

# INDEED! Luke 24:30-35 -- Easter Sunday

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[ 0 : 00 ] was a special treat for me in that He Lives is my favorite hymn.

He walks and talks with me along life's narrow way. Please turn to the Gospel of Matthew. Chapter 28. And we'll be looking at chapter 28 of Matthew verses 1 through 14.

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.

And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.

[ 1 : 23 ] And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified.

He is not here, for he has risen. Just as he said, Come and see the place where he was lying.

Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead. And behold, he is going ahead of you into Galilee.

There you will see him. Behold, I have told you. And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to report it to his disciples.

[ 2 : 27 ] And behold, Jesus met them, and greeted them. And they came up, and took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid.

Go and take word to my brethren to leave for Galilee. And there they will see me. Now, while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened.

And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers. and said, You are to say, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.

And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble. Let's go.

Thank you. Thank you.

[ 4 : 18 ] Where the chief priests and the scribes got together, offered a bribe to the soldiers, and said, This is what you are to say regarding Jesus' absence.

You got it. And they paid them off with a large sum of money. He said, By the way, your incompetence, supposedly, is very likely to come to the ear of the governor, and you could be in big, big trouble.

But we'll get to it, and we'll smooth things over, and it will be all right. The only thing that was missing from this scene was some e-mails.

Otherwise, it's pretty much same old, same old. Nothing new. Nothing has really changed. What I want to share with you this morning in connection with Resurrection Sunday has to do with life itself, something different.

A little different setting. If you will turn over to Luke's Gospel now, and chapter 24. Luke chapter 24.

[ 5 : 33 ] All four of the Gospels contain some information regarding the resurrection. And we're just selecting something from two of them.

We've already heard from Matthew. And this is from Luke in chapter 24. I think one of the most convincing things about the reality of the resurrection of our Lord was the fact that those who would have wanted it most, and would have needed it most, and would have cherished it most, was the same crowd that denied it even happened.

And that, of course, is the Twelve Apostles. Or at this time, the Eleven Apostles, because Judas has already gone out probably and hung himself, taken himself out of the picture.

And when the news of his resurrection is reported, excitedly, understandably so, those on the receiving end of it just didn't buy it.

In fact, one account says that when the women told the men what had happened, that they had actually seen Jesus in the flesh, he that was crucified.

[ 6 : 52 ] The text says, And their words seemed to them as idle tales. Just couldn't believe it. Now, in one respect, it might not be all that difficult, because Jesus did have an impressive track record for doing what was considered impossible.

It wasn't too long before his own resurrection, matter of fact, just a few days, that he raised Lazarus from the dead. And Lazarus had been dead four days.

No question about the reality of his death. But when someone has the power and ability to raise another person from the dead, that's, well, we know who alone is capable of that.

But add to that, if you will, the complexity and the difficulty, at least in the human mind frame, of being able to do that for yourself. I mean, it's one thing for a living person to be able to give life to a dead person.

But for a dead person to give life to himself, that's a whole other issue. And yet, one of the things that Jesus said, that really sticks with us, and of course there are so many of his sayings, is, No man takes my life from me.

[ 8 : 21 ] I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and to take it again. And when he gave that story about Jonah, even as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth.

Didn't register. Just did not register. Right over their heads. They just didn't get it. Couldn't put it together. They, of course, will put it together after the fact.

And not only will they put it together, but they are going to publish it and spread it abroad. And after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that became the message.

Prior to that, it was the coming of the kingdom, and the return of the king, establish that kingdom, reverse the curse that's upon the earth, fix everything that's broken, political corruption to be done away with, and all of those things, all of those wonderful things that are going to happen during the millennial reign of Christ.

They were the message before the death of Christ. Everything centered on that kingdom. And it became a topic of prayer. Thy kingdom come.

[ 9 : 35 ] Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And now the emphasis has somewhat switched. The kingdom is not entirely out of the picture, but something new, dramatic, dynamic, has displaced the message of the kingdom.

