

Life Unstoppable

April 5, 2026

Based on Acts 10 and Matthew 28:1-10

I find myself every year thinking how truly unbelievable the resurrection story is. Then I also find myself trying to figure out the complexities and nuances of the event. Like an earthquake and how buff was the angel to roll the stone? Did he jump on the rock or fly? What did the voice sound like? Is an angel really a he or a she or does it matter? What really happened to the guards was it like hypnosis? Then all the emotions of both the first evangelists, the women. Fear and joy: how does that work? And then the dumb men trying to figure it all out. What did Jesus look like after all that he had been through? Was he bright eyed and bushy tailed as the saying goes, or was he disheveled and looking in need of a shower and new set of clothes?

For as many years as you can remember you have heard this story. He is Risen! **He is Risen indeed!** We can proclaim it. But, how has it changed you? Or do we just say, it should change us therefore it does. I don't like that answer. I think that something as big as the resurrection should change us, and I think the reading from Acts describes how it actually changed the hard-headed, emotional roller coaster of a guy named Peter. Maybe it is because I can so relate to Peter, maybe you do too that the resurrection seems to be a changing force.

In the book of Acts that Donny read to us Peter is now at the home of Cornelius. Cornelius is a Roman soldier. Sworn enemy and not Jewish, a Gentile of the worst kind. Peter has a dream and Jesus himself tells him that he needs to go from Joppa to Caesarea and see this guy. Now right here Peter could have decided, "Nope not gonna do it. Not going to go to the house of some Gentile. I got that thing."

We all have our Peter moments where we run hot and cold, we have a clear mind and then are confused. We have moments when we want to put up walls and barriers. We decide when and how we want to practice being Christians. But the great thing about being a Christian is about the practice. We are never going to get it right 100% of the time. So Peter shows up. And honestly if I have learned anything about ministry, showing up is more important than anything else. When we show up God can do God's things.

When the women showed up at the tomb God did a huge God thing. Jesus was not in the tomb when that angel rolled the stone away and greeted them. Peter showed up a Cornelius' house and then was amazed at what happened next. He baptizes the family and the servants and he ends up preaching a Twitter version of the Gospel on death, dying and resurrection.

Peter says, "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him." This is a revolutionary statement coming from Peter.

Growing up in the Jewish faith and having experienced the persecution that Jewish descendants had faced created a guarded mistrust of others. Add to that the current occupation by the Roman Empire and the recent death of Jesus at the hands of the Roman government no one could really blame him. But if the resurrection has created anything, it is that all are welcome as God's creation. He is Risen! **He is Risen indeed!**

The difficulty arises even more so when others, his own disciple buddies, find out that he went and hung out with a Gentile. They felt betrayed. How could a Gentile receive the same salvation that was promised to them, the Jewish faithful? That is the power and the purpose of the Resurrection. Jesus was there for everybody in his earthly ministry. He saved the woman from adultery, ate dinner with Zaccheaus, allowed the tax collector Matthew to become one of his disciples, all people considered to be the bottom of the social order in Jesus day.

It is the same today. There are people who say don't include those people over there. Those people over there do not belong here. They may call themselves Christians but really with the best eye roll that can be mustered. We like to have some body to exclude.

The resurrection turned all preconceived notions upside down. The sovereign Lord of all has come among us as one of us to raise us to share intimacy with us. It is written in Hebrews 13:8 that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." The Good News of the gospel is that Jesus

came to forgive, to love and to redeem us once and for all. That is how the resurrection has changed us. When we are willing to take action and stand with the least and vulnerable we are proclaiming resurrection power. He is Risen! **He is Risen indeed!**

When we allow resurrection power to enter our lives we are willing to be inclusive and believe in the unbelievable. Peter was converted in this experience to the same conversion we can experience. We can be open to where the Holy Spirit leads us to serve. We can give to people who have less by supporting the pantry. We can volunteer to work with people in Wayfinders. We can serve at Rising Up. We can call on people right here in our church who would love a visit because they are lonely. Spreading resurrection power comes in serving and showing love and compassion.

Love was freely given by Jesus. We should not put a price on that same love. We know that the disciples were not truly converted until they witnessed the power of resurrection. But once it was seen and felt and believed the world has never been the same since. Share in that same love by both receiving and giving. And if you hear how that angel got on top of that rock let me know. He is Risen! **He is Risen indeed!** Amen.