

April 5, 2015

The *angel* said to  
the women,  
"Do not be afraid, for I know  
that you are looking for  
*Jesus,*  
who was **CRUCIFIED.**  
*He* is not here;  
*He* has *Risen*

There are any number of great statements that have been spoken and/or written through the ages: "Four score and seven years ago..."; "We hold these truths to be self-evident..."; "Ask not what your country can do for you..."; "I have a dream..." Many statements from Scripture are also life changing, but among all of the words that have ever been uttered in this world the most important by far are these words found in Matthew's gospel.

With these three simple words God's angel has changed everything. Before this Sunday morning more than two thousand years ago mankind had lived for centuries estranged from their Creator, separated by the gulf of sin, living without hope. But God, because of his great love, chose to bridge the chasm of our own sinfulness. He sent his one and only Son to earth as a human, one of his created, and that Son took upon himself all of the sins of the world. Those sins were nailed to the cross and in his death as an innocent sacrifice those sins were washed away.

On that Friday evening all of those years ago as weeping women helped by Joseph and Nicodemus took the tortured body

of Jesus from the cross, hope dimmed. All of the promises the Lord had made and all of the hopes and dreams that he had ignited seemed dashed in the despair of his horrible death.

On that Sunday morning everything changed for all time. The stone that sealed the tomb where his body had been laid to rest was rolled away and Jesus, the only Son of God, lives again! He emerged from that grave alive and he lives today. Death has been defeated. Life wins!

When the women who loved Jesus and had followed him for nearly three years approached the tomb they knew nothing about the wondrous events that had just occurred. They carried jars of myrrh and other oils and were planning to anoint the body of their dead friend. They were in mourning; broken by their grief.

How that angel must have terrified them as all angels do. His words must have confused them even more. "**He is not here; He has risen...**" Because we can look back on the events of that dawn all of those years ago we can understand, but I am sure that those women did not. What can it mean, they must have wondered, "**He is not here...**" Had someone moved or even stolen the body of their friend? Luke's account indicates that they thought this. "**He has risen...**" What can that statement mean?

Even the remaining Apostles, those who were chosen as eye-witnesses, struggled as those first reports surfaced. Is the Master really alive again? Can such a thing even happen? Even when he was among them they doubted.

But it happened. Jesus, the one and only Son of the God of creation, born fully human died in the horror of the cross and is alive again? "**He is not here; he is risen!**" For us hope is born. We can hope that despite our sin-filled lives we can find forgiveness, receive new life, and live forever. "**...he is risen!**"



## ***Announcements***

-There will be no Ladies' Bible Class and no Wednesday Bible study this week as Mike and Gloria will be traveling.

Check out our new website at: [www.anacondachurchofchrist.org](http://www.anacondachurchofchrist.org)