And that is, Jesus Christ, who was crucified, is alive again. He is risen from the dead. That became the message for the apostles.

And not only had he risen from the dead, but he had been on this earth in ten separate appearances to about seven different groups of people over a period of six weeks.

Think of that. About 40 days after the resurrection, he was here on the earth prior to his ascension. Different groups saw him. One group was consisting of 500 people at once.

And the writer says, not only did 500 people at once see him, but most of them are still alive today as I write this, and you can go check with them and see what they have to say.

[ 10 : 52 ] So the evidence is absolutely overwhelming. And the guards, who had this cock and bull story about. His disciples came while we were asleep and stole him away.

And you just have to ask the question, well, if you were asleep, how do you know what happened? How do you know it was his disciples? How do you know? When you tell a lie, in any kind of collusion, and I remember reading the book Born Again by Chuck Colson.

This was back when President Nixon was in the White House, had the big brouhaha, and he ended up being the only president ever to resign in office like that in disgrace. But I remember Chuck Colson talking about the things that they were trying to put together by way of a defense and everything.

And he said, it just kept falling apart, just kept falling apart. Because if you do not have truth that is consistent with truth, you've got chinks in the armor of the defense, and it's not going to hold up.

And this is partly what's being faced right now in Washington with all the stuff that's going on, all of the investigations, and who knows exactly how or when that's going to pan out.

[ 12 : 14 ] But there is one thing that all of these people are committed to ferret out, and that is the truth.

And sometimes it can be very difficult to come by, especially when there are people who are trying to prevent the truth from coming out. And that's what we have in the book of Acts.

As the apostles went about preaching this message, they confounded the authorities, and there was little or nothing that they could do. So they called them together and they threatened them.

And they said, now listen, we are commanding you to speak no more in this man's name. Just shut up. Stop talking this way.

And Peter answered and said, well, in your sight, whether we ought to be obedient to God or be to man, you see it your way, we see it our way, all we know is this.

[ 13 : 18 ] We cannot help. I love that expression. We cannot help but speak of those things which we know.

They didn't suspect them. They didn't have a hunch. They didn't have an opinion. They had cold, hard facts.

And you cannot deny that. And Peter says, we just have to give this message out. And you will have to do with us as you will. And the text says that they beat them.

They beat them. You can read this in Acts 4 and 5. They beat them and sent them on their way.

And you know what the apostles said? They prayed. They prayed and they said, Lord, we rejoice that we have been found worthy to suffer for his name.

Now tell me, how are you going to defeat people like that? They are armed with two things. The truth and determination.

[ 14 : 32 ] we cannot help. We have to do this. It's just incumbent upon us. We don't have any choice. We've got to speak of what we know to be true.

So, they did and the message was not well received at all. In fact, Peter was imprisoned and God sent the angel in Acts chapter 10 to release Peter from prison so that he could go out and continue with that message.

This became the world-shaking, life-changing event. And it is still in order today with all of the same power and girded with the same truth that it had 2,000 years ago.

And it all boils down to this thing called life and how we view it. Scriptures make it very clear and you will not find this in other places with any authority.

Life is priceless and life is precious. And whenever you do anything to devalue or demean human life on any level, you put it at risk on every level.

[ 15 : 55 ] And this is exactly where we are right now as a nation. We view life differently. I don't know how aware you are of it, but I'm very much aware that in the 80 plus years that I've lived, life has cheapened in a lot of areas.

It has just cheapened. over 50 million lives have been snuffed out and denied the birth and the life. Innocent had nothing to do with it, but for just the result of behavior that in most cases was irresponsible.

And you have to find somebody to pay the price for that. And those who engage in it determine that it's not going to be them. It's going to be somebody else. It's going to be the unborn.

They take the life of the unborn. Tragic. Absolutely tragic. Well, the text in Luke chapter 24 and verse 34, I find it absolutely delightful.

