

Vantage Point 2 – Easter Resurrection

Thank you for being here to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. My name is Chris Fluitt and I welcome you to Redemption Church. Hello to all our online watchers and listeners. Youtube, podcast, facebook live and other social medias hello. Greetings from Plano Tx.

We always need a better viewpoint in life. I hope you agree. ..A better understanding of our future and our purpose. ..A better vision of what is true and what isn't. ..A clearer sight on happiness. We could always use a better viewpoint in life.

Vantage Point - a place or position affording a good view of something.

To get a better view, we need a better position. Could we position ourselves today to see the resurrection?

Whatever situation you are facing today, we believe that it can be answered with a better vantage point of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our story today starts in Matthew 27:62-66. I want us to pay extra attention to the vantage point of the Pharisees. What was their position and viewpoint?

Matthew 27:62 (NIV2011) The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate.

Matthew 27:63 (NIV2011) "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.'

Matthew 27:64 (NIV2011) So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

Matthew 27:65 (NIV2011) “Take a guard,” Pilate answered.
“Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.”

Pharisees

What did we learn about the Pharisees?

- They remembered what Jesus said. Jesus’ own disciples had forgotten that he said he would rise again, but these Pharisees remembered.
- They believed something was going to happen. If they learned anything about Jesus, they learned that when Jesus says he is going to do something you better open up your eyes – because something always happens when Jesus is involved.
- They didn’t necessarily believe that Jesus was going to raise himself from the dead. They thought that His followers would steal the body and tell people that Jesus rose from the dead. They thought it would be a deception.
- The most important point is – They did everything they could to stop the resurrection.

Which brings us to...

The soldiers

The soldiers tasked by Rome to guard the body of Jesus. What was their vantage point?

Matthew 28:2 (NIV2011) There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.

Matthew 28:3 (NIV2011) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

Matthew 28:4 (NIV2011) The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

These guys were just doing their job. They didn’t necessarily have an opinion on Jesus. To these Roman guards, Jesus was just some Jewish guy that people were mad at. But when an Angel showed up and rolled away the stone away, I think they may have formed an opinion.

These trained soldiers of Rome were so afraid they shook and become like dead men. Their training had not prepared them for a sight like this! What do you think they thought about Jesus from their vantage point? Do you think this moment where they were exposed to God's power changed them?

Then came **Mary Magdalene**

She was a friend and follower of Jesus. She had come to the tomb expecting Jesus to still be dead. She was there to clean his body because he was so hurriedly buried 2 days before.

John 20:1 (NIV2011) 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.

John 20:2 (NIV2011) 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!"

Mary sees the tomb open – the stone removed. And what she does next reveals her position. She runs away. She can't handle what she just saw so she runs to Peter & John.

Is she running to tell them "GREAT NEWS JESUS HAS RISEN?" No she says "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb..." In other words Jesus' DEAD body has been taken.

She tells **Peter & John**

Having heard that the stone was rolled away Peter & John take off running to see the tomb. It doesn't say that Peter believed yet, but that John believed when he saw the empty tomb. They go back to where they are staying to tell the other disciples.

And they leave **Mary Magdalene** behind at the tomb.

Unlike before, this time Mary positions herself to look into the tomb.

John 20:11 (NIV2011) Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb

John 20:12 (NIV2011) and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

John 20:13 (NIV2011) 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."

Mary had been through a lot. Jesus died and if that wasn't bad enough, someone had stolen his body and now she can't honor Jesus by preparing his body.

John 20:14 (NIV2011) At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

John 20:15 (NIV2011) 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."

Jesus is alive. Jesus is standing right in front of Mary. Mary is positioned in the physical to see Jesus, but she sees a gardener. Mary is seeing what she expects and she doesn't expect a resurrected savior. What you expect effects what you see.

But watch her position change.

John 20:16 (NIV2011) Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

With one word Jesus changed everything. All He said was Mary and then she realized her Lord was alive again.

Am I talking to anyone today that has had a moment where Jesus called your name and suddenly you realized He is real?

John 20:18 (NIV2011) Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20:19 (NIV2011) 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!"

John 20:20 (NIV2011) After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

After he said this... the disciples were filled with joy. Before this moment there was uncertainty, there was fear, there was heartache, and guilt. But a resurrected Jesus changes all of that.

When they saw Jesus, when they saw his hands and his side, this vantage point changed everything.

I don't know what you are facing today, but a resurrected Lord changes everything.

Doubting Thomas

There was a disciple who was not present when Jesus appeared.

John 20:24 (NIV2011) Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

John 20:25 (NIV2011) So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Thomas is positioned to see defeat, doubt, and despair. It is all He can see. He is thinking that he will never see his friend Jesus again, and it doesn't matter what people say, dead people just don't come back from the grave.

So how does Jesus see Thomas? What is the vantage point of the resurrected one?

Jesus

John 20:26 (NIV2011) 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!"

John 20:27 (NIV2011) 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."

John 20:28 (NIV2011) Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus does not come in storming around in anger because Thomas doubted. Instead Jesus positions himself in front of the doubter and presented his hands. It's like Jesus saying "Thomas whatever you need to believe I want to give you."

Doubting Thomas

Thomas simply didn't believe that Jesus was alive. Now Thomas goes beyond believing that Jesus is alive. Not only does he believe Jesus is alive, he declares that Jesus is His Lord and His God.

Jesus is alive. Jesus is the resurrected Lord. But are you positioned where you can see Him?

Not everyone who was near to Jesus really saw Him. People who were near to Jesus physically mistook him for something or someone else.

But Jesus positioned himself where Mary Magdalene could see Him. He positioned Himself where the disciples know He was alive. He positioned Himself before Thomas and his doubts.

A resurrected Jesus wants to change your vantage point for you to see Him like you never have before.

You

Do you see Him? Do you have doubt like Thomas? Are you seeing someone else like Mary?

John 11:25 (NIV2011) "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;

John 11:26 (NIV2011) and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

I may be speaking to people who have not come to faith yet. I believe Jesus is here ready to give you everything you need to believe.

I know I am speaking to people who already believe in a resurrected Jesus. But is there something He wants to reveal to you today? I think He is trying to bring us into a brand new position to see things clearly.

Your enemy

We would really be missing a great moment to tell you about your enemy and his vantage point. What did hell see? What did the devil see? All your guilt and shame, what was their vantage point.

Colossians 2:13 (NIV2011) When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,

Colossians 2:14 (NIV2011) having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:15 (NIV2011) And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

You were dead but now alive. All your sins forgiven. Your debts canceled and nailed to the cross. The powers over you are disarmed. The powers that controlled you are now a joke – a spectacle. All that remains is the triumphant cross.

The Pharisees did everything they could to stop the resurrection. The guards were there to stop the resurrection. The forces of darkness wanted to stop the resurrection.

But He is risen!

Position yourself today. Get a better vantage point on the resurrection.