

Don't Be a Fool, Jesus Is Risen!

Sunday, April 1 – 7:00 & 10:45

The Resurrection of Our Lord – 2018

Divine Service on Mondays: They resume on April 9 at 7 PM

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today is the resurrection of our Lord, *but it is also April Fool's Day*. “Since 1900, Easter has fallen on April Fool's Day only four times – 1923, 1934, 1945 and 1956. [The last time was 61 years ago!] It won't happen again until 2029.¹ April Fool's Day is intended for practical jokes; those who fall for them usually hear the words, “April Fools!” The jokes are normally harmless, *but being an actual fool is a most serious matter!* Therefore, this sermon will include ♣the truth and joy of the resurrection and ♣some sad realities about being a fool.

1. **The Gospel:** **1 Corinthians 15:1-5**

- a. What it is: The good news that Jesus ♣is the Son of God in human flesh, ♣lived as our sinless substitute, ♣suffered our punishment, ♣laid down His life, ♣was raised, and ♣is alive forever!
- b. The Corinthians: Paul preached the gospel to them; then, *by God's grace*, they received it and stood upon it – *as their confidence for heaven!* Then Paul warned them: By this gospel ² “...you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you-- unless you believed in vain.” What does that mean? Jesus and His finished

¹ http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2018/03/easter_falls_on_april_fools_da.html

work ARE the good news, so *those who know Him ARE saved!* But relationships don't automatically continue; therefore, as we would **hold fast** to a bag of money, *how much more should we **hold fast** to our Lord Jesus Christ!* May we never be among those who believed in vain – *who believed, but did NOT hold fast!*

c. Key factors of the gospel:

- i. ³ ...Christ died for our sins – Since we have all earned eternal punishment, *Jesus obediently took our place!*
- ii. ⁴ ...he was buried – He was truly dead, so *His body was wrapped and entombed!*
- iii. ...he was raised on the third day – The third day was Sunday, *which was also the OT festival of Firstfruits; since Jesus is the firstborn from the dead, those who know Him will also be raised to life!*
- iv. ⁵ ...he appeared – He appeared ALIVE to many people! **Alleluia! Jesus is risen!** (He is risen indeed! Alleluia!)

2. **A Fool:** What is a fool? A person who acts unwisely; thus a person who has good information, *but does not put that good information to good use!*

- a. Stephen Hawking: He is good example; some people considered him to be one of the smartest people on earth, *so his brilliance gained him the best information*, but he concluded that **“There is no God.”**² So how do we know he was a fool?

² <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Stephen-Hawking-Says-There-Is-No-God-Heres-Why>

The Bible says, “The **fool** says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Ps. 14:1 ESV). And we should not be surprised at his conclusion, because “as many as 93% of top-tier scientists do not believe in God” (Ibid.). Sadly for many, “Claiming to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1:22 ESV). So, by God’s grace, *let us humbly trust Him and His Holy Word!*

b. People in general:

- i. **Misplaced trust** – We all trust in some thing or someone; the Bible says, “Whoever trusts in his own mind is a **fool**” (Prov. 28:26 ESV). We have God’s Word and our own minds; though we are tempted to trust in us, *let us trust in God and His Word!*
- ii. **Poor planning** – For the man in Luke 12 who planned his earthly life, *but had no plans for eternity*, “God said to him, ‘**Fool!** This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’” (Luke 12:20 ESV). Since our days will eventually come to an end, let us **be** and **remain** ready for God’s call *by continuing to hold fast to Jesus!*
- iii. **Slow to believe God’s Word** – The OT made it clear that the Messiah would rise from the dead, *and Jesus spoke of it multiple times*. But on that first Easter Sunday, some of His followers were struggling to believe, so Jesus “said to them, ‘O **foolish ones**, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have

spoken!” (Lk. 24:25 ESV). Why were they foolish? Even though God is holy—*so He cannot lie* **and** even though God is almighty in power—*so He can do whatever He says, they were slow to believe!*

- iv. **No action** – In His sermon on the mount, Jesus gave wonderful instructions to His disciples; He taught such things *so that disciples would put them into practice*. For those who do, Jesus calls them wise; but He also said that “...everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a **foolish man** who built his house on the sand” (Matt. 7:26 ESV). So, *rejoicing in the Gospel*, let us do the Word!
- v. **Unwilling to embrace the cross** – The Bible teaches that God became a man in order to die on a cross to save people who despise Him. What do you think – *incomprehensible love or unbelievable foolishness?* The Bible says that “the word of the cross is to those who are perishing **foolishness**, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18 NAS). We are not called to understand God’s ways, *but we are called to repent and believe!*

Conclusion: Let us pray: Dear Father in heaven, You love us and have bought us back; please keep us from being fools and keep us ever-holding fast to Jesus! In His name, we pray!

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