning, I would like us to think about the promises of Easter. There are three of them. Each promise is marked by something empty:

**AN EMPTY CROSS, AND EMPTY TOMB  
AND  
EMPTY BURIAL CLOTHES.**

**I. THE EMPTY CROSS - *Matt. 27:33-37;*  
*Matt. 28:1-2***

Let's begin with the empty cross. Because the cross was empty, we have the promise of forgiven sins.

Let's go - back, if we can, to that 1st Easter Morning. It is early morning - dawn - but the sun has not risen. A few of Jesus' followers - women - are on their way to a tomb. It is the tomb where Jesus was buried. **The promise of the empty cross is that you and I stand forgiven.** Because it was on that cross that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins.

**II. THE EMPTY TOMB - *Matt. 28:1-6, Mark 16:1-8***

- ◆ When these women came to the tomb they came upon something even more remarkable.
- ◆ The soldiers are all unconscious (*V-4*)
- ◆ The stone has been moved  
An angel – glowing like lightning – is sitting on it

Listen to his words - “**Fear NOT or Do not be afraid;** for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified. He is not here; He has risen!” (*Matt. 28:5-6*) Jesus had risen – He was alive – the tomb was empty. And what a tremendous promise that holds.

The empty tomb is God's way of saying to us; “Relax, my child, I took the sting out, death can't hurt you anymore.”

**III. THE EMPTY BURIAL CLOTH - *John 20:1-9 9*  
*(vs.5-7)***

Inside the empty tomb, Peter found the clothes that Jesus had been buried in. They too were empty! This could only mean one thing. If someone had stolen his body, they wouldn't have removed the burial clothes and folded them up neatly and left them where they lay. Truly, Jesus was resurrected – **HE IS ALIVE!**

Think about that – the cross couldn't hold him, the tomb couldn't contain him, the burial clothes were unnecessary, because Jesus is alive! He has skin and bones and a face and was recognizable. And he talked and touched and loved and healed. He did it the day of his resurrection, and he does it still today. And – most importantly – **HE** wants to do it with you. That 1st Easter Sunday, as the women went to the grave, they had no idea what was about to happen to them. They were not yet aware of the wonderful promises of that day.

- ◆ Off in the distance stood an empty cross - the promise that their sins were forgiven.
- ◆ At the end of their journey was an empty tomb – the promise of their eternal life.
- ◆ Inside the tomb were empty burial clothes. The promise that they would once again have a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ – their living Savior.