[ 17 : 15 ] Let's begin reading, if we may, with verse 30. Luke chapter 24 and verse 30. And it came about that when he had reclined at table with them, he took the bread and blessed it.

And breaking it, he began giving it to them. This is kind of fresh in my mind because I just taught some of this at the men's class on Thursday morning, but I just wanted to point out something from a cultural standpoint, especially for the benefit of young people who may be here.

The text says that Jesus reclined at table with them. He didn't sit down at the table with them. He laid down. Quite different from the way we do things.

We all just came from a sumptuous breakfast, and we have a table spread before us and we sit on a chair that puts us at just the right height for eating food from the table.

And that's the way we do it. And that's the way it's done in much of the world. But back in this day, they reclined at table because the table was a rather low affair, maybe 12, 14 inches off the ground,

just four legs, just a regular square table, or maybe in some cases a round table.

[ 18 : 27 ] But it was down very low. And the Japanese and the Chinese kind of come close to that today in their serving. And then there are cushions around and carpet and things like that, and you lie down, most of them on their elbows like this, with their mouth right at about the level of the table, and their body is stretched out behind them.

that's reclining a table, and that was standard operating procedure. This is what made Jesus' feet so accessible to Mary, who washed his feet with her tears and dried them with her hair, because his feet were there, stretched out, very accessible to her, and she was able to do what she did.

It also explains how it is that in John's gospel, that says, I think it's, John says, and the disciple whom Jesus loved leaned on Jesus' bosom.

Well, you're going to find that rather awkward to do if you're sitting at a chair and table like we ordinarily have, but when you're on the floor like that, you're shoulder to shoulder almost, with the person next to you, and it's just very easy and very convenient to just lean right over either way, and the person is right there and very available.

So, these are the kind of things that the Bible uses that are completely different from our culture, and they're a little puzzling when we read them about reclining it, what's that all about? So, he reclined the table, he took the bread, and blessed it, and breaking it, and that's another cultural thing, by the way, and it has been reduced to eating the meal or having a meal time, breaking bread together, and it's a very literal kind of thing, because they always broke bread, they never cut it, you don't cut bread, not in the Bible, you break it, and most of the bread, most of the bread was kind of like a small pancake, and you would fold it in half, and it would be almost like a taco shell, and then you would dip that and use it as a scoop, no knives, forks, or spoons, everybody was without those, and you made that and you dipped it into the common bowl, now I know that this would really turn some of us off when it comes to hygiene and passing around bugs and things like that, but that was of absolutely no concern to them at all, and they would sit around the table like that, and each one would take a piece of bread and fold it over, and what they dipped into was a substance like gravy, and it had chunks of meat and vegetables and things like that in it, it was,

[ 21 : 11 ] I guess you would kind of call it maybe equivalent to our stew, a pot of stew, and they would fold that bread over and use it as a scoop, and dip down in that, and then you would take a bite, and when Jesus said that he was going to be betrayed, they became very concerned, because they were thinking in terms of somebody doing or saying something stupid, which they proved to be capable of, because they were just human, and that it would be embarrassing to Jesus.

I can promise you this, they had no idea at all when Jesus said, one of you is going to betray me, and he went around the circle, and said, is it I?

I couldn't do that, I don't think, I couldn't betray, and each one was kind of dumbfounded over that, Jesus saying that, and then he said, it is the one to whom I will dip the sop when I take it.

Jesus had already taken the role of being the host at this Passover meal. It wasn't the home of anybody, none of the twelve lived there, this was a room that was rented in advance, just like the colt upon which Jesus rode, and it was a room that was furnished, equipped and everything, for everything they'd need, I'm sure they got some carry out, and they have the Passover lamb and the meal and everything that goes with it, and the common pot, which was a large bowl filled with all of these goodies, chunks of meat and vegetables and different things like that, like a stew pot, and Jesus said, the one who will betray me, it is he to whom I will give the sop when I have dipped it, and in this culture, that was an act of love and generosity accommodation, it was being a good host, and you were treating the one whom the host gave the sop almost like a guest of honor, and Jesus dipped the sop, and he put it to the mouth of

Judas. Now, as I said before, you can be certain that those who were there had no idea what was really going on, betrayal, and Jesus said to Judas, that thou doest too quickly, go ahead Judas, run your errand, do what you agree to do, you can leave now, and Judas went out, to do, and the other apostles had any idea at all what was really going on, and what Judas was really going to do, they would have never let him out of that room.

