

**“Christ Is Risen! He Is Going Before You!”
Matthew 28:1-10**

In the name of + JESUS +

***Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!
Alleluia!***

“He is not here!” the angel said. And that changes everything, doesn’t it? At least it did for the women that first Easter morning. **“He is not here.”**

The **“here”** to which the angel was referring was the cemetery—the grave—where those women had last seen Jesus—His lifeless body laid in a quickly-borrowed tomb late Friday afternoon. They had run out of time for completing all the necessary funeral details and needed to return. But...

“He is not here!”

And that Easter announcement changed everything, didn’t it? The cemetery was no long their final destination.

“He is not here!” But if Jesus is not “here,” as the angel said—not at the cemetery in Joseph’s burial garden, not bound to the grave—then **where** is He?

“He is going before you to Galilee,” the angel said. **“There you will see Him, just as He told you.”**

Where? **“There...going before you.”**

Do you know what this means? It means that Jesus Christ is already in the future—already **there** where we have not arrived yet?

There---where we have not arrived yet.

There where perhaps we are at times afraid to travel.

There where sometimes we are sure we can never get.

THERE...going before you!

It is **from** the future that the Risen Lord Jesus is calling us: **HE IS GOING BEFORE YOU!** And it is **to** the future that He is calling US.

“He is going before you.”

But where is that? ***“To Galilee,” the angel said. “There you will see Him, just as He told you.”***

To Galilee. Galilee was where the disciples had traveled with Jesus before all these things took place. For most of them, then, “Galilee” was “back home” – familiar turf. If you will, “the same-old-same-old.” And yet, Christ is risen—just as He said, and therefore the “same-old-same-old” is not ever quite the “same-old”.

To be sure, as we journey into the future—our Lord’s future—**from** which He calls us and **to** which He calls us—we may expect to meet Him on some very familiar ground—in our own “Galilee” as it were—places where we have already met Him before...places He promises always to be. And where are those?

He will be in our tomorrows just as He has been in our yesterday and our todays...in **His Word**: familiar territory. His Word never returns to Him without doing what He sends it to do. *“You search the Scriptures because in them you find eternal life, and they bear witness to Me.”*

We meet Him in **our Baptism**, too—for most of us, ground covered long, long ago yet here, too, we have met our Living Lord time-and-time-again, always with the forward-looking promise: *“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...”* (Is. 43:1-3)

“All of us where were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death! We were therefore buried with Him thru baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection.” (Romans 6:3-5) Here the Living Savior meets us!

And we will meet Him not only on the familiar ground of His Word and our Baptism, but also as He keeps gathering us together **at His Table**, giving us to eat and to drink of His very Body & Blood for the forgiveness of sins and the strength to continue walking onto in His future. And His promise is ever-new: “Where two are three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

“There you will see Him...going before you.”

This is the message of Easter: You and I need no longer be afraid of the future, wherever it leads. The word of the Risen Christ assures us that we are NOT going to face the future alone. ***“There you will see Him,” the angel said.***

And even when our journey leads us—as it always does eventually—to the cemetery, ***“There you will see Him!”***

For Jesus is already there—He’s been there and done that—FOR US! He is there VICTORIOUSLY, to lead us beyond the cemetery, beyond the grave, beyond the ashes and the loss and the tears and the sorrow. Jesus lives and goes before us to lead us to the ultimate future: **life everlasting!**

“He is going before you. There you will see Him!”

***Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen, indeed!
Alleluia!***