



Our Church, Empty Tomb

Serving Leaders in Life

This excerpt was written by Dr. John Kie Vining, Senior Trainer, Great Commandment Network.

Pastor: Our churches are empty, but so is the tomb. Jesus was always more than a man with a body: "... *that holy thing ... shall be called the Son of God*" (Luke 1:35). He was God building a **body**: "*I will build my church*" (Matthew 16:18). Jesus, the **bodybuilder** like His Father, is a God of subversion: "*What I do you do not know now; but you will know later*" (John 13:7). He subverts the common, the expected, and the routine for purposes beyond human understanding yet with humankind always in view: "*Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven*" (Hebrews 12:26). In that sense, His **bodybuilding** purposes are often hidden from human perspective: "*His ways are past finding out*" (Romans 11:33).

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- His birth subverted the natural birthing order. "*... a virgin will be with child*" (Matthew 1:23).
- His life subverted the ordinary patterns of development.
- "*... I must be about My Father's business*" (Luke 2:29).
- His death subverted the ugly instrument of penalty and punishment. "*... for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame*" (Hebrews 12:2).
- His body subverted death. "*... O death, where is they sting?*" (1 Corinthians 15:55).
- His resurrection subverted the grave. "*... O grave, where is your victory?*" (1 Corinthians 15:55).

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The women went to anoint His body.

- The angel comforted. "...don't be afraid...come and see... go and tell" (Matthew 28:5-7).
- The women implored the men. "...Come and see" (Matthew 28:8).
- The men departed to their homes, sheltered in place, and practiced social distancing.
- Later Jesus appeared to them and said, "...come and see... be filled with the Holy Ghost...go and tell" (Acts 1:8).

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As they gathered in an upper room to wait and experience, they were endued with power to disperse and demonstrate. "...They were filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4).

The disciples, *the with ones*, were now the apostles, *the sent ones*, deployed in power, faith, and openness. "...they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word" (Acts 8:4).

The first century Diaspora, scattering of the saints, foreshadowed a potential twenty-first century diaspora when God would again subvert by scattering, this time subverting the breath of a virus by the breath of His Spirit. "...Occupy till I come" (Luke 13:9).

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Like the inspiration taken from Kristi Bothur's poem, "*How the Virus Stole Easter*," maybe the meaning of an empty tomb informs the meaning of empty churches. The import of the body of the man Jesus walking out of a shell, the tomb, in circumstances of death and uncertainty, to go and tell, inspires us to wonder. In this time of death and uncertainty, should not we, His body, also be walking out of our shells, church buildings, to go and tell (Acts 29)?

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Click on the image above to read about Kristi Bothur and her amazing poem.

[Click HERE to hear/watch Kristi's poem.](#)

Reverend Samuel Rodriguez,
President of NHCLC, info@
nhclc.org (916) 919-7476.

