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Sermon Notes

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Witnesses of the Resurrection

The Book of Acts

Across Time and Around the World: The Celebration Goes On

From that very first glorious morning, when eyewitnesses discovered the tomb of Jesus Christ was empty, the news has been spreading and bringing joy to those who once lived their whole lives in slavery to their fear of death. Across the centuries, people of widely differing cultures and languages have celebrated their faith in Christ's resurrection with songs and gestures, rituals and symbols, and especially with clear proclamation of the Scripture's testimony to the fact: **CHRIST IS RISEN!!!**

God brought each of you here today to celebrate this glorious fact—death has been defeated, and Christ is the victor... to the victor go the spoils—and we, his disciples are the spoils! And to us Jesus has given the plunder—eternal life, free from all suffering, free from pain, free from Satan, free from wickedness, free from all fear... free from SIN, free from DEATH!! If you are already a Christian, He has given some of that victory to you already, but He has infinitely more to give you still. He wants to escort you into His very presence; He wants you to be with Him, where He is, to see His glory. He wants to sit at a banquet table with you and share a celebration meal. He wants to walk with you—He in His incorruptible body, you in yours—looking around you at a perfect earth, resplendent with His glory. He wants to show you the detail of His new creation, with no time constraints, no temptation constraints, no flesh constraints, no sin constraints, no death constraints... He wants to give you infinite and eternal joy in the New Heaven and New Earth—He wants you to gaze at Him as the perfect radiance of God's glory, and have you feast on His glory and be filled with perfect joy. He wants to bring you to heaven. And what Jesus wants, He asks His Father for. And everything Jesus asks His Father for, He gets!! So celebrate, dear Christian! You are unspeakably RICH!!!

Now, if you are not yet a Christian, all of this treasure can be yours as well... you can be as unspeakably rich as anyone who has been a Christian for decades... this very morning, you can become an heir of heaven, an heir with Christ of the glorious Kingdom that is coming. This very morning, you will hear the message of the gospel—that God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, into the world as Savior from sin. Jesus, fully God and fully man, lived a sinless life; did great signs and wonders to prove His supernatural identity and His incredible love; and especially Jesus **DIED ON THE CROSS** as a substitute for you, died under the wrath of God, taking all your sins and the punishment you deserved, and giving you His perfect righteousness... if you simply believe in Him, repenting of

your sins, you will leave this building today UNSPEAKABLY RICH... an heir of heaven.

Dear friends, today is RESURRECTION SUNDAY... a chance to hear proclaimed in this place (as in places all over the world and in thousands of different languages) a simple message: CHRIST IS RISEN!!! The tomb was empty, death has been defeated, and our sins are forgiven if we trust in Him!

The story of the resurrection is told in all four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John all bear different eyewitness accounts of this historical fact... and EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS are the key to the beginning of the Christian religion. History matters... the things that really occurred in space and time—the attitudes of the heart, the words of the mouth, the actions of the body—all that has ever occurred on this planet that God made—all of it matters, and all of it is perfectly recorded in God's record book. But God has also given us a mind for history: our memories are an imperfect history; our books contain historical records of events: of military conquests by men like Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, William the Conqueror who crossed the English Channel in 1066; our histories contain records of plagues, technological achievements like Gutenberg's printing press in 1439 and the Wright Brothers' airplane in 1903; our history books are full of treaties made and broken, of kings rising and falling, of literary achievements—Shakespeare's plays and Dickens's novels. Our history books speak of the arts and music—of the Gregorian chants and Bach's concertos. The history of the human race is fascinating and rich, but also shameful and incomprehensible. But history is all about one issue: WHAT REALLY OCCURRED IN SPACE AND TIME! And that is settled predominantly by the testimony of eyewitnesses.

As a matter of fact, every courtroom trial spends most of its time ascertaining the HISTORY of WHAT REALLY OCCURRED IN SPACE AND TIME. On the basis of that history, the judge and jury renders its verdict. And the determination of WHAT REALLY OCCURRED IN SPACE AND TIME is predominantly on the basis of eyewitness testimony... people who were there, who saw and heard what happened, who remember what happened, and put into words what happened.

The Bible is full of history... as a matter of fact, one could argue, the Bible is predominantly a history book: either a simple record of what happened, or an analysis of the significance of what happened, or a prediction of what will happen, or poetry about what happened...

But no fact in the history of the world is as significant as the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And like any other historical fact, it hangs completely on the testimony of eyewitnesses.

