

# Easter - He is Risen. Just as He Said.

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[ 0 : 00 ] We're going to send off the kids to their class, but first I want to see if there's any. We did this last song that we just sang, He Arose, or Christ Arose.

We did this at our family night on Tuesday, and we had some special actions that we did. And I want to ask any of the kids who are willing to come up here, and we're going to sing that last refrain or the last verse.

In fact, Sophie, could you play for us? We're just going to sing the last one, and the kids are going to help me with the actions. Any kids want to come up here and help me with that? All right, I got at least one, two, three.

Any others? Here's how it works. This song says Arose a lot, and every time this song says Arose, everybody's going to jump up from their seats, at least the young people.

I got some wide eyes from some of you out there. All right, so if you're young and you're in your seat out there, that's fine, but I want you to jump up with me.

[ 1 : 08 ] Are you ready? Here we go. We're going to do the last one, so we'll all sing together. Here we go. Here we go. Death. Okay, here we go.

Death cannot keep his prey. Jesus, my Savior, he tore the bars away.

Jesus, my Lord. Here we go. Up from the grave he arose. With a mighty triumph for his foes.

He arose a victor from the dark domain. And he lives forever with his saints to reign. He arose.

He arose. Hallelujah. Christ arose. All right. Good job, everyone.

[ 2 : 16 ] The kids, you can go ahead and be dismissed to your class. We'll have announcements, but you don't need to stick around for that. And I saw some of the young at heart were joining in. That is great.

So we'll have some quick announcements before we jump into our message this morning.

Let's see what we've got going on. We're not going to do our memory verse, so this time I didn't forget it on accident. But because we're having an Easter celebration today, we're going to bypass the memory verse.

We'll have a new one next month. We do have some new directories. I think we might actually be out. I think there were just a couple left last time I checked. But we'll print off some more so that if you need a directory, you can grab one.

So many of you know about the tornado that hit the Indian Lake community. And many of you have helped bring things to church or maybe even gone to some of the different drop-off locations to help out with that effort.

[ 3 : 26 ] The Pregnancy Resource Center here in Springfield got a special request for diapers and formula. And so they are collecting those this first week of April.

And so we put this in an... I think we... I can't remember if we talked about this last week. I don't think we knew about it until later in the week. Did we talk about it last week? So if you brought anything like that, just put it back in the pantry area, that room, when you first come in the back door.

And we'll have somebody deliver that to them. Otherwise, if you'd like to donate, you can just go to the Pregnancy Resource Center in Springfield. You can look that up. And all week, you can drop things off over there to help with that need.

Also, we have a daily bread pantry. It's that same room where we have a ministry called Daily Bread that distributes things like, whether it's food or furniture or toiletries, whatever it might be, to those who are in need in our community.

Liz, who runs that ministry, had some specific requests, needs that she's seeing. And so furniture, things like couch, loveseat, dresser, bedding, pans, wash rags, towels, food, boxed and canned

food, toilet paper, and bar soap.

[ 4 : 49 ] And you can bring those to the church, and she comes by once a week and picks up those things. Or if you have something like big that you don't want to necessarily bring straight to the church, like a couch or a loveseat or a dresser, you can just give her a call at that phone number that's listed there in the announcements.

It's still March. It's the last day of March. But if you have a birthday this month, we have a book table. It's getting a little bare. I need to order some more books. But if it's your birthday this week, we'd love for you to go check out what's on there and take one of those books as a gift to you for your birthday.

Let's see. What else do we got going on? We just had family night last week. We got another one coming up. We have those once a month. I think it's the third Tuesday of every month. And there's a ladies' fellowship tomorrow at the church here, and then a singles luncheon later on at the Hickory Inn.

So one last thing before we jump into the scriptures is that you'll see at the very back of your bulletin some recommended reading and a movie night suggestion. So both of these are related to Easter or Resurrection Sunday.

The book is called A Case for Easter. And if you're familiar, there's a guy named Lee Strobel. He used to be a journalist with the Chicago Tribune. Actually, both of these resources are from him.

[ 6 : 08 ] The other is A Case for Christ, which is a movie made about his life. His wife, both him and his wife were secular, not religious at all.

He was an avowed atheist. It was very important to him that the idea that God does not exist at all. His wife ended up becoming a Christian, a believer.

And it really messed him up. What am I going to do? You know, we were on the same page, and now we're not. And so he determined that I'm going to use my investigative journalism skills to really look into the record of the Bible and prove to my wife that this is all a bunch of hoey.

