

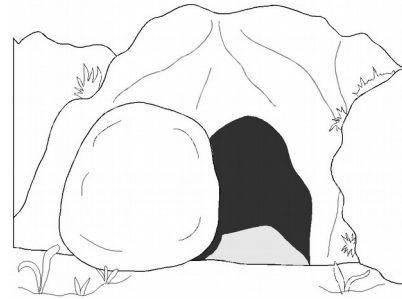
Sermon for Holy Saturday

Date: April 20, 2019

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Sermon Text: Mark 16:1-8

Sermon Title: It Didn't Get Him



Hymns:

- LSB 434 – Lamb of God Pure and Holy
- LSB 440 – Jesus I Will Ponder Now (v.3)
- LSB 344 – On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (v.1)
- LSB 655 – Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word (v.1)
- LSB 358 – From Heaven Above to Earth I Come (v.2)
- LSB 398 – Hail to the Lord's Anointed (v.1)
- LSB 451 – Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted (v.2)
- LSB 459 – Christ Is Arisen
- LSB 930 – All You Works of God, Bless the Lord (v.1,2,5,6)
- LSB 456 – Were You There

Liturgy:

Divine Service: Special



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Text: Mark 16:1-8

When the day of rest, a holy day, was over, Mary from Magdala, Mary (the mother of James), and Salome bought spices to go and anoint Jesus. On Sunday they were going to the tomb very early when the sun had just come up. They said to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?”

When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away. It was a very large stone. As they went into the tomb, they saw a young man. He was dressed in a white robe and sat on the right side. They were panic-stricken. The young man said to them, “Do not be afraid! You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth who was crucified. He has been brought back to life. He is not here. Look at the place where they laid him. Now go and tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of them to Galilee. There they will see him just as he told them.”

They went out of the tomb and ran away. Shock and trembling had overwhelmed them. They did not say a thing to anyone because they were afraid.

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Grace to you and peace in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Our enemies never cease to assail us. The sight of our sin shames us. The power of the grave frightens us. Death's shadow hovers over us waiting for an opportune time to strike. Such a shadow has covered our Lord.

The women make their way to the tomb because death has struck their Hope. Jesus is crucified. His blood spilled on the ground. Those who loved Him abandoned Him.

...but the women have not forgotten. Though threatened by the same enemies, they take courage. They go to the tomb seeking to care for His body. They go assuming that all is the same as the day before, that dead things remain dead, and dead people stay in the grave.

This is the way it has always been since the time of Adam. The wages of sin is death. Death comes to everyone because everyone has sinned. Jesus died. Jesus must still be in the tomb because that is the where they laid Him and dead people don't get up and walk away.

Like all who've gone before them, these women go to the tomb of One whom they loved. They go looking for the body to anoint it with spices, oils and aloes as was their custom. They go to work. They go in sorrow. It is the walk of sorrow and sadness. It is the walk of fear.

What will become of tomorrow? What will happen to us, to me, to my family? Life will never be the same. Joy has been ripped from my heart. Tears run down my cheek and stifle my soul. Who will roll away the stone? Who will come and deliver us, deliver me from these wretched enemies? Who will finally break the seal of the tomb and let us out?

Looking for the body of Jesus they find no such thing. The stone is rolled away. The tomb is open. Their hearts pause as a young man dressed in white greets them. "You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here! Come see the place where they laid Him!"

Today is not the same as yesterday. Christ is not here, not here among the dead things of the world, not here in the tomb, not here in death, not here under the dominion of sin. No longer seized by Hell's legions Jesus is risen!

Hope is resurrected!
The tomb is empty!
Death has no teeth.
Hell's gates have no bars.

Sheol is vanquished!
Hades is cast down!
Satan is crushed!
Humanity is liberated!
God's saints are victorious!

He is not here. He is not dead any more. He was crucified. Our enemies gave it their best. Sin railed against Him. Hell harangued Him. Humanity rebelled hanging Jesus on a cross. All our guilt, shame, sin and death was hung on His shoulders, while He hung on a cross. Jesus carried it all. Suffered for it all. Died for it all.

...but He is the Holy One of Israel. He has no sin but ours. He deserves no death, but receives ours. Sin, death and devil certainly crucified Him but they could not hold Him. His holiness is so great, His righteousness so pure, His love so powerful the grave was compelled to surrender to Him. He is not here! He is not dead! He is arisen!

When your enemies advance against you, look to Jesus! Behold His Cross! Remember His empty tomb! Jesus our Lord Christ has taken upon Himself your sins, suffered for them on your behalf, and now today has become your blessing.

Where is your sin now? It is there on the cross.

Where is your death now? It is there in the crucified and resurrected Christ!

Where is your grave? It is open. The stone has been rolled away. The seal is broken, never to bar your exit again.

You will go in because death comes everyone, but you will surely come out, alive, resurrected, to live for all eternity in paradise. Jesus is not in the tomb. Jesus is not dead. Jesus did not remain dead. Nor shall you!

He is risen! So also shall you who believe and are baptized. So seek the body of the Lord where He has promises to be. The angel told the women to go to Galilee and there they would find Him, just as He promised. We Christians are bound with the promises from our Savior. We do not need to go to Galilee. We seek Him where He has promised to be.

We go to the font, where in the waters He delivers us with His death and resurrection. We die with Christ, we are crucified with Christ. The old Adam drowns and we are raised with Christ.

We go to the altar. In the bread we eat His body and in the cup we find His blood. The resurrection is placed on our tongue. And the words "given for you" speak grace to our heart.

We hear the Word, the absolution, the forgiveness of sins, the means of grace. These give life, because these give Jesus.

It is for this reason you may walk away from the grave with these words ringing in your ears. “He is not here. He is risen!” These Words comfort our hearts, and strike fear in our enemy.

Though we continue to be assaulted and afflicted with the enemy’s disgusting display, we have these words, we have Jesus. We counter our adversaries’ attacks on the soul with words of boldness, words of faith, powerful words, words that chase the darkness away.

“Know then – Sin, Death, Devil, and everything that evil assails us: You are missing the mark. I am not one of those who are afraid of you. For Christ my dear Lord has presented to me that triumph and victory of His by which you were laid low.

From this very gift of His we derive our name. We are called Christians. My sin and death hung about His neck on Good Friday but on the day of Easter they had completely disappeared. This victory He has bestowed on us. This is why we do not worry.¹

Jesus is not here. He did not remain long in death’s clutches. Nor shall we remain long who believe and are baptized.

He is Risen!
He is risen indeed!
Amen.

1 Martin Luther