

EASTER MESSAGES 2011
A DAY OF UNUSUAL CELEBRATION
MATTHEW 21:1–11; LUKE 19:28–36, 39–44



The Heart of the Matter

What a study in contrast. On Palm Sunday 1865, the American Civil War came to an end. One side marched off in humiliating defeat, while the other side celebrated victory. One general appeared in his military finery — polished boots and sword — while the other wore a private's mud-splattered uniform and went sword-less. Before the week was through, the victorious president would be assassinated on Good Friday. On the original Palm Sunday, the contrasts between Jesus's mission, the people's expectations, and the disciples' confusion were just as stark as the contrast between the appearance of Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant. And what Christ calls us to do stands in stark contrast to the calling of our culture.



Discovering the Way

1. Traveling with Jesus from Jericho to Jerusalem (Luke 19:28–36)

After telling His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem to die and rise again (Luke 18:31–35), Jesus entered Jericho and began the long climb to the capital city (19:1).

2. Jesus's Triumphal Entry Was the Fulfillment of Prophecy (Matthew 21:1–11; Luke 19:39–40)

Jesus fulfilled the promises of Psalm 118:25–26 and Zechariah 9:9, yet the religious leaders scorned Him.

3. Jesus Wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41–44)

On the day of triumph, Jesus wept over the city because He knew His rejection and crucifixion were sure.



Starting Your Journey

We've walked where Jesus walked, from Jericho to Jerusalem. Now let's walk as Jesus walked by applying these four statements to our lives. First, always take the path of obedience. Second, always walk toward the challenge. Third, always remember that God can do the impossible. Fourth, always leave room in your life for compassion.



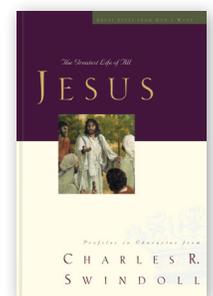
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EASTER MESSAGES 2011
A NIGHT OF UNBEARABLE SADNESS
ISAIAH 53:3–7, 10, 12



The Heart of the Matter

If you knew you had less than twenty-four hours left to live, how would you spend that time? Most people don't pause long enough to consider how they might answer that question. Jesus thought about that question, and He spent His final hours with His disciples and in prayer—before He was arrested, condemned, and crucified. Now, it's our turn to stop long enough and ponder what Jesus accomplished on the cross, how His death might change our lives, and what His death might mean if we had only a few more hours to live.



Discovering the Way

1. Behold the Lamb

Hebrews 12:3 commands us to “consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself.” How do we do that? How do we do this thing that isn't pleasant and doesn't come naturally?

2. Behold the Man of Sorrows (Isaiah 53:3–7, 10, 12)

Few can bear to linger too long here; the scene is too grotesque and the suffering too agonizing. But linger here we must.



Starting Your Journey

We have unhinged ourselves from the troubles of the world for a few moments. Now, it's time to come to the cross in faith, confessing our sins, and asking the Father of our Lord Jesus to forgive us and make us clean.



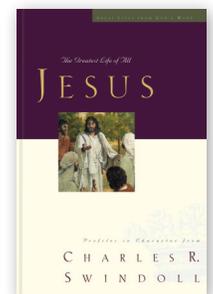
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INSIGHT FOR LIVING

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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

EASTER MESSAGES 2011
A MORNING OF UNIMAGINABLE JOY
LUKE 24:1–9, 11; JOHN 20:3–10



The Heart of the Matter

Tombs, as a general rule, are not fun places to hang out! That is, unless you're an archaeologist looking for treasures of the past. But most of us aren't archaeologists; we're just regular folks who have had some experience with tombs and graves—and none of it very fun or pleasant. Tombs represent finality, loss, and death. You go to tombs and graves to bury loved ones and to mourn—everyone knows that, including those who buried Jesus after His crucifixion. But what they didn't know then, and maybe some of us don't know now, is that a tomb can also be a source of unimaginable joy . . . if the tomb is empty.



Discovering the Way

1. What the Women Saw Perplexed Them (Luke 24:1–9, 11)

Early on Sunday morning, after Jesus's death and burial, a group of women came to the tomb. Seeing the stone rolled away and the body gone, they were perplexed.

2. What Peter and John Saw Filled Them with Faith (John 20:3–10)

When Jesus's disciples, Peter and John, came to the tomb, they also saw the body was missing, but upon closer inspection, they believed.



Starting Your Journey

You now stand at the empty tomb of Jesus. Can you see anything? To see, you have to look. To look, you have to think. And to think, you have to decide. Jesus's tomb is the only one once occupied and now empty. So what will you decide—will you believe what your eyes, your mind, and your heart tell you, or will you turn away?



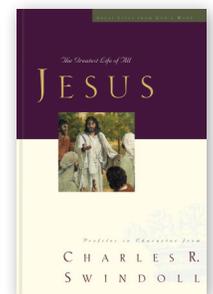
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