And through that process, he ended up coming to faith himself. And he's written several books.

One, his first one, or the most popular anyway, is A Case for Christ, which has turned into a movie. Great film. And then this one he wrote later, A Case for Easter, really looks at specifically the resurrection. Do you know that there is a ton of evidence for this event that happened 2,000 years ago?

[ 7 : 11 ] It's incredible. So just some things to consider as far as resources and movie nights. Well, we're going to jump into the scriptures.

And with this being Easter weekend, us celebrating the resurrection of Christ, that's what our message is going to be on today. I'd really like to focus on one verse and kind of jump from there. But it's the one that Jonathan read for us in Matthew there. It's the resurrection story, the story of the empty tomb there in Matthew 28. And this is what Matthew 28, verse 6 says, at least the first part.

This is what the angel said to the ladies who came to the tomb and found it empty. See, the resurrection, when those ladies went to that tomb and found it empty, what were they expecting? They were expecting to find a dead body in which they would add spices and do some of the rituals that they were used to doing with the dead. They're expecting to find Jesus' body there.

[ 8 : 40 ] They were shocked. They were surprised when they found that tomb empty. And instead, an angel was there. Yet, was this something that Jesus had hidden from his followers?

Was this something that even was hidden from the Jewish people, God's people throughout the ages? Jesus had told them exactly what was going to happen.

Yet, they didn't know what to do with that information. When somebody tells you, I'm going to die, and then I'm going to come back to life, that's kind of hard to process, right?

And so, that's what happened with his own disciples. He told them what was going to happen. And not only did he tell them during those three years that he was with them, but we actually see throughout the whole Old Testament, also indications, foretelling of what was going to happen in that week of Jesus' passion, his death, his burial, and his resurrection.

See, a big part of what we celebrate today is that the resurrection of Jesus, what happened to him, isn't just some story that somebody told.

[ 10 : 00 ] This is an event that actually happened in real history that there are many, many witnesses to. Jesus being just one of them. That's a big part of our faith.

So, we're going to look this morning at what Jesus told his disciples and then what the prophets, the prophets of God, had said before Jesus even came to the earth.

So, let's start with Jesus. There are actually three times in the Gospels in which Jesus foretold his death and resurrection in very, very clear terms.

Not in language that was hard to understand, but in very clear terms. This is actually recorded in both Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all three times.

We're going to actually look at the three times in Mark because we've been studying the book of Mark here at church. And conveniently, the three times are in Mark, Mark chapter 8, Mark chapter 9, and then Mark chapter 10, which is where we're at in our study.

[ 11 : 11 ] Let me read these three passages. Here's the first time. This is right after he fed the masses, the 5,000. Mark chapter 8, verse 31 and 32. Here's what it says.

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and after three days rise again.

He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. And if you remember the rest of that story, Jesus wasn't too happy about that rebuke because this whole concept of him dying was not Jesus being afraid, but an important part of what Jesus came to accomplish.

The second time we see in the next chapter, Mark chapter 9, verse 30. This is right after what we call the transfiguration. Jesus went up onto a mountain with three of his disciples and he was transfigured before him.

His face and his clothes shone. And they came back down and Jesus said something to them.

[ 12 : 21 ] He repeated this same foretelling. Mark chapter 9, verse 30. Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee and he did not want anyone to know it.

For he taught his disciples and he said to them, The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men and they will kill him. And after he is killed, he will rise the third day.

But they did not understand this saying and they were afraid to ask him. The third time that Jesus predicts or foretells of his death and resurrection is in Mark chapter 10.

This is right before he takes all of his disciples. They've been traveling around mostly in northern Israel, but now they're in Jerusalem or in the south of Israel and they're heading to Jerusalem.

This is the lion's den because Jesus knows this is where things are really going to come to a head. And the persecution and the suffering is going to start.

[ 13 : 25 ] Not just for Jesus, but also for his own disciples. Mark chapter 10, verse 32. And here's what it says. Now, they were on the road going up to Jerusalem.

And Jesus was going before them and they were amazed. And as they followed, they were afraid. Then he took the 12 aside again and he began to tell them the things that would happen to him.

Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes and they will condemn him to death and deliver him to the Gentiles.

And they will mock him and scourge him and spit on him and kill him. And the third day, he will rise again. You see, Jesus was a witness.

He testified as a witness would on the witness stand. He testified three times before the fact to something that would happen.