[ 24 : 25 ] But the text in one of the gospels says that they supposed that Judas was going out to buy something additional for the feast.

feast. Maybe he was going to get some dessert, you know, for the end of the meal. They didn't know where he was going, but he would be the logical one to go because Judas was the treasurer of the group, and we are told that he bared the bag, he carried the money purse, and when people

would make contributions to the cause that Jesus was preaching, it would go into that common treasury, and they would buy their food and things that they needed out of it, and Judas was the keeper of the treasury, and we're also told that he was a thief, and he was skimming from the bag for his own personal gain.

The disciples had no idea at all what Judas was really up to, but he had already decided to turn him over.

I've often wondered why did he do that? Well, we know there's always the money, they say follow the money, and we know that the 30 pieces of silver were involved, and that was a nice piece of change in that day, but how could you give someone over to the authorities who would do who knows what with them, and I'm convinced that Judas didn't know that Jesus was going to end up on the cross.

He probably didn't think it would come to that. That was not clear at all, because Pilate was the only one who had the authority to order an execution.

[ 26 : 20 ] Jews couldn't do that. You've got to remember the Jewish people were under occupation. They were ruled over by the government of Rome, and the local representative from Rome was a man by the name of Pontius Pilate.

The Jews had the authority of capital punishment removed from them. They couldn't do that. Now, they're going to disobey it. They didn't get permission when they stoned Stephen to death in Acts chapter 7.

That's a different situation, and I wouldn't be surprised if some of the authorities in the Jewish establishment weren't called on the carpet and made the answer for the riotous execution of Stephen in chapter 7.

Because those who carried out that execution were all leaders in Israel. They were the Sanhedrin. It would be the equivalent of our Congress, which of course would be a lot larger, because in the Sanhedrin there were only 70 people.

And they were the ones who physically carried out the execution of Stephen without Roman authority. And I wouldn't be a bit surprised if when they were called on the carpet to give an answer, for their exercising authority that they did not have, they probably took with them a nice sum of money and probably left it there on the table.

[ 27 : 43 ] And as the authorities saw the money, the seriousness of the offense began to decrease. And you know how these things work. Someone said in the United States, you get the best justice that money can buy.

well, it has often come to that. Sad to say, it has often come to that. So, Judas went out in the night. He'd already made arrangements. He told the authorities, listen, I know how you can take Jesus. I know how you can take him. and their quandary was, we want to arrest this man and put him out of commission.

But the problem is, this stupid public that doesn't know any better, they're infatuated with this guy. They think that he's the Messiah.

And they're ready to follow him. And if we make a scene and send the temple police, and they would not be Roman soldiers, they would be temple police, they would be Jews, if we send the temple police to arrest Jesus, that's going to cause a riot.

[ 28 : 55 ] The people are going to rise up and say, yeah, you can't do this, and there's going to be a big crowd, and a big melee take place, and then that will bring the Roman guards and the soldiers in to put down, it's going to be a big mess.

We've got to find out some way to do this, where we can take him nice and quiet light. Judas says, listen, first of all, I can deliver them.

What's it worth to you? And they probably negotiated, maybe he demanded 50 pieces, we don't know, but human nature being what it is, maybe he demanded 50 pieces of silver, and they said, we'll give you 10 or 20 or whatever, and they end up agreeing on 30.

And that became forever the infamous number, 30 pieces of silver. And Judas says, I know where he will be, when he will be there, who will be with him, it would be perfect for you to have your police there when I give the word.

