

EASTER
SERMON OUTLINE

A large, dark teal silhouette of a tomb with a large, circular stone rolled away from its entrance. The background features a light grey, stylized mountain range. The text "AT THE TOMB" is written in a large, white, distressed, blocky font across the bottom of the tomb silhouette.

AT THE
TOMB

"AT THE TOMB"

SERMON OUTLINE**SCRIPTURE: LUKE 24:1-12**

(On the stage/at the front have three stools. On the first, have some torn up rags, on the second a large rock, and keep the third empty. Please note, if you have kids staying in your service, we suggest you make them small bags with items for them to use during your message - in the bag you can have a small piece of cloth and small rock for this sermon that you can indicate for them to find as you speak).

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever shown up somewhere and wondered, "Am I at the right place?"

- Share a personal story of a time that you found yourself confused about a place you found yourself – maybe it was a house that clearly didn't match the directions or an event that didn't line up with how you expected it to look
- If you need a story you can use this illustration: This once happened to our Executive Minister, Leanne. In her early 20s, she and a friend went on a trip to Paris and wanted to go to a well known art museum called the "Musee D'Orsay." They wandered a bit (this was pre cell phones in every pocket) and found what they were sure was the right place, paid the fee and went in. They soon found they were looking at display after display of...money. They were confused but kept looking, but all they could see were different types of money. Finally, they found someone who spoke English who told them they were in the Money Museum, and not the art museum at all. They should have known when it looked nothing like what an art museum should look like!" It took them a few minutes to say "We must be in the wrong place!"

Today, we are going to journey with people to a place we celebrate today: the tomb of Jesus, and we are going to talk about why many would have thought: "I must be at the wrong place."

We're going to look at three things that would have made them say "This must be the wrong place!" You'll see them here (Indicate the stools), and kids - you will have them in your bag. Then we're going to talk about why this wasn't the wrong place, but why being "at the tomb" is exactly the right place.

BACKGROUND

Review what happened up to this point (Jesus death and placing the body in the tomb), explaining the first two items:

- Burial practices in the ancient world: bodies would be placed in a “tomb,” like a cave, wrapped in cloths. They would stay this way for a year, before they would be removed and put in “bone boxes” or ossuaries (we find many example of these from ancient times - you could share images on a powerpoint if you use powerpoint). Bodies were buried quickly due to lack of practices to preserve them.
- Read burial account from Luke 23: 50-55
- Note they wrap him in cloths, as was the custom (hold up cloths, invite kids to hold up cloth from their bag)
- And then they put a large stone in front of the tomb. This was something that would be rolled away when new bodies were added, but it was sturdy and strong, to protect the bodies from animals, etc. – point to stone (invite kids to hold up)

Because it was near the Sabbath, the practice of adding the spices had to wait, which is why the women come back on Sunday.

AT THE TOMB

Imagine you are the women - you are going to the tomb to finish the task. And you find three shocking things:

- The stone is rolled away (discuss how incredible this would have seemed)
- The rags are there, but no body! (discuss)
- And then this is the third one: NOTHING. See how there is nothing on this stool? They don't find a body! (invite kids to look in their bags: What's left? NOTHING!)

What would you have thought if you were the women? You might have thought “I'm in the wrong place!” This can't be right!

They quickly know something is amiss: They state: they have stolen the body. They need an explanation for what they see. A rolled stone! Leftover cloths! An empty tomb! They don't imagine the truth of what has happened.

More People at the Tomb...

Now the men show up: Luke 24: 12 (Discuss and elaborate)

They also see the same thing! A rolled stone, rags, and no body!

They are baffled and confused at the tomb! It doesn't make sense to them

What about you?

Life can feel this way to us sometimes:

- We can feel like we are looking at disappointment of how things should be, or how we thought they would be
- We can feel like we are looking at God and we don't understand what is happening, how this can be

We thought we would be at the D'Orsay, but we are at the Money Museum

- Give examples from your church of ways they may have wondered where God is this year
- Share example or stories of times people may feel this way

What Really Happened

But they were not in the wrong place!

No one had stolen the body!

Instead, something exceptional had happened! The body that was in the tomb was now living, breathing and walking around, and risen from the dead.

HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED

Explain what did happen:

- Explanation of the angel
- Look back at the texts where Jesus predicted this would happen - there are a lot of them!
(Choose some to share/explain)

Matthew 16:21-23

Jesus told his disciples that he would be rejected by religious authorities, killed, and then raised again

Matthew 17:22-23

Jesus made another prediction of his death shortly after the Transfiguration

Matthew 20:17-19

Jesus told his disciples that he would be betrayed, condemned to death, and crucified, but would rise again on the third day

Mark 8:31-32

Jesus told his disciples that the "Son of Man must suffer many things"

Mark 9:30-32

Jesus made another prediction of his death shortly after the Transfiguration

Mark 10:32-34

Jesus told his disciples that he would be betrayed, condemned to death, and crucified, but would rise again on the third day

Luke 9:21-22

Jesus made his first prediction of his death after feeding the multitudes

Luke 9:43-45

Jesus made another prediction of his death shortly after the Transfiguration

Luke 18:31-34

Jesus told his disciples that he would be delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, and crucified, but would rise again on the third day

What Does this Mean for Us?

Today, I invite us to the tomb.

- Discuss further the hope we find at the empty tomb - not the wrong place, but exactly the right place for us to find hope
 - Let us look at what can happen after we think the worst has happened.
 - Let us remember that what seems unlikely can be true.
 - Let us hold onto hope that, even when we are not sure how to explain it, God is present at the tomb.
 - Let us look at the empty grave and have hope!
- As the sermon ends, play a song or have a soloist sing. Invite people to each come and take one of the rags, to remind them that there is new life at the tomb
- If you think they'll do it, end the service by inviting them to WAVE the rags like a flag as you sing a resurrection song