

Talks – Empty Tomb – myfishbites.com

Introduction

In this talk, we're looking at the fact that the tomb was rolled away by the power of God to bring Jesus back to life. Everything in your life that seems blocked, or makes you feel like you're in a tomb, can be rolled away by the power of God. But we have to work with God and do our part.

Talk

I love the idea of Easter being seen as a battle between good and evil. In an idea from [Kerry Shook ministries](#), we find Jesus as the Master & Commander and Satan as the evil pirate. In this great story we find that Jesus was betrayed by a fellow 'ship mate' and was killed. Golgotha was a place where it could have ended. Instead, the Bible tells us that Jesus came back to life and in Colossians 2.15 we learn Jesus *"..disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."*

So instead of the cross being a defeat, Jesus turned it around and brought it back to life. What the evil one thought had brought him victory by killing and destroying Jesus, had the opposite effect. God was working all things for good, putting into effect the plan that he had, a plan that prophets like Isaiah had visions of, but would never see. God opened up his amazing plan and revealed it to us. His plan was Jesus.

This Easter, we celebrate the fact that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive. When we didn't know God, we were dead – now we have new eternal life in him.

Romans 6.4-5 – *"..just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."*

Is there anything that is holding you back from following God's best in your life, serving him more completely? To do this only comes from submitting to God's Spirit and saying yes to him. In Ephesians 5.18, we are told to be *"filled and stimulated with the [Holy] Spirit."* (Amplified Bible). The word 'filled' means to be continually filled. It is a passive verb, so being filled is something the Holy Spirit does as we allow the Holy Spirit to control us. The word is used like the wind in a sailing ship, moving the ship through water.

When we are filled with God, he directs us and we sail wherever the wind of the Spirit blows. The word is associated with being controlled completely by something – in this case by the Holy Spirit. It can also be used in a context of being fully equipped / complete, for every good work. So, to do God's work fully, we must be submitted to God.

Romans 6.6-7 – *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been freed from sin."*

This may mean there is a conflict between your old self and your new God self, as Paul says – this is a war that rages inside us all the time. We all have our crosses to bear (places where what we want conflicts with what God wants). This is the place where God’s will and our will meets and we say yes to what God wants whether or not it conflicts with what we want! This is a daily thing, a decision-by-decision choice and a lifetime of growing in the knowledge of God.

Jesus made it clear to God that he was there to serve God. He did nothing except what he saw his Father doing. Jesus is described in Hebrews as being the radiance of God – the divine rays of God himself, the image of the unseen God. As such, in Luke 22:42 we read the words of Jesus – *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”*

Once we’ve died to sin by saying yes to Jesus, we are raised up just like Jesus was and liberated into a new life and new level. This happens on a ‘now’ level and on an eternal level. So we see change in our lives now, and we know that what God is doing in us will be rewarded in eternity with him!

Romans 6.8-10 – *“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.”*

Jesus didn’t stay buried in his tomb and nor do you have to stay buried in your tomb! The stone on the tomb was rolled away and Jesus came back to life from the dead. The good news is that God is the tomb-rolling business and wants to give us life!

Despite what Jesus did having been complete, there are often things in our own lives that keep us down. What Jesus did on the cross and when he rose from the dead means that you can live life to the full in him. Every stone that holds you back can be rolled away. Jesus was raised from the dead by faith and we must have an active faith that God can work in and through us to bring change from the inside. The battle can only be won by a daily commitment to saying yes to God and every time self rises up, pushing it back down in the name and by the Word of God.

But as we have seen, we must agree to co-operate with the Holy Spirit and ask him to change us to be all he wants us to be. Hebrews 12.1-2 encourages us:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders (‘every unnecessary weight’ – Amplified) and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”

The evil one tried to stop Jesus in every way he could. But nothing could hold Jesus back. Nothing can hold back God’s purposes, ultimately.

I don’t know about you, but my jacket doesn’t jump off me if I want it off, I have to take it off. Hebrews tells us to throw off / put off everything that hinders us. We have to make the choice and then act. Joyce Meyer says that God has a part to play and we have a part to play. God won’t do our part, we can’t do God’s part.

Sometimes God does supernaturally do things, but if we co-operate with him, the process will be shorter and ultimately easier and bring fulfillment more quickly!!

We must allow God to fill us – one practical application is to let God’s Word dwell richly in you (Colossians 3.16) or literally ‘live in you’ – or start loving others more. Then we can help bring change, transformation, justice, compassion, love and God’s grace. How do we do this? Well, we have to make a choice and ask God to change us, very simple. Only trouble is, God will take you at your word so be careful what you say!!

Let’s look at our checklist and ask how we’re doing.

Galatians 5.22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

How are you doing? Are you ready for a new level?