So, at the last supper, Jesus excused Judas, and he went out. And he went straight to the house of Caiaphas.

[ 30 : 14 ] It's probably 11, 12 o'clock at night, late. Passover meal is finished. All of the homes throughout Israel that celebrated the Passover, it's all over and done with.

And for the most part, everyone is bedded down for the night. And Judas shows up at the house of Caiaphas, wraps on the door.

Servant comes to the door. I've got to see Caiaphas. This is important. This is an emergency. Well, he's asleep. Well, wake him up. I've got to see him. So, where all the others were and how they got the word to all the others, I do not know.

Those details are not given. But we've got enough Jewish authorities who are in charge of the temple. And the Roman authorities have given them a certain amount of latitude as regards their own people, especially in religious affairs.

And Caiaphas and Annas, and I get these two mixed up. One of them is the father-in-law, the other is the son-in-law. and they're both high priests at different times. And Caiaphas rounds up his cohorts who are positioned to authority, probably nearby because this was a rather swanky area in which they lived.

[ 31 : 32 ] It was the nicest part of town. It wouldn't have been difficult at all to send servants around, rap on the door of someone and say, come on, come on, this is it, this is it, we've got him tonight, tonight. And everybody gets together.

And here they have police from the temple and they light their torches. Some of them have lanterns. And Judas says, follow me, I know exactly where he will be.

And this whole retinue, this whole company, we don't know how many, could have been 15, 20, something like that. They have their torches and swords, lanterns.

And they come to the base of the Mount of Olives. And the Mount of Olives is actually, it's a string of hills. And they begin making their way up the path because Jesus is in a place called Gethsemane. And there's a garden there. Lots of olive trees abundantly growing all over the place. lots of cover. They start winding their way up this path.

[ 32 : 47 ] Jesus looks off in the distance and he can see the flickering lights from the torches. And he knows it's very near.

They're making their way up here. They're coming for me. one of the problems they're going to have is Jesus is built like physically probably most of the apostles.

No reason to believe he was six foot six. He was probably average height, average weight. And he probably looked like the average Jew. And the pictures that you see of Jesus are just an artist's imagination.

they have no validity at all. So, got a problem. It's dark. Probably now it's likely three o'clock in the morning, something like that.

Maybe four o'clock in the morning. Still dark. And, here they come. And when they arrive, Judas says, they ask Judas, how are we going to know which one is Jesus?

[ 33 : 55 ] Got to keep in mind, dark, and there are 12 of them. And Judas says, when we get there, I'll be leading you, and when we get there, I'll go over and give Jesus a kiss.

And the one I kiss, that's your man, taken quickly. Wasn't uncommon at all.

Now, we've looked at that and we say, what is this, a man kissing a man? Well, today, of course, it's not all that strange today. You're liable to see men doing anything with men anywhere, because the world's going crazy.

But back then, it was a little saner than it is now. And the kiss, you see the official kiss. When a dignitary, particularly from a Mideast country, gets down off the plane and is greeted by one, they grab each other and they kiss this way, and then they kiss this way.

That's what the Bible calls a holy kiss. And it was standard fare. They didn't shake hands. We don't even shake hands today. We fist bump or something like that. We're so germ conscious, you know.

[ 35 : 06 ] But man would grab a man, kiss him on this side, kiss him on this side. And that's what Judas did. And Jesus looked at him and said, betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss.

Judas, it's kind of like saying, Judas, how low can you get? Earlier, just right before that when they got there, they'd come up and just crowd these torches and these bullies, bunch of thugs from the temple.

Jesus said, whom seek ye? We're seeking Jesus of Nazareth. And he said, I am. And the text says, they all fell down backwards, kind of stumbled over each other and just fell down backwards.

And most texts read, I am he. Jesus said, when he was seeking the son of man, I am he. But if you look carefully at your text, the word he is italicized.

It's not in the original text. Jesus did not say, I am he. He said, I am. And that's what caused them all to fall down backwards. And they didn't know what or why or what was going on.

