

**TITLE: The Hope of Easter**

**SERIES: Stand Alone**

**TEXT: Various**

Balboa Community Church

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Today's sermon is entitled, "The Hope of Easter." For many people, Easter means: egg hunts, chocolate bunnies, & family gatherings.

But the hope of Easter is not found in just a holiday celebration of a bunch of traditions. The hope of Easter is found in what it actually celebrates: The resurrection of Jesus Christ, from the dead.

God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. We celebrate His birth at Christmas. But Jesus came with a purpose, and that was to die on a Roman cross as the Savior of the world.

It's difficult to imagine someone who could save the world by dying. But that is what Jesus did. And to prove His power over sin and death, He rose from the dead.

Jesus was taken off a cross after paying for our sins with his own life, and placed in a borrowed tomb. But on the third day he rose from the dead and appeared to many witnesses over the next 40 days before He returned to heaven.

The resurrection of Jesus guarantees life-changing hope to all who believe.

And today, I would like to give you 10 ways that the resurrection of Jesus gives us life-changing hope.

The RESURRECTION...

## 1. Authenticates Jesus' Claims About Himself

Among His many claims while on earth, Jesus claimed He was eternal (John 10:28), sinless (John 8:29), one with God (John 10:30), and He possessed the authority to forgive sins (Luke 5:20).

We also know that Jesus predicted His own death and resurrection many times (John 10:17, 16:16; Luke 18:33). Had Jesus remained in the grave, He would have become one of history's greatest frauds.

Instead, the resurrection of Jesus proved that all of His claims were true.

Why does this give us hope today? Because we have a Savior who is fully trustworthy! He does what He says. He is who He claims to be.

He really is "the way and the truth and the life," no one can come to God the Father except through Him (John 14:6). All who are weary and carry heavy burdens can find rest in Him, as Jesus promised in Matthew 11:28.

The resurrection means we can completely trust that everything Jesus said is true.

## 2. Validates Jesus' Atoning Work on the Cross

The Bible says that each one of us has sinned - we were born that way. And it tells us that the penalty for sinning, for

disobeying God, is death. God's holiness and justice require this. God was within His rights to wipe out the human race and start all over again.

But instead, He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth to die in our place and thereby pay the penalty for all the sins of mankind. In other words, today if you've repented of your sins and have trusted in Jesus as your Savior, you can rest assured that your sins have been completely atoned for. The penalty for your sins has been completely paid. God's holiness and justice have been satisfied by the death of His Son.

The resurrection, then, is the validation that God has accepted the death of His Son as payment for all our sins. If His death wasn't good enough to accomplish the payment for sins, then God with His almighty power wouldn't have raised Jesus from the dead.

## 3. GUARANTEES Believers' Regeneration

**Romans 3:23:** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." NIV

All of us were born in sin and are therefore unacceptable to a holy God.

**Ephesians 2:1** says that we are, "dead in our transgressions and sins." NIV

A dead person has no hope. But God did not want to leave us dead in our sins. Through faith in Jesus, we can be spiritually reborn - given new life in Christ.

Jesus said in **John 3:3**, "No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." NIV.

**1 Peter 1:3** says, "In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." NIV

The resurrection gives us hope that we don't have to remain dead in our sins. We can be reborn, regenerated, experience a new life as a child of God.

## 4. Affirms Believers' Justification

**Romans 4:25** says, "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification." NIV

**Justification** means "to be made right with God." Our debt of sin has now been legally paid for by Christ's death. The debt is paid. And now God declares that we have been forgiven and that we are now righteous in His sight.

Once you are justified before God, it's a done deal. There's nothing more for you to do—no more for you to add! If you're carrying any guilt or shame, you can lay it before the cross. Through faith in Christ, your sins have been fully paid for—forever!

We can have hope because we have been justified - made right with God.

## 5. Fills Every Christian with Heavenly Power

Amazingly, the same supernatural power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to all believers.

Paul writes in **Ephesians 1:18–20**, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.” NIV

The next time you're feeling physically or spiritually weak, remember that the same power that raised Christ from the dead is available to all believers who call on the name of Jesus.

You may be struggling with depression, worries, health issues, or habitual sin. Remember, as a believer the power that raised Christ from the dead is available to you. There is tremendous hope in the power of the resurrected Christ.

## 6. Makes Sanctification Possible

Most people spend a lifetime trying to improve themselves. They study at a university to learn more; they take classes on parenting; stick to a strict regiment at the fitness center; carefully watch what they eat (improve their diet); etc.

Improvement is a good thing, right?

Spiritually speaking, the same should be true. Christians should never settle for the status quo... or want to be just like everybody else. Our goal as followers of Jesus is to become more like Jesus.

Thanks to Jesus' resurrection, sanctification is guaranteed to all believers. Sanctification can be thought of as a lifelong process in which a Christian gradually becomes less sinful and more like Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit living within them.

**Colossians 3:1–3** alludes to the resurrection's part in this: “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” NIV

As you surrender to Christ day by day, you are being made more like your Savior to reflect His glory! The resurrection brings hope that we can be more like Christ.

## 7. SEALS Believers' Eternal Security

This important doctrine assures all authentic followers of Christ that they cannot lose their salvation. This is because salvation is not based on human accomplishments or how good you are, but on God's sovereignty, His power, and His decision (Eph 1:3–14).

**Ephesians 2:8-9** - <sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. NIV

It is completely a work of God's grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Paul affirmed our eternal security in **Romans 8:38–39**, <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. NIV

The resurrection brings us the hope that God will never abandon His followers. Nothing will ever be able to separate us, who are believers, from God.

## 8. Assures Believers of Ultimate Victory

In this life, Christians are locked in a heated battle with the forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12). At times, the situation might look hopeless.

But thanks to Jesus, the outcome has already been determined.

**Acts 17:31** says that God has, “...set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.” NLT

There will come a day when the world will be judged with justice by the man that God has appointed. And that man is none other than the one God raised from the dead - Jesus Christ.

This world is a dark, wicked place. But Christians have nothing to fear. Our ultimate victory has already been determined. We can live today with hope in future victory.

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 15:57**, “But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” NIV

## 9. Promises Eternal Life to All Believers

Benjamin Franklin once said, “In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.” Every person in this room will die. We can be certain of that. It might be today, next year or in 20 years, but every person will die.

For followers of Jesus, physical death is not the end. It is the beginning of eternal life with God.

**Romans 8:10-11** - <sup>10</sup> And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. <sup>11</sup> The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. NLT

After death, believers will be given resurrected bodies just like Jesus had when he rose from the grave.

There is no greater hope that any person on earth can have, then to know that when they die, they will live forever with God. That's a fact.

## 10. FORESHADOWS Jesus' 2nd Coming

As the disciples were standing on the Mount of Olives with

their mouths wide open, watching Jesus ascend into heaven, two angels visited them this message.

**Acts 1:11** - "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." NIV

Two thousand years later, we are still waiting for this glorious promise to be fulfilled. But we wait with expectant hope—knowing He will return.

This is the future hope of all believers. Christ will return. So no matter how crazy this world gets, we know Christ will return and make everything right.

Ten ways the resurrection gives us hope. What an incredible list

Today, if you are NOT a Christian, Resurrection Sunday would be a great day to put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior.

For those of you who have trusted in Jesus as your Savior, I pray that the hope of the resurrection would fill your life. Go over each of point of today's sermon and claim the hope that is yours in Christ.