

NEW SERIES: CHOOSE FAITH NOT FEAR

“Faith is the Victory”  
1 Cor. 15:26, 54-57

**Big Idea: Jesus conquered death so I don't have to fear it.**

Hebrews 2:14, 15 Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death.

Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

1 Corinthians 15:12 Now since we preached that Christ was raised from the dead, why do some of you say that people will not be raised from the dead?

13 If no one is ever raised from the dead, then Christ was not raised.

14 And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is worth nothing, and your faith is worth nothing.

15 And also, we are guilty of lying about God, because we testified of him that he raised Christ from the dead. But if people are not raised from the dead, then God never raised Christ.

16 If the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised either.

17 And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith has nothing to it; you are still guilty of your sins.

18 And those in Christ who have already died are lost.

19 If our hope in Christ is for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone else in the world.

20 **But** Christ has truly been raised from the dead—the first one and proof that those who die will also be raised.

21 Death has come because of what one man did, but the rising from death also comes because of one man.

22 In Adam all of us die. In the same way, in Christ all of us will be made alive again.

23 But everyone will be raised to life in the right order. Christ was first to be raised. When Christ comes again, those who belong to him will be raised to life,

24 and then the end will come. At that time Christ will destroy all rulers, authorities, and powers, and he will hand over the kingdom to God the Father.

25 Christ must rule until he puts all enemies under his control.

26 The last enemy to be destroyed will be death.

1 John 4:4 Everyone who is a child of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world—our faith.

Today is Easter Sunday and, as Christians, we celebrate the resurrection of our Savior and Lord in the middle of a world-wide virus pandemic that has seemed to fill the air with debilitating fear and death.

I'm here to tell you today that Easter reminds us Jesus conquered death so I don't have to fear it, and faith is the victory!

**ILL.** On Feb. 27, 1991, at the height of Desert Storm, Ruth Dillow received a very sad message from the Pentagon. It stated that her son, Clayton Carpenter, Private 1st Class, had stepped on a mine in Kuwait and was dead.

Ruth Dillow later wrote, "I can't begin to describe my grief and shock. It was almost more than I could bear. For 3 days I wept. For 3 days I expressed anger and loss. For 3 days people tried to comfort me, to no avail because the loss was too great."

But 3 days after she received that message, the telephone rang. The voice on the other end said, "Mom, it's me. I'm alive." Ruth Dillow said, "I couldn't believe it at first. But then I recognized his voice, and he really was alive." The message she had received was all a mistake!

She said, "I laughed, I cried, I felt like turning cartwheels, because my son whom I had thought was dead, was really alive. I'm sure none of you can even begin to understand how I felt."

Perhaps not, but think of how the disciples of Jesus must have felt because they experienced the same emotions themselves. One day they watched their best friend and teacher being nailed to a cross. They witnessed His pain as He cried out, "I thirst!" and "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"

They listened as finally He bowed His head and said, "It is finished!" and "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." They watched as His body was taken from the cross and buried. All their hopes and dreams were buried with Him.

Friday and all day Saturday they mourned, until finally, on "the first day of the week, early in the morning," the scripture says, some women made their way along the path that led to His tomb, wondering who would roll away the stone for them.

But when they arrived, they found that the stone had already been rolled away. And an angel there told them, "You're looking in the wrong place. You're looking for Jesus among the dead. He is not dead. He is alive. He is risen, even as He said!"

"He is risen!" That is what we celebrate this morning. When all the evidence is in we're convinced that Jesus is alive. He is risen from the dead, and what a difference His resurrection has made!

**ILL.** A Sunday school teacher asked her 3<sup>rd</sup> graders to imagine what the first words of Jesus were when He came out of the grave on Easter? One little girl anxiously raised her hand, then jumped up shouting, "I know, I know!" Teacher: "What was it Emily?" Emily shouted out with great gusto and glee, "TA-DA!!!!"

The 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians is the great resurrection chapter of the Bible.

**Donalyn, start below:**

**Where did death come from?**

1 Corinthians 15: 21 Death has come because of what one man did, but the rising from death also comes because of one man.

Romans 5:12 Sin came into the world because of what one man did, and with sin came death. This is why everyone must die—because everyone sinned.

### **When Jesus died for the whole world His disciples were afraid.**

Matthew 26:56 But all these things have happened so that it will come about as the prophets wrote.“ Then all of Jesus’ followers left him and ran away.

### **When Jesus rose His disciples were afraid.**

Matthew 28:5 The angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified.

6 He is not here. He has risen from the dead as he said he would. Come and see the place where his body was.

7 And go quickly and tell his followers, ‘Jesus has risen from the dead. He is going into Galilee ahead of you, and you will see him there.’ “ Then the angel said, “Now I have told you.”

8 The women left the tomb quickly. They were afraid, but they were also very happy. They ran to tell Jesus’ followers what had happened.

### **Jesus does not want us to fear death but have everlasting life now and when we die**

1 Corinthians 15:22 In Adam all of us die. In the same way, in Christ all of us will be made alive again.

23 But everyone will be raised to life in the right order. Christ was first to be raised. When Christ comes again, those who belong to him will be raised to life,

24 and then the end will come. At that time Christ will destroy all rulers, authorities, and powers, and he will hand over the kingdom to God the Father.

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