[ 36 : 44 ] They probably thought somebody tripped over somebody and set off a chain reaction like Domino's. They all fell down. But what Jesus said was, I am. And he was reflecting on the Tetragrammaton in the book of Exodus, where the Lord describes himself as when Moses says, whom shall I say sent me?

What's your name? This God in this burning bush that doesn't burn up. What am I going to tell them? They're going to ask me, what's the name of your God? What is your name, by the way? I've got to introduce you to Israel.

What is your name? And he said, you tell him that the I am have sent you. And the I am means the self existent one.

I am the one who exists because of myself. And no one else in all the universe can say that. That's the I am. And he says it a number of times in the text.

I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. all of these I am. I am the resurrection and the life.

[ 37 : 56 ] And it's plugged into all of those. He is claiming to be none other than the God of Israel who was reflected in the book of Exodus that led them out of the land.

Out of the land of Egypt. He's that I am. And they all fell down backwards. And Peter, Peter was ready to fight.

We can take these guys. And he pulls out his fisherman's knife. Probably pretty sharp. And he gives it a slice across like that.

I think he was going for the guy's throat. I mean, this was a showdown. And the guy goes like this. The duck. And Peter just slices his ear right off.

Can you imagine that? And the ear just flops on the ground. Jesus said, Peter, put up your sword. We're not going to do this.

[ 38 : 56 ] He reached down and picked up that severed ear. And the guy's probably standing, what would you do? He's probably standing there holding it like this, you know, blood flowing and what a mess.

And it's dark. And Jesus took that ear and put it back on. And he didn't even have any surgical glue. He just stuck it back on. And I'm convinced that it was healed. Now, Peter is perplexed.

What is this? Here we are ready to defend our master with our life. And he's backing off. I say, let's get.

And when Jesus would have none of it, mass confusion sits in. What is going on here? What is he thinking? What are we going to do? And perplexed and puzzled and disappointed and confused, they just head for the tall grass.

[ 40 : 04 ] Everyone wants to get out of there. Jesus had just said, if you seek me, if I'm the one you're looking for, let these go their way. And they started peeling off, going in every which direction.

And the guards take Jesus, they bind him, they start leading him down the hill. And they're going to the household of Caiaphas.

And Peter is one of the eleven that has run away, but as he's running, he's thinking, where are they taking him? What's going to happen to him?

What are they going to do? And he stops running and he decides to circle around and join in the tail end of that crowd and see where they're going and what they're going to do.

And as he's making his way down through there, guess what he hears? Jesus told Peter at the last supper that he was going to deny him.

[ 41 : 19 ] Peter said, well, that's one thing you don't have to worry about. I certainly wouldn't do that. And Peter even went so far that night to say, listen, got Jesus aside and said, I can't speak for the other guys.

I don't know what they might do, but I just want you to know this, Jesus. you can count on me. I'll be there for you no matter what.

And Jesus said, Peter, before the cock crows tonight, you're going to deny me three times.

Couldn't believe that. Couldn't believe that. But we all know what's going to happen when he stands there in the garden and the fire lit by the enemy warming himself in the spring day, spring night, probably kind of chilly.

And they're gathering in. They're coming in. The priests and the scribes, and it's about four or five o'clock in the morning. Very unusual hour. One of them walks up to Peter, little maiden, probably all of who knows, you know, five foot two and that kind of thing.

[ 42 : 32 ] She looks at him and says, I think you're one of them. You're one of Peter's friends. Who, me? I don't know what you're talking about.

I don't know the man. And it wouldn't be long until a different one would walk up and say, I heard you talking and your accent, your accent is identifiable.

You're from the north, aren't you? You're from Galilee, where Jesus is from. You're one of his disciples, aren't you? I don't know. I don't know. I don't know the man. The third time, somebody else points him out because he's in enemy territory.

And he denied with an oath. He swore because he wanted to make it really emphatic that he didn't know Jesus. And he swore. And off in the distance.

