

## Easter – True and False Narratives Matthew 28

Today is a historic day... **This day marks the end of the worldwide pandemic!**

I wonder, what are you thinking at this very moment after hearing such a statement? In the least, you are probably assuming that I must have heard, or been exposed to, **a narrative that has led me away from the truth!**

The definition of a narrative - a story, or description, of a series of events! Some narratives are based upon facts & others are based upon fabrications.

At this very same time last year, there was a narrative being advocated that said **“By Easter, Covid will be gone & we will all be back again worshipping in-person!”** Well, here we are a whole year later & we are still not all back!

**This was but one of the many narratives over the past year that have caused division among us.** Consider some of the other narratives - wearing masks, social distancing, BLM, the police, racism, Trump, Biden, the election, etc.

How can we tell if the narratives we are hearing/believing/responding to are true or false narratives? **Why can't the truth just be easily identifiable?**

Since we are on this topic of narratives, & today is Easter, let's consider the different narratives people believe about this day that we are celebrating!

- For some this day is all about bunnies, egg hunts, family gatherings & **chocolate**, because that is the narrative they have come to embrace!
- For others, this day is just another Sunday because they believe Easter is nothing more than an excuse for commercialized consumerism!
- Still others reject this day out of **spite** for the Christian faith, or maybe just out of complete ignorance of what Christians believe about this day!
- Some declare today “Resurrection Sunday”, because they believe the narrative that Jesus has come... He lived... He died... He was buried... He rose again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day - **all to save us from the grip of sin!**

If this last narrative is the one you embrace, then surely you will see & respond to this day differently than those who hold a different view!

**We all operate out of the narratives we hold, so which narrative are you believing about today?** Which one are you living in response to?

**Every narrative also has a place of origin.** Can you identify the source(s) that have shaped the narratives that you embrace, including your Easter one?

Consider again some of the examples I shared earlier where different narratives have led us in different directions over this past year!

- When you first heard about the Coronavirus, what was your response?
- When masks & social distancing became required how did you respond?
- **When a black man was \_\_\_\_\_ by a white, male, police officer, what first came to mind?** Would you/I have been considered as a juror in this trial?
- When I say the name President Trump, or President Biden, or the 2020 election, what narratives are running through your head?

**We speak/act/live in response to the narratives we embrace!** So what information, experience, or even traumatic events have given shape to what you believe? \_\_\_\_\_ And what has shaped your beliefs about this day?

There are 2 very different narratives found in Matthew 28

1) **Jesus is dead!** He died on the cross & dead people stay dead!

- It's what the 2 Mary's initially believed! – vs. 1
- It's what the disciples initially believed! – Luke 24:9-11
- **It's the narrative the chief priests paid the soldiers to spread!** – vs. 11-13
- It's what the guards went along with to save face! – vs. 1
- It's what many Jews still believe b/c of this narrative! – vs. 15b

2) **Jesus is alive!**

- The angel declared it & Jesus Himself said it would happen! – vs. 6
- Both Mary's had a narrative-altering experience! - vs. 1-8
- Both Mary's, & the disciples, saw Jesus alive face to face! – vs. 9-10

2 very different narratives that come from different sources & experiences.

**Which narrative about Jesus do you believe?** Which narrative do you live in response to? If Jesus is alive what difference does that make in your life?

**Jesus leaves room for doubters** (vs. 17), **but the fruit on the tree of the empty cross speaks volumes of the truth of this resurrection narrative!**

I stand by my opening statement! The day Jesus rose from the dead is the day a worldwide pandemic came to an end! **Death is swallowed up in victory!**

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