The primary authoritative eyewitnesses were called by Jesus Christ in His lifetime for precisely that purpose. They were called "apostles". The book of Acts is filled with their testimony to the resurrection... and not just theirs, but the testimony of others who were eyewitnesses of His glory.

This morning, we're going to trace out the testimony of these eyewitnesses throughout the first and only perfect history book of the Christian church: the Book of Acts.

My purpose is to STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING FAITH of Christians... and to be an instrument in the Holy Spirit's work of GIVING BIRTH TO THE NEW FAITH of others who did not

I. Apostolic Job Description: Witness to the Resurrection (Acts 1:8, 22)

A. In His Lifetime... Jesus Called the Twelve

Mark 3:13-14 *Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ He appointed twelve-- designating them apostles--that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach*

B. After the Resurrection, He Unleashed them as Witnesses

John 20:19-21 *On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, 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."*

Luke 24:46-48 *He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.*

Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

C. BUT Specifically Witnesses to the Resurrection

1. One of the twelve, Judas Iscariot, betrayed Jesus Christ, and then committed suicide
2. His place had to be filled with a replacement
3. Acts 1, the church as it was waiting for the promised Holy Spirit, Peter said this

Acts 1:21-22 *it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."*

4. SO... witnessing to the resurrection was central to the apostolic job description

D. Throughout the Book of Acts, testimony to the resurrection is CENTRAL to the growth of the church

1. In chapter after chapter, people proclaim the earth-shaking message: CHRIST IS RISEN
2. I went through the book of Acts and identified all the places I could find

[Peter on the Day of Pentecost] Acts 2:24 *But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*

[Peter in the Temple at Jerusalem] Acts 3:15 *You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.*

[Temple Guards] Acts 4:2 *They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.*

[On Trial Before the Council] Acts 4:10 *Then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.*

[On Trial Before the Sanhedrin] Acts 5:30 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead-- whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.*

[Stephen, just before he died] Acts 7:56 *"Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*

[Cornelius's House] Acts 10:39-41 *"We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree,⁴⁰ but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.⁴¹ He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen-- by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.*

[Pisidian Antioch] Acts 13:29-33 *When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.³⁰ But God raised him from the dead,³¹ and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people.³² "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers³³ he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus.*

[Thessalonica] Acts 17:2-3 *As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,³ explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said.*

[Athens] Acts 17:31 *For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*

[Festus's Statement About Paul] Acts 25:19 *Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive.*

[On Trial Before Agrippa] Acts 26:22-23 *I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen-- ²³ that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles."*

Obviously, the proclamation of the resurrection was central to the advance of the Church... these eyewitnesses never stopped preaching in Jesus the resurrection from the dead!!

This is clearly the greatest news that has ever been proclaimed in the history of the world!

II. Power for Witnessing to the Resurrection: The Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; 4:31-33)

- A. This Witness to the Resurrection Was CONSTANTLY OPPOSED... at Every Step
- B. This World is Dominated by Satan and His Puppets... Human Beings Who Use their Power to Stop the Spread of the Gospel
 1. Initially, the Apostles had to face the wrath of the very people who killed Jesus
 2. Peter in particular had to face his own fears of suffering and death... the very fears that had made him deny knowing Jesus
 3. In Acts 4, Peter and John were arrested by the High Priest and his associates
 4. In Acts 5, the Sanhedrin imprisoned and beat the Apostles
 5. By Acts 7, the Sanhedrin killed Stephen as he was testifying to Christ
 6. In Acts 12, King Herod joined the persecution of the messengers—he had James killed and intended to do the same to Peter
 7. As the gospel began to spread more and more, the messengers of the resurrection had to face other enemies
 8. In Asia Minor, unbelieving Jews consistently persecuted Paul and his fellow witnesses as they spread the gospel of the resurrection
 9. In Philippi, the owners of a slave girl arrested Paul and Silas for preaching the gospel of the resurrection

10. In Ephesus, some Gentile idol-makers raised a mob and started a riot

C. Therefore, to Witness to the Resurrection Took Great Power and Courage

D. The Book of Acts Specifically Links their Courage to the Work of the Holy Spirit

1. Initial opening statement

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

2. The boldness of Peter and John in Acts 4

Acts 4:5-12 The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. ⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ He is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone." ¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

3. The prayer for boldness in Acts 4

Acts 4:29-31 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." ³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Acts 4:33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

4. Amazing how they faced the threats of imprisonment and death... not that the threats would go away, but that they would be empowered with supernatural BOLDNESS TO PREACH THE WORD!! This boldness was specifically linked to the testimony of the resurrection!!!

