

Theme: There are very few ways to respond to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And only one of them ends in life with Him.

Introduction: July 21, 1969. The moon landing: did it actually happen? A look at three different responses to the most important event in the history of the world.

I. Those Who *Refuse* to Believe: The Jewish Rulers – Those responsible for Jesus' crucifixion

A. In spite of His claims

1. The Lord's anointed (Luke 4:18-21)
2. Forgiving Sins: Truly "only God can do that" (Matthew 9:2; Luke 7:47)
3. His relationship to God the Father
 - a. Seen Jesus? You have seen the Father (John 14:9)
 - b. One with the Father (John 10:30)
4. To rise from the dead (Matthew 27:63)

B. In spite of the evidence

1. Power over sickness and infirmity
 - a. Paralysis (Matthew 9:5, 6)
 - b. Uncleaness (Luke 8:43)
 - c. Blindness (John 9)
 - d. Leprosy (Luke 17)
2. Power over the physical world
 - a. Water to wine (John 2)
 - b. The weather (Matthew 8)
 - c. Physical properties of matter (John 6)
 - d. Feeding thousands with five loaves and two fish (Matthew 14)
3. Power over the spiritual realm
 - a. Casting out demons (Matthew 12)
 - b. Delivering a man crazed by demons (Mark 5)
4. Power over death
 - a. Jairus' daughter (Luke 8 / Mark 5)
 - b. Widow of Nain's son (Luke 7)
 - c. Lazarus (John 11)

C. Their deadly actions

1. Attempts to destroy His ministry
 - a. In league with the Devil? (Matthew 12:24)
 - b. A terrible sinner
2. Seeking His life
 - a. And succeeding!
 - b. According to God's foreknowledge and plan (Acts 2:23)

D. Refusal leads to fear: Fearing Him in life and in death

II. Those Who Try to *Recuse* Themselves: The Guards

A. The hired help

1. A frightening experience: More than they bargained for
2. Reporting to the chief priests: Payoff convinces them "they didn't see what they saw"

B. Committed to themselves

1. This is not their fight
2. Silence is profitable!

C. Not their decision

1. We don't have to take sides
2. They have made their choice: Not a bold refusal to believe – but a rejection none the less

III. Those Who *Rejoice* in Believing: The Women

- A. Sorrow to joy
 1. Came to grieve
 2. Grief is shattered
- B. It's all true!
 1. Every word, every promise
 2. All confirmed in life!
- C. A powerful encounter
 1. The Message: "He has risen"
 2. The Invitation: "Come and see"
 3. The Commission: "Go quickly and tell His disciples"
 4. The Meeting: The risen Savior meets them

IV. Our Turn to Decide

- A. The circumstances change
 1. Not the same culture that Jesus came to
 2. The attacks continue
 3. None have stood
- B. The choice remains
 1. Some refuse to believe that Jesus is anything unusual – Rejecting the truth leads to fear
 2. Some wish to recuse themselves
 - a. Claiming that they haven't decided one way or the other
 - b. "Whoever is not with me is against me" (Luke 11:23)

But I am inviting you this morning:

3. Rejoice in the risen Lord!
 - a. Repent, believe, and rejoice!
 - b. Discover what it is to be a child of God