

19th April 2026; Sermon on Matthew 28:8–15a and 1 Peter 1:13–25

“Run, Hope, and Live Differently”

The women leave the tomb running.

Matthew tells us they go “with fear and great joy.” It’s a strange combination, but it rings true. Something has happened that they cannot fully grasp death has been undone and yet their hearts are alive with hope.

At the same time, in the background, another group is also moving quickly. The guards go into the city. The leaders gather. Plans are made. Money changes hands. A story is constructed to explain everything away.

Two movements begin on Easter morning: one toward truth, and one away from it.

And into that tension, the words of 1 Peter speak clearly: “*Set your hope fully on the grace that is being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*”

A Faith That Moves Forward

The women don’t stay at the tomb. They are told, “Go and tell,” and they go immediately.

They don’t wait for perfect understanding. They don’t resolve their fear first. They move forward carrying both fear and joy together.

And it is *on the way* that Jesus meets them.

That’s important. The risen Christ meets them not in stillness, but in obedience.

Peter picks up this same idea in a different way: “Prepare your minds for action... be sober-minded... set your hope.”

Christian faith is not passive. It is not about standing still and waiting for certainty. It is about movement intentional, directed, hopeful movement toward what God has promised.

Hope, in the New Testament, is not wishful thinking. It is a decision about direction.

What You Fix Your Hope On Shapes Your Life

Peter says, “Set your hope fully on the grace that is being brought to you.”

That word *fully* matters.

Because we are always setting our hope on something:

- success
- security
- reputation

- control

And in Matthew's story, we see what happens when hope is placed in the wrong thing.

The religious leaders set their hope on maintaining their authority. When the resurrection threatens that, they don't reconsider they react. They create a story that protects their position.

Their lives are shaped not by truth, but by what they are trying to preserve.

Peter warns against this kind of life: "Do not be conformed to the desires you formerly had..."

In other words, don't let your life be shaped by the same old fears and ambitions.

Instead, fix your hope on what God is doing in Christ.

Because whatever you place your hope in will determine how you respond when everything is shaken.

Holiness Is a Response to Resurrection

Peter goes on: "As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct."

That can sound heavy like a burden. But in light of the resurrection, it becomes something different.

Holiness is not about earning God's favour. It is about living in alignment with a new reality.

If Jesus is alive, then the world has changed. And if the world has changed, then our lives should reflect that.

The women at the tomb don't analyse the resurrection they respond to it. They run. They worship. They obey.

Their lives begin to take shape around what they have encountered.

Holiness is simply that: a life shaped by the reality of God.

The Cost of Truth and the Cost of Avoiding It

In Matthew's account, the guards tell the truth at first. They report what happened.

But the leaders offer them money and protection in exchange for silence and a lie.

It's a striking moment. Truth is known but it is negotiated away.

Because truth can be costly.

If the resurrection is real, it changes everything. It challenges power structures. It demands humility. It calls for repentance.

And so the easier path is chosen to reshape the story, avoid the implications.

Peter reminds his readers of a different kind of cost: “You were ransomed... not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.”

In other words, your life has already been bought at a great price not to preserve the old way of living, but to free you from it.

So don't trade truth for convenience. Don't sell out what is real for what is easier.

Love One Another Deeply

Peter then brings everything down to something very practical: “Love one another deeply from the heart.”

This is where resurrection hope becomes visible.

Not just in belief. Not just in worship. But in relationships.

Because if we have been given new life if we have been born again through the living and enduring word of God then that life must express itself in love.

The leaders in Matthew's story act out of self-protection. The women act out of trust and obedience.

One closes in. The other opens outward.

Love is the evidence of where our hope truly rests.

What Lasts

Peter ends with a reminder: “All flesh is like grass... the grass withers... but the word of the Lord endures forever.”

The story the leaders spread in Matthew's Gospel had its moment. It circulated. It influenced people.

But it did not last.

The truth of the resurrection, carried by those women who ran from the tomb, has endured.

And Peter says: that enduring word is the foundation of your new life.

So don't build your life on what fades on fear, control, reputation, or temporary gain.

Build it on what lasts.

Conclusion

On that first Easter morning, two paths opened:

One path ran toward hope, truth, and new life even with fear.
The other turned toward control, denial, and preservation of the old.

Peter calls us to choose clearly:

Set your hope fully on Christ.
Live differently because of it.
Love deeply from the heart.

And like those women on the road go.

Because when you move in that direction, even imperfectly, even with trembling
you will find that the risen Christ meets you there.