5. The display of boldness in Stephen (Acts 7)

a. Stephen was amazingly bold in his proclamation of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ

- b. He was arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Senate, to answer charges for his teaching
- c. At the end of his defense, the Holy Spirit overtook him and he boldly preached Christ

Acts 7:54-60 *When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, ⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.*

6. All of it linked to the resurrection AND the Holy Spirit

E. How Does the Holy Spirit Give Power and Boldness?

1. Above all things, He illuminates the Scripture and brings its power home to your heart
2. He fills you with a sense of God's infinite majesty and power
3. He fills you with a deep love for Jesus
4. He fills you with a love for other people
5. He frees your heart from worry about consequences
6. He strengthens your sense of His presence; He fills you like a brisk wind fills the sails of a yacht on a breezy lake
7. And OFF YOU GO!!!

III. Witnessing to the Resurrection by Prophecy (2:31)

A. A Consistent Theme of Witness in the Book of Acts: How the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was PREDICTED BY PROPHECY

B. Jesus Began to Show them These Things in the Forty Days

Luke 24:45-48 *Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be*

preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

C. Then Peter Plainly Preached It on Pentecost: Acts 2:

Acts 2:23-32 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. ²⁵ David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, ²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. ²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." ²⁹ ¶ "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.

D. So Also Paul Preached It in Pisidian Antioch

Acts 13:26-37 "Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. ²⁷ The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. ²⁸ Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. ²⁹ When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised him from the dead, ³¹ and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people. ³² "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers ³³ he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'" ³⁴ The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: "'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.'" ³⁵ So it is stated elsewhere: "'You will not let your Holy One see decay.'" ³⁶ "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed. ³⁷ But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

E. Paul's Consistent Pattern

Acts 17:1-3 When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them

from the Scriptures, ³ *explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said.*

F. Central Text: Psalm 16—David Predicted Someone Who Would Die But Never See Decay

G. Central Idea: Jesus Fulfilled Prophecies Written Centuries Before Jesus Was Born... Powerful Evidence FOR ALL TIME of the Resurrection

1. We cannot see physical evidence of the resurrection
2. We cannot even talk to those who did... the eyewitnesses
3. All we can do is read the scripture as it testifies to the resurrection
4. On that basis alone, we will believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ

IV. Witnessing to the Implications of the Resurrection

A. Since Christ is Risen, Your Sins Can Be Forgiven

Acts 13:36-39 "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed. ³⁷ But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay. ³⁸ "Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. ³⁹ Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

1. This is the whole point of Christ's death and resurrection anyway... the salvation of sinners
2. Christ's resurrection PROVES that God has accepted His atoning work and that through faith in Him our sins can be forgiven
3. This hopeful and powerful message speaks first and foremost of our reconciliation with God
4. Our sins are many and they are mighty... we have sinned against God's holy laws... we have violated His Ten Commandments... we have worshiped other gods and taken His name in vain... we have not honored his Sabbath day or honored our parents... we have had murderous thoughts in our hearts and lusted after things that were not ours... we have sinned greatly
5. AND great is the wrath of God against sin! But God has poured out His wrath on Jesus instead of us, and through Him we can be saved
6. Cry aloud to Jesus for salvation!!!

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

Acts 2:21 everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved

Acts 16:30-31 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household."

B. Since Christ is Risen, You Can Live Forever

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Jesus is the "author of life"... not just that He lives, but that WE CAN LIVE FOREVER through him

Stephen's faith extended beyond the grave:

Acts 7:55-60 Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ... ⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Stephen died completely unafraid of death...

Acts also makes it clear that Jesus was only the FIRST to rise from the dead... He came to give that same resurrection to all who believe in Him!!

Acts 26:23 the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles.

