

Easter Sunrise

April 5, 2026



For us more than half of our resurrection is already accomplished, because our heart and head are already above, and only the smallest part remains to be done, namely, that the body be buried in order that it too may be made new.

– Martin Luther –
Sermon from 1532, WA 36

PROCLAMATION POINTS

The following are some thoughts and questions to be used for a text study on the weekly lessons, or for jump-starting the imagination of the preacher and hearer in preparing for the proclamation event.

Exodus 14:10–15:1

Upon seeing the Egyptian army chasing them down, God's people must have begun to wonder if the salvation Moses had brought to them was any kind of salvation at all. The cost seemed too high to bear and they started thinking, "We could have gotten along just fine without Moses' interference." Yet, even in the midst of their doubt about God's power to save, their instinct was still to call out to him. They called out to the only one who had the power to rescue them from their distress. The word Moses gave them in response to their cries was a word of hope. God had no intention of leaving them to perish in the wilderness. He had plans for his people, and those plans did not end at the Red Sea. They were his chosen ones, and Pharaoh's army was no match for the Lord.

- *Does it ever seem to you that God's salvation, or life as a Christian, is not as great or easy as you thought it would be—or as you think it should be? Have you ever found yourself questioning whether being a follower of Jesus is really worth the bother or cost?*
- *How is the dramatic display of God's power at the Red Sea like or unlike your experience of God's saving power?*

The crossing of the Red Sea brings to mind baptismal imagery. God works salvation for his people through means of water. At the Red Sea, God's people were saved from the Egyptian army. In baptism, God's people are saved from sin. At the Red Sea, the Israelites were rescued from death. In baptism, we are saved through death. The salvation at the Red Sea was temporary, but the salvation that comes through Christ in baptism is forever.

- *What is the relationship between our baptism and the reality of death and resurrection in our life?*
- *What does it mean to "die to ourselves" on a daily basis? How has God delivered you from yourself, and given you new life?*

Psalms 118:15–29

In the words of the psalmist we can hear what Israel might have said to the Lord as they were freed from the terror of Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea, "The right hand of the Lord does valiantly," and "(We) thank you that you have answered us and become our salvation." (Psalm 118:15, 21) In modern language, we might paraphrase the ending of the psalmist's praise to the Lord as, "You are on my side!"

- *How important is it to know the God is on our side? What all does that mean?*

1 Corinthians 15:1–11

Paul often had to justify his place as an apostle. He was not counted among the twelve. He wasn't even among the first 500 to see the Risen Lord. Even worse, Paul had been a persecutor of the church, seeking to destroy it. When he found himself in conflict with Peter or James, this status of being "untimely born" — not being part of the inner circle — was a problem. Why should anyone listen to him?

But Paul remained clear about one thing: This faith was not about him. It was about the Gospel he proclaimed. It wasn't important whether Paul was popular or if his biography had the most impressive details. Of first importance was the gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation through Him. Christ gave Paul the task of proclaiming this Word, and that is what made him worthy to be called an apostle.

- *What would make Paul's background a stumbling block to his effectiveness as an apostle? Are we ever guilty of being more concerned with someone's credentials than with the truth of the Word they bring?*
- *What might Paul's story tell us about who God chooses to be his witnesses? What does that say about you?*

John 20:1–18

From our side of the resurrection, it's difficult to understand the behavior of the followers of Jesus. He had told them what was coming. He had told them he was going to be killed in Jerusalem. He had promised that the grave would not hold him. Still, when they discovered the empty tomb, they had no recollection of that promise. It didn't cross their minds that Jesus had risen. His body was simply gone. That early Easter morning was not a joyous celebration as we observe it today. It was a time of confusion, disappointment, sorrow, and doubt. The disciples left the empty tomb and went home, not knowing what else to do.

- *Why do you think the disciples still didn't understand about the resurrection? What was blinding them?*

While the others went home, Mary remained weeping at the tomb. She stuck around long enough to see something that the others had not seen and to hear something the others had not heard. She saw the angels in the tomb. She saw the Risen Lord. She heard the first word of the one who had defeated death.

- *Do you think Mary stayed behind because she was more faithful than the others? In what sense was the Word of Christ different after the resurrection than it was before?*