[ 14 : 24 ] To his own death, to his own burial, and to his own resurrection. I'd like to look at some other witnesses because there's more witnesses before the fact than Jesus himself.

In fact, Jesus, when he was talking to his disciples at one point, he actually made it a point to tell them, listen, I'm telling you things, both that are and that will come to pass, but I want to make it clear that you shouldn't just take me at my own word.

Don't just listen to me. My testimony alone is not sufficient. He said that in John 5.31. This is what he said. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

You realize Jesus said that? He said, don't just listen to me. In fact, in the Bible, in the Old Testament law, there was a very important principle when you adjudicate a criminal matter.

It says that every word must be established at the testimony of two or three witnesses, not just one. We use that today in our own criminal justice system.

[ 15 : 36 ] One witness can't come and accuse somebody of something or make a claim and you just go with it. There has to be multiple witnesses, multiple attestations. Later on in that same passage in John 5, Jesus said this, and he talked about another witness besides himself.

He said this, You search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. And these are they which testify of me. Jesus was pointing his own disciples and the people.

I'm one witness, but I'm just one. Here's another witness. Go back to the scriptures of old, those ancient texts from the prophets and read them because they speak of me and they will confirm and testify that what I am saying is true.

If you would turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 15, we're going to look at this. Keep your finger there or a bookmark because we're going to look at several passages here. But Paul, who's writing to the Corinthian believers, brings up this same thing in talking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He says, Don't just listen to me, but I want to point you back to the scriptures. There are multiple witnesses. 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 1, and it says this, Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel or the good news which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved.

[17:17] There is this message, this gospel message, this good news that you stand in and it's the message by which you are saved. If you hold fast that word which I preached to you.

So if you believe, unless you believed in vain. And he's saying that because, he's saying, I want you, I want it to be clear that you didn't believe in vain.

Your faith is not in vain because what you are believing is a fact. It is truth. And then he says this, For I delivered to you, first of all, that which I also received.

He said, I didn't come up with this by myself. I received this from others. In fact, he received it from eyewitnesses to the fact that Christ died for our sins according to what?

According to the scripture. And that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scripture. This is something that the prophets had spoken of.

[18:17] This wasn't something that was new, that came out of nowhere. This is something that the prophets had foretold. Well, where? Well, actually, all over the place.

We're just going to look at a couple examples. I think the ones that really make it clear. But the first one we're going to look at is a guy named Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet that lived over 700 years before Christ.

If you think about our day, we live in around the year 2000, right? If you go back 700 years, what's that? About the 1300s? Does that seem like a long time ago?

That was a long time ago, the 1300s. Everything was different back then. But imagine somebody in the 1300s saying something that comes to pass in such vivid detail in today's time.

That's how it would have been at that time. When Jesus was living, these are words that had been spoken 700 years before. This is Isaiah chapter 53. And we're just going to read through the whole thing.

[19:27] Because it really brings out the story that came to pass 700 plus years later. Isaiah 53.

This is what Isaiah the prophet said. Who has believed our report? Because this report is unbelievable. It's hard to believe.

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant. It's talking about somebody growing up. And as a root out of dry ground.

He has no form or comeliness. This isn't a handsome person. This isn't somebody that has a commanding appearance. And when we see him, there's no beauty that we should desire him.

He is despised and rejected by men. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. This is somebody who experiences with us the griefs of life.

[20:24] And we hid, as it were, our faces from him. He was despised, and we did not esteem him. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, for our sins. He was bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement for our peace was upon him. It was a punishment on this man that he received so that we could have peace.

And by his stripes we are healed. And all we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. The Bible teaches us in the New Testament that our sins were laid on Jesus, carried, as it were, by him.

[21:23] He was oppressed, verse 7, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. And that's exactly what we would read in the story of Jesus. While all this was happening to him, he just kept

his mouth shut.

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shears is silent, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment. Jesus stood before not just the Jewish leaders, but also the Gentile leaders, Pontius Pilate.

And he was judged by them. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare his generation? For he was cut off from the land of the living.

And that's a euphemism. Cut off, it means to be killed. Cut off from the land of the living. For the transgression of my people, he was stricken. And they made his grave with the wicked, but with the rich at his death.

Jesus was buried in the tomb of a very wealthy man, Joseph of Arimathea, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

[ 22 : 31 ] Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. You see, this wasn't just the plans of men that this would happen. This was part of God's plan that this would happen.