The resurrection of Jesus proves there is life after death... and if we believe in Jesus, we can live with Him forever

C. Since Christ is Risen, Live a Holy Life... Because there is a Judgment Day

Acts 17:31 God set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

Acts 24:15-16 I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶ So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

1. The ethical implications of this are staggering!!

2. Because there will be a judgment day, we should be aware of the danger if we are not Christians
3. Because there will be a Judgment Day, we Christians should live holy and godly lives... striving constantly to keep our consciences clear before God and men

V. Success in Winning Converts by Witnessing to the Resurrection (Acts

A. This Message of the Resurrection was Powerfully Successful!!

B. Pentecost Harvest

Acts 2:37-41 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call." ⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

C. Harvest by Peter and John

Acts 4:1-4 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. ² They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³ They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. ⁴ But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

D. Paul's Conversion... Effected by the Resurrected Christ

Acts 9:3-5 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

E. Paul's Harvest

Acts 13:48-49 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. ⁴⁹ The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.

All over the world this message of the gospel has been bearing fruit and growing! Today literally tens of millions of people are gathering to celebrate the resurrection, to sing praises

to Jesus, to listen to preaching, and to renew their hopes for their own resurrection from the dead. The celebration has never stopped... and it never will!!!

VI. Applications

A. Come to Christ!

1. In many churches across the nation, people come to church once a year—and Easter is it
2. In many churches, Christians make it a point to invite their friends, coworkers, neighbors, and family to church on Easter Sunday in the hopes that they will hear the gospel and be saved from sin and death
3. Friends... if you have never trusted in Christ for your salvation, **THIS IS YOUR MOMENT!** I began this sermon with the gospel, and now I will end it with the same...
4. The greatest single moment in history is the resurrection of Jesus Christ
5. The greatest single moment in any person's life is the moment he/she trusts in Christ and receives the gift of salvation
6. Call out to Jesus now in your heart... confess your sins... ask Him to save you... ask Him to give you the gift of eternal life!
7. For the rest of your life, you can remember Easter Sunday as the day you were raised from the dead **SPIRITUALLY** into new life in Christ

IF you are already a Christian:

B. Rejoice in the Resurrection

1. Just rejoice! Let your cares flow from your mind, let your anxieties flow away... let them roll down the hill into the empty tomb... let them stay there forever
2. The God who raised Jesus from the dead physically and raised you from the dead spiritually will take care of all lesser problems easily
3. Perhaps you are missing a loved one who's gone on to be with the Lord... our church has had a number of wonderfully godly people die in the last year or two... just rejoice in the fact that, though they are absent from the body, they are present with the Lord... and someday, because of your faith in Christ, you also will be present with **BOTH THAT LOVED ONE AND THE LORD...** you can join together and praise the resurrected and glorified Christ!

C. Be Filled with Hope

1. Christ's resurrection means that all believers will live forever in resurrection bodies
2. The future is unspeakably bright
3. If you are a Christian, you must NOT fear death
4. Perhaps you have a serious disease; you're battling cancer or another illness; your faith tells you that the Scripture promise that, even if you, die, you will live forever... and on that final day, Christ Himself will raise you from the dead!

D. Be Witnesses of the Resurrection

1. You are not an apostle... none of us are
2. We cannot be EYEWITNESSES... but we can be witnesses
3. The EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS are left for us in the New Testament
4. The prophecies are left us in the Old Testament
5. Tell someone this week about Christ's resurrection
6. The Bible says all lost people are in slavery through their fear of death
7. The gospel has power to set them free
8. Seek BOLDNESS through the Spirit to witness to the resurrection
9. Ask the Lord to give you an opportunity this week to share the good news of Christ's resurrection
10. Tomorrow, those of you who work in some place of employment will probably have at least one good chance to speak to an unsaved person about the resurrection
11. It'll go like this:
 - a. You: "How was your weekend?"
 - b. Co-worker: "It was great... quiet and restful."
 - c. You: "What did you do yesterday?"
 - d. Co-worker: "Slept in... ate a leisurely breakfast... did some gardening; in the afternoon, I watched the tournament games. What did you do?"

- e. You: "I heard the most exciting news I've ever heard in my life!"
- f. Co-worker: "Really?? What was it?"
- g. You: "That Jesus Christ was raised from the dead! It was Easter Sunday... and we were celebrating the resurrection!! It's definitely the most exciting news I've ever heard in my life."
- h. Co-worker: "But you've already heard it many times... so have I!"
- i. You: "Yes I have... but for me, it never gets old. And the older I get, the more exciting it is... because Jesus promised me that, if I believe in Him, I also will someday be raised from the dead... I will live forever. But what about you? What's your spiritual background?"

And then, off you go!

E. Pray for FBC to Have Power and Boldness to Share this Good News

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 4:29-31 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus. ³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.