

**Matthew 28:1-20**  
**Vindicated and Empowered**  
**Sermon Outline**

**Introduction:** The resurrection really happened—not just in our hearts. God “tore a hole in normal history” (N.T. Wright). What are we supposed to do about it, and what incentives does God give us for why?

**I) What are we supposed to do about the resurrection?**

Go and tell—now—everywhere

**II) Incentives for going**

**A) We have something amazing to tell people**

*28.18: All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me*

- God has taking back the world.
- He has broken the world-wide bondage of death and sin

**B) We will be resisted**

*28.11-15: The alternative “go and tell”*

It must be true if the status quo resists it so vigorously

**C) The Sender promises to go with us**

*28.20: “Behold I am with you always, to the end of the age*

- We meet him as we go
- Obedience a key to Christian conviction

**D) The Sender loves us**

*28.5, 10: Do not be afraid*

- The whole machinery of cosmic glory grinds to a halt as two women cling to Jesus’ feet

**Questions for Reflection this Week**

1) Reflect on the following statement by N. T. Wright:

“Don’t be fooled by the idea that modern science has disproved the resurrection of Jesus. Modern science has done no such thing...The Christian belief is not that some people sometimes get raised from the dead, and Jesus happens to be one of them. It is precisely that people don’t ever get raised from the dead, and that something new has happened in and through Jesus that has blown a hole through previous observations. The Christian thus agrees with scientists ancient and modern: Yes, dead people don’t rise. But the Christian goes on to say that something new and different now has occurred in the case of Jesus. This isn’t because there was an odd glitch in the cosmos, or something peculiar about Jesus’ biochemistry, but because the God who made the world, and who called Israel to be the bearer of his rescue-operation for the world, was at work in and through Jesus to remake the world. The resurrection was the dramatic launching of this project.”

- 2) Matthew tells us that, despite the remarkable report of the guards at Jesus' tomb, the religious leaders mounted an alternative story. What was the story? Reflect on its plausibility. Why did the leaders not even consider the possibility, given the guards' testimony, that something remarkable had happened? Why wouldn't they have wanted to know? How and why are we like them?
- 3) Note that Jesus ends the Great Commission with the words, "Behold I am with you always, to the end of the age." Jesus seems to be implying here that there is a link between consciously "going" (seeing oneself as and acting as a representative of Jesus the Lord of all) and a heightened experience of the presence of Jesus in one's experience. Why is this so? How does this work?
- 4) How might you be more consistently missional with friends, with family, at work, and globally?
- 5) List the evidence in Matthew 20 that Jesus' resurrection signals a cosmic reversal of the status quo. What is remarkable, in the light of the greatness of the moment, about the way that the angel and Jesus treat the two Marys (bear in mind that they were "merely" women, one of them with a questionable background). Notice as well the name Jesus gives to his disciples in v. 10. What does this response teach us about the heavenly Conqueror's attitude toward his people?
- 6) The appropriate response to who Jesus is and what he has done is worship (see vv. 9 and 17). Spend some time in worship.