

Pastor Samuel Rodriguez: It May Be Dark but the Tomb Is Still Empty

We live in one of the darkest hours in human history.

The COVID-19 pandemic demands we distinguish between that which is essential and that which is not. With that being said, I am reminded that more than 2,000 years ago, a woman named Mary ran, while it was still dark, toward an empty tomb.

She ran not when things were pristine or perfect. She ran while things were still dark.

It's what we do in the darkest hour that truly defines us.

The darkness of depression cannot impede us from running toward the empty tomb of joy. The darkness of despair cannot hinder us from stepping into the empty tomb of hope. The darkness of destruction cannot obstruct us from looking into the empty tomb of destiny.

Are we willing to run toward the empty tomb?

Are we willing now, in the midst of this darkness, to run toward the reality that Jesus is Lord and Savior?

The day Mary, Peter and John ran toward the empty tomb and found nothing, you and I discovered everything. We discovered an empty place that filled our hearts, our families, our destinies, our purposes, our passions and our promise.

Hebrews 9:12 (NLT) tells us, "With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever." It's not about what we do for God. It's about what God already did for us. He came down so we could get up. He defeated darkness so we could

be light. He died so we can live. He said it is finished, so we can get started. He came out of the tomb, so we can come out of sin, failure and captivity and change the world around us.

Because he lives, what Jesus did cannot be undone.

If Jesus came out of the tomb, then we can come out of misery. We can come out of depression, anxiety and fear. We can come out of panic. We can come out of addiction. We can come out of sin, temptation and the very pit of hell if Jesus came out of the tomb.

Let me remind you of Romans 8:11: "The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you." Here is a word of the Lord for us this Easter: It's time for us to come out of our tombs.

Whatever we may be going through at this very hour, the Spirit of God is calling us out. He's calling us into a new life. Because the blood of Jesus shed on the cross sealed our past, the empty tomb secures our future.

Once again, we are celebrating Jesus' resurrection in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic. And while it may be dark outside, the tomb is still empty. {eoa}

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