

Children's Sermon

(from Dollar Store children's sermons)

(offer gum to a student...have them open each piece)

This reminds me when the disciples and Mary got to the tomb and all they found was a white cloth but no Jesus.

HE IS RISEN (he is risen indeed)

HE IS RISEN! (he is risen indeed)

This is confusing! Why isn't there any gum in here? I bet the disciples were thinking the same thing...this is confusing! Where did Jesus go? How could his body not be here?

But we know the story! Alleluia! We celebrate today because Jesus is risen.

This is the best news that we know! Jesus loves us so much that after he died, he wanted us to live with him forever and so he rose from the dead because he loves us and now we have new life.

Remember to waive your butterfly's that remind us of new life in Jesus every time you hear the word Alleluia today! We are celebrating this amazing gift!

Let us pray:

So Many Questions... Mark 16:1-8

My oldest daughter Adelyn is 4 ½ now and all of a sudden, I find myself having real conversations with her that are engaging and thoughtful. It's the weirdest thing. And she asks questions! Oh – the questions.

So, we were dying easter eggs last weekend, Adelyn started engaging in conversation...

Mom, why are we coloring these eggs? (well, because that's what we do before easter)

When is Easter? Is that the next holiday? (yep, it's on Sunday)

What are we doing on Easter? (well, we will go to church and then to Gramma's house with your cousins for a party)

Is Easter when Jesus dies? (no, Easter is after he dies when he is alive again)

But doesn't Jesus live in Heaven? (yep! After he was alive again he went up to Heaven)

So Jesus died and came alive and died again...and now He's in heaven?

(Well, he didn't die again. He just lives in Heaven)

But G.G. (great grandma) died and shes is in Heaven!

(yep, you're right)

So is she alive or did she die? Or did she die and come alive and die again and now she lives in heaven?

(ummmm....)

Mom – why do we color eggs for Easter? Do bunnies die and become alive?

(I give up). So many questions!!!!

After I was able to compose myself a bit again after being bombarded with questions, I began to think to myself... Why DO we color eggs for Easter? How DO I explain the resurrection to a 4 year old? Heck – how do we explain the resurrection at all? Can we really believe that this happened?

Why are children known for asking questions and adults aren't? Why do we stop asking questions?

Mark's version of the resurrection used to be my least favorite. It's pretty incomplete compared to Matthew's version or Luke's version.

This version of the Easter story is one that we do not always hear. I bet it makes some of us uncomfortable to have it end without the women telling the news! It made people uncomfortable long ago, and some early writers added more to the end to allow it to end on

more of a positive note. But this version allows us to ask questions and to imagine the end of the story for ourselves.

This version of the resurrection story leaves us with questions. What happened after the women ran from the tomb? Do you think they went home? Who was that guy dressed in white? Why was Peter named separately from the other disciples? It leaves us asking a lot of questions. It leaves the story open. But maybe that's ok! Maybe that allows for space for us to ask questions and engage with the story!

Asking questions does not mean our faith is weak. It means we are interested in learning more, and are engaging with God and God's story. Asking questions actually deepens our faith. We grow through asking questions. It's ok to not fully understand or even have doubts of how God is at work. We grow in our understanding through questions. We grow in our faith through being challenged and seeking to know more.

I might imagine that when Mary and Mary went to visit Jesus' tomb that day, they were questioning things too. They were going to pay their respects. They were bringing burial spices to be placed on Jesus' body. They had accepted that Jesus had died and maybe had not been the messiah that they all had hoped for. They were visiting his grave.

But when they arrived to the tomb, the young man at the tomb gave the women some unexpected good news: "He has been raised; he is not here!"

Jesus did not stay in the place at which he has been condemned and where he died. He went back to Galilee, where he had lived, and healed, and taught. He is not on the cross any longer...nor is he in the grave. So where is he now? Where is Jesus today? Could he be with us?

Some of us today might have a hard time even imagining that Jesus is with us today. I know, because I've been there. I know because when things like bombings happen in places like Brussels and innocent people and children are killed, I question where Jesus is. I know because when a 4 year old dies of influenza, I question where Jesus is. I know because when my 34 year old friend and mother of 2 is diagnosed with cancer, I question where Jesus is.

What does this mean that Jesus has been risen from the dead? To the women who showed up that day, it meant terror and excitement at the same time. All these women had done was show up...burial spices in hand...but that's all it took to witness a miracle. Maybe that's all it takes for us today to. You are here. You have shown up (either willingly or through guilt). Will you witness a miracle? Or will God work a miracle through you?

Where will Jesus meet you? He will meet you on the way...he will meet you as he is calling you into the future. Jesus will meet you in the pain and hardships of every day life. He will meet you

in the joys too. The lowest of lows, and the highest of highs, and everywhere in between. Promise of resurrection is dynamic...it doesn't have a tangible form, but has the power to open up a future to which we are called.

The world has been changed. Easter is one of those things after which nothing will ever be the same again. Eyes that have seen the resurrection cannot see the same again, the lenses have been changed. Hearts that have felt the power of resurrection cannot feel the same way about the world ever again.

So I guess the answer to the question is in large part up to us. How will we live now that we have met the reality of Easter? How will we share the Good News of this day, of this new reality, of the Kingdom? How will we move past fear and amazement and flight and silence?

How will you live out the story of the resurrection?

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Thanks be to God. Amen.