It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he has put him to grief. When you make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

He shall see the labor of his soul and be satisfied, and by his knowledge, those who know him, my righteous servant, shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors. And he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Wow. This story that many people in the Old Testament, it was unclear to them, who is this talking about? Is this Isaiah? Is he talking about himself? Is he talking about one of his children?

[ 23 : 43 ] Who is it that Isaiah is talking about? In fact, this comes up later in the book of Acts in the New Testament. Remember, there was the Ethiopian eunuch, and he was reading this passage in the Bible. He was sitting there in his chariot, and he was reading it, and somebody comes up to him, somebody who had witnessed, one of the followers of Jesus, Philip.

And Philip says, do you understand what you're reading? And the guy says, how could I understand it unless somebody tells me? And Philip was, he said, hey, I'm here to tell you who this is all about. Another passage that we'll look at from the Old Testament is from the book of Daniel. Daniel. Daniel is a book of prophecy. A lot of people go to it to look at what's going to happen in the end.

What's going to happen when everything comes to a close? The apocalypse. Daniel talks a lot about that. But there was something that Daniel prophesied that would happen before all that would happen.

Daniel chapter 9, Daniel chapter 9, verse 24. And this one is so interesting because Daniel gets very detailed with dates and times.

[ 24 : 52 ] Very, very detailed. Daniel chapter 9, verse 24. Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city.

This is the Jews in Jerusalem to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity. Daniel is saying something's going to happen that will solve this sin problem among my people to bring everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

And he said 70 weeks. 70 weeks. That's not a very long time. Well, as you read this and understand it, you realize he's talking about 70 periods of seven years.

So 490 years. Verse 25. Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.

He said there's going to be a command that is coming to restore Jerusalem. We actually see this later on when this happens. There's a king named Cyrus and he gives a command for the city of Jerusalem to rebuild.

[ 26 : 16 ] and the Bible records the exact date that that command was given. Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there shall be seven weeks and 62 weeks.

Daniel wants everybody to do math I guess. Seven weeks and 62 weeks. That's a carry the three 463 years.

The streets shall be built again on the wall even in troublesome times. And after the 62 weeks Messiah shall be cut off.

Messiah shall be cut off but not for himself. And the people of the Prince who has come to who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The end of it shall be with a flood till the end of the war of desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering and on the wing of abomination shall be the one who makes desolate even until the consummation which is determined is poured out on the desolate.

[ 27 : 35 ] He's talking about the end times but before that comes this time when this person named the Messiah this prince will come and it says that he will be cut off.

Again another euphemism for being killed. And you know if you and people have done this they've looked at the exact dates in which that king commanded that Jerusalem should be rebuilt.

The exact date. And then they go 463 years into the future. And you know what happened on that date? Math is hard right?

And calendars are hard so you know people land on some different days. But this is the Easter week that you land on 463 years later.

Some people have actually marked it as the day that Jesus rode on his donkey on that donkey into Jerusalem where we celebrate as Palm Sunday. pretty incredible.

[ 28 : 40 ] This is something that was not done completely in secret. This is something that the prophets had spoken of. Even before that a thousand years before Jesus there was a man a king his name was David.

King David popular very famous within the Bible for all that he did slaying Goliath and his rule over Israel. But there was a psalm that he wrote it's in the book of Psalms Psalm chapter 16 Psalm chapter 16 and verse 10 it may have confused a lot of people back then because in this psalm here's what David says he says for you will not leave my soul in hell or in the grave nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption.

for you will not and he's talking to God you will not allow or leave my soul in the grave nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption.

That was confusing to a lot of people what is David talking about? This passage from David is actually used several times in the scriptures declared both by Peter in the beginning of Acts and Paul later on in Acts they reference this scripture and they made the point and they said this listen who is this scripture about who was David speaking of was he speaking of himself well that can't be the case David is dead his body is in a grave his body saw corruption this holy one that David is speaking of is somebody else and both Peter and Paul spoke to the Jewish people of that time and said and we are here to declare to you who that man was if you go back to 1st Corinthians 15 we'll finish up that passage that we started 1st Corinthians 15

I'll start at verse 3 again for I delivered to you first of all that which I also received that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures so he just said this is something that the prophet spoke of this was foretold and he's going to talk about some other witnesses and that after he rose he was seen verse 5 he was seen by Cephas that's Peter then by the twelve and after that he was seen by over 500 brethren at one time of whom the greater part remained to the present but some have fallen asleep after that he was seen by James then by all the apostles then last of all he was seen by me also as one born out of due time Jesus revealed himself in his new body his resurrected body to many many people that they might be witnesses that his body was not in the grave that he was alive forever more why is it that the

