

SEEN. KNOWN. SENT.

Resurrection Sunday Sermon Manuscript (25 minutes)

John 20:1–29

INTRODUCTION — *Resurrection Begins in the Dawn*

Church, Resurrection Sunday does not begin with a celebration.

John tells us very deliberately that *early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark*, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb.

That detail matters.

The resurrection does not wait for daylight. It does not wait until fear is gone. It does not wait until faith is strong.

God raises Jesus **while it is still dark**.

That means resurrection does not require emotional readiness. It requires divine initiative.

And I want to say this before we go any further: If parts of your life still feel dark right now — grief, doubt, fear, disappointment — you are not behind in the story. You are standing exactly where resurrection starts.

PART 1 — MARY AT THE TOMB

Why Love Was the First Witness

¹*Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.* ²*So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”* ³

John 20:1-2

Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb with a simple expectation: to mourn.

When she sees the stone rolled away, her conclusion is not resurrection. It is loss: “They have taken the Lord.”

This is important: **Resurrection did not begin with faith** — it began with devotion.

Mary runs to Peter and John. They sprint to the tomb. They examine the evidence. They see the linen cloths.

And the text says something startling: “They went back to where they were staying.”

They leave.

But Mary stays.

¹¹*Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb* ¹²*and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.* ¹³*They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?” “They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.”* ¹⁴*At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.* ¹⁵*He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”* ¹⁶*Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).* ¹

John 20:11-16

Why does she stay?

Because when love has lost something precious, it doesn't move on easily. Mary is not driven by theology here. She is driven by relationship.

And this is where the Gospel becomes quietly revolutionary.

In the first century, women were not considered reliable witnesses. Their testimony was often dismissed in legal settings.

If the resurrection were fabricated, Mary would never have been chosen. But God does not choose witnesses based on credibility. He chooses based on **faithfulness**.

Mary stays when logic fails her. She stays when angels do not solve her grief. She stays in tears.

And it is there — in lingering grief — that Jesus appears.

But she does not recognize Him.

Resurrection is standing in front of her, and she mistakes Him for the gardener.

Why?

Because resurrection is not recognized by appearance. It is recognized by **voice**.

When Jesus says, "Mary," everything changes.

Not because He explains the resurrection — but because He restores relationship.

The Good Shepherd calls His sheep by name. And the moment He does, confusion becomes clarity.

Before Jesus sends Mary with a message, He reassures her with belonging.

Only then does He say, "Go and tell."

Church, here is the theological truth: The resurrection is not first revealed to authority, intellect, or power — but to **love that refused to walk away**.

If you have stayed with God through confusion, sorrow, or unanswered prayer, resurrection sees you.

PART 2 — THE LOCKED ROOM

Why Peace Comes Before Purpose

¹⁹*On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"* ²⁰*After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.* ²¹*Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."* ²²*And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."* ²³*If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* ¹

John 20:19-23

That same evening, the scene shifts.

The disciples are gathered — not to worship — but to hide. The doors are locked. Fear fills the room.

And suddenly, Jesus stands among them.

The risen Christ does not knock. He does not wait for permission. Fear does not stop resurrection presence.

And the first thing Jesus says is not correction — it is peace.

“Peace be with you.”

Why peace?

Because fear fractures identity. Fear makes people forget who they are. Before Jesus reminds them of their calling, He restores their wholeness.

Peace in Scripture does not mean calm feelings. It means restored relationship. It means things made right.

Jesus is saying: “What was broken between God and humanity is healed.”

Then He shows them His hands and His side.

This matters deeply.

The risen Jesus does not erase the evidence of suffering. Resurrection does not pretend the cross never happened.

The wounds remain — not as symbols of defeat — but as proof that love went all the way through death and came out the other side.

The same hands that were pierced now bless. The same side that was opened now breathes out the Spirit.

Only after peace is established does Jesus say: “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

Mission does not begin with guilt. It begins with grace.

And church, if peace has not settled in your heart, God is not rushing you into assignment.

TRANSITION — *Encounter Before Explanation*

Church, we have heard the story. But resurrection is not only something to understand — it is something to encounter.

Before we continue, I want us to pause and listen — not to preaching, but to the heart of the risen Christ.

Receive this moment quietly.

(Play the Skit Guys video)

AFTER THE VIDEO — *Let the Moment Breathe*

(Pause after the video. Do not speak immediately.)

Church... notice something.

The Jesus you just heard was not angry. He was not hurried. He was not defensive.

And His wounds were still visible.

That is intentional.

If the risen Christ still carries scars, then scars must matter to God.

Resurrection does not deny pain. It redeems it.

If Jesus is not ashamed of His wounds, then maybe the places you thought disqualified you are the very places God intends to transform.

PART 3 — THOMAS

Why Honest Doubt Was Not Rejected

²⁴*Now Thomas (also known as Didymus#20:24 Thomas (Aramaic) and Didymus (Greek)*

*both mean twin.), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.*²⁵*So the*

*other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”*²⁶*A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and*

*stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”*²⁷*Then he said to Thomas, “Put your*

*finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”*²⁸*Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”*²⁹*Then Jesus told him,*

“Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” 'John 20:24 - 29

Now we come to Thomas.

Thomas is not present when Jesus appears the first time. And when the others tell him, “We have seen the Lord,” Thomas responds honestly:

“Unless I see... unless I touch... I will not believe.”

Thomas is often called “doubting,” but Scripture never says he lacked faith. It says he lacked **encounter**.

Thomas does not ask for philosophical proof. He asks to see the wounds.

Why?

Because resurrection that ignores suffering feels untrustworthy. Thomas needs to know that the Jesus who was crucified is the same Jesus who is alive.

And Jesus does not shame him.

A full week later, Jesus comes back — for one disciple.

Same greeting. Same peace. Same wounds.

“Put your finger here.”

Jesus meets Thomas exactly where his faith broke.

And Thomas responds with the greatest confession in the Gospel of John: “My Lord and my God.”

Doubt, when handled honestly in the presence of Christ, does not lead away from God — it often leads deeper into worship.

Then Jesus looks beyond Thomas, beyond the room, and speaks to us:

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Church, that is not secondclass faith. That is resurrection faith formed through testimony, Scripture, and the Spirit.

PASTORAL APPLICATION — *Where Resurrection Meets Us*

If you are grieving like Mary, Jesus meets you before you understand anything.

If you are fearful like the disciples, peace still enters locked spaces.

If you are doubting like Thomas, Jesus is not offended — He is present.

And if you are part of the church, resurrection is not an event we remember — it is a life we live.

CONCLUSION — *Seen, Known and Sent.*

Resurrection means this:

You are **seen** — in your grief. You are **known** — by name. And you are **sent** — with peace and power.

The tomb is empty. The wounds are redeemed. And Jesus is alive.

Amen.