You know, roosters usually start crowing even a few minutes before that sun gets up, don't they?

And he heard that cock crow off in the distance. And he broke down and sobbed.

[ 43 : 43 ] And he sobbed bitterly. Oh, God, what have I done? What have I done? And after the resurrection, when Jesus gave instructions to the women and to the other apostles, he says, you go and tell my apostles and Peter.

I love that. He included Peter. He named him as if to say, Peter needs to know that I have risen and I don't hold any grudge against him.

My forgiveness is there. Be sure to tell Peter. It'll make him feel a lot better. And of course it did.

And as the story goes on, Peter becomes the chief protagonist for the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

When it came time for him to be executed, because Rome was rounding up all of these radical Jews who had believed, and Peter says, if you don't mind, would you please crucify me upside down?

I am unworthy to be crucified in the manner of my Lord. And we don't know if that's true or not, but that is tradition, and I wouldn't be surprised if it were not true, because after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, there was a spine put in the backbone of Peter that was not there before.

[ 45 : 19 ] And he becomes this man who stands up before all of Israel there on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and delivers that blistering message. This one being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

You have taken and with wicked hands have crucified and slain the Lord of glory. Wow! He didn't have that kind of backbone before when he was confronted by a little Jewish maiden probably half his size.

But you know what makes the difference? What makes the difference is not only knowing, but in knowing what you know. And what is really riding on this thing regarding Jesus Christ and his resurrection from the dead?

What is it that's riding on the resurrection? Only everything. That's it. Only everything. For if there be no resurrection then Christ is not risen.

And if Christ is not risen, your faith is vain and you are yet in your sins. Didn't do a thing for you. It matters only if Christ rose from the dead.

[ 46 : 28 ] And indeed he did. And that's the whole thrust of this little word, indeed. New American Standard in verse 34 says, the Lord has really risen.

I love that. Indeed. King James says, indeed. And the indeed comes from a little Greek word that is ontos. O-N-T-O-S which is the way we spell it in English.

Ontos is the word from which you get the word ontological. And it has to do with the essence and nature of being. Of being. And that's the word that is used here.

Ontos. It's another way of saying the Lord has really, he's really did it. it is an actual fact. It is true. It is real.

It is incontrovertible. That's what is built into this word indeed. It didn't just rise. He indeed rose from the dead. So, when I say he is risen, the Lord is risen.

[ 47 : 26 ] He's risen indeed. No kidding. No fooling. This is for real. all. And you better believe it. Because your life eternally depends upon it.

And if you don't believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and has eternal life, no reason why you would want it. But if you do, there's every reason why you would want it and why it's available to

you.

And would you pray with me, please? Father, we are so grateful for the truths that are found in the word of God and for the comfort and enlightenment it brings to us. We see the resurrection of Christ as being the very linchpin of Christianity.

Everything is riding on it. But it is enough. The Lord of life himself has given life to himself in a way that we do not begin to understand.

But we thank you for the reality of it. And we do not understand how believing in Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and putting our trust and faith in him.

[ 48 : 36 ] We do not understand how as a result of that you make us a brand new person on the inside with new goals, new ambitions, and most of all, a new destiny.

We are so grateful for what you have been pleased to reveal. Thank you for the privilege of knowing and believing in this most incredible person whom you sent to be our Savior.

For anyone who may be here this morning struggling with these issues, never really settled it, we pray even now that you will give them the courage to do what they know to be right.

We are to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ not because somebody else does, but because it's the right thing to do and it's predicated upon the truth that you provided.

For anyone here struggling with these issues, we pray that they may have the courage to talk to someone about them, to know that they can be resolved if they have questions. Answers are available.

[ 49 : 44 ] Thank you for the presence of each one today and for the truth that you have built into your word. We bless you for it in Christ's name. Amen. If you will remain seated for just a moment, we're going to have a musical selection and that will be our benediction and when that is concluded, you are free.

Thank you.