Easter 2014 - Empty Promises
What to do when things turn out differently than you expected.

Resurrection Sunday, April 20th

“Empty Promises”

Service: Open with 15 minutes of upbeat music video with last 5 minutes being a countdown clock.

Mark 15: 22- 39And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull. 23 Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it. 24 And when they crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them to determine what every man should take. 25 Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him. 26 And the inscription of His accusation was written above: THE KING OF THE JEWS. 27 With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. 28 So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors." 29 And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" 31 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. 32 Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him. 33 Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" 35 Some of those who stood by, when they heard that, said, "Look, He is calling for Elijah!" 36 Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink, saying, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to take Him down." 37 And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. 38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. 39 So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!"

NKJV

Luke 24: 1-12 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' 8 And they remembered His words. 9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women
with them, who told these things to the apostles. 11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened. NKJV

Empty Promises:

- Empty Cross – (He died) The empty cross promises us our sins are forgiven
- We talk about what filled the cross. We talk about the man next to Jesus. We talk about the Christ on the cross. But we do not talk about the empty cross.
- Because Saturday was the Sabbath the crosses were still up. They would be a reminder of what had happened but also a testimony that the cross is empty today. Because it was on the cross that Jesus paid the price for my sin!
- The cross was empty because:
  A. It was finished (Jesus completed His mission)
  B. No other sacrifice need go on that cross (No other blood could equal THAT blood. Tell Harmon girl story)
  C. It is a reminder to us that sin and death, no longer hold any power over us!

- Empty tomb (He is risen) The empty tomb promises there is everlasting life
- The women had an empty hope to anoint His body but who would role away the stone. On the way, the earth shakes! What miracle could we see if we, if out of love we did something desperate?
- The fact that the tomb was empty means that death has been defeated as well. Whoever heard of resurrection from the dead? Paul preached great until he got to this point.
- We must preach Jesus resurrected. He did not come to save us from death but to give us life!

- Empty cloths (He is alive) The empty clothes promises us we can have a personal relationship with Him
- Inside, Peter found the clothes that Jesus had been buried in. They too were empty. This could only mean one thing – Jesus was alive!
- If someone had stolen his body, they wouldn’t have removed the burial clothes and folded them up neatly and left them where they lay. Truly, Jesus was resurrected!
• It wouldn’t be long, before Jesus, himself would appear to Mary Magdalene, and
to all of the Apostles, and eventually to over 500 people.

Off in the distance stood an empty cross – the promise that their sins were forgiven.

At the end of their journey was an empty tomb – the promise of their eternal life.

Inside the tomb were the empty burial clothes – the promise of a personal relationship
with Jesus!

Preaching Point: Empty isn’t always bad!