[ 32 : 10 ] Bible emphasized put so much emphasis of these witnesses both those who foretold those who were there when he was alive those who saw him physically face to face after his resurrection why is the Bible put so much emphasis on the witnesses to the resurrection the primary reason is because the resurrection of Jesus is the single most important aspect of the Christian faith you see Christianity rises or it falls on the resurrection if Jesus' body is in a tomb if Jesus' body has been corrupted and turned into dirt by this point then our faith is invalid Christians all over the globe should give up their faith and go do something else because the foundation of our faith is in that

Jesus rose from the dead here's how Paul puts it and we're still in 1 Corinthians 15 but we'll skip to verse 12 1 Corinthians 15 12 this is what Paul says now if Christ is preached that he has been

raised from the dead how do some among you say that there's no resurrection of the dead Paul saying some of you guys are saying that after you die that you know you're just going to go in the grave and that's it it's all over that's not what the Bible teaches that's not what the resurrection of Jesus teaches verse 13 but if there is no resurrection of the dead then Christ is not risen he's saying listen if you are not going to rise from the dead then Jesus didn't either if Christ is not risen then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty yes and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ whom he did not raise up if in fact the dead do not rise for if the dead do not rise then

Christ is not risen and if Christ is not risen then your faith is futile and you're still in your sins then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have just perished they're gone forever if in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men the most pitiable and some people view Christianity or just religion in general that way Christianity religion it's it's it's a nice thing to believe to help you get through the difficulties in life and especially death you know people are scared of death and you know there's lots of difficulties in life and so religion has lots of nice sayings and things to give you comfort and so that's good for some people that's not what the Christian faith teaches the words of the scriptures are not just nice stories to help us get through life the words of scripture are literal life from the dead he says here if

Jesus is still in the grave then we are still in our sins all the sins that we've committed they're not paid for Jesus is dead how can a dead man pay for our sins and we can have no expectation of life after this but Jesus is not still in the grave the tomb that they laid him in is empty because he rose from the dead just as he said he would you know Jesus told his disciples everything that would happen we read those three passages Mark chapter 8 Mark chapter 9 Mark chapter 10 he laid it all out all the most important details he told them he said I'm going to be betrayed and he was betrayed just as he said he was rejected by the

Jewish leaders just as he said he was judged as a criminal along with all the other criminals like Barabbas and it was just as he said he was mocked and he was spit upon just like he said he suffered intensely with lashes and a crown of thorns nails in his hands just as he said and then he died just as he said he would he was buried in the tomb of a rich man just as he said and then he rose again to live forever just as he said he was right about all of it and what does this mean for you and I well it means that

[ 37 : 32 ] Jesus is somebody who's trustworthy you know people make a lot of claims about what they're going to do in life I think about people who have claimed I'm going to be the greatest athlete the greatest baseball player the greatest boxer I think about Muhammad Ali and his claims his high confidence about what he was going to do those who declare that they're going to conquer kingdoms and many of them have come back to life only one Jesus is trustworthy all the things that he said would come to pass did just as he said so that means that his promises to us for our future for those of us who trust in him those promises can be believed and what are the promises that he makes to us well there's this account about remember the story about

Lazarus who was sick and they called Jesus to come and when he arrived they said it's too late he's dead Lazarus died Jesus had a conversation with Martha Lazarus one of Lazarus sisters and in John chapter 11 verse 23 Jesus says this Jesus said to her your brother will rise again and Martha said to him I know that he'll rise again in the resurrection at the last day when all is said and done I know he's going to rise from the dead that's what the prophets talked about Jesus to I miss king Jesus God and Jesus 00 who is to come into the world.

Jesus said, listen, I'm the central figure here. And if you believe in me, you can live forever. Paul repeats this same promise.

Going back to 1 Corinthians chapter 15, this is such an important passage in the scriptures, 1 Corinthians 15. We're going to read it if you got your finger there. Verse 20, 1 Corinthians 15, verse 20.

But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead.

[ 40 : 14 ] For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order. Christ the firstfruits?

Jesus was the first to rise from the dead. forevermore. And afterwards, those who are Christ's at his coming. Then comes the end when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when he puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. And the last enemy that will be destroyed is what? It's death. And what an enemy that is.

It's the enemy of us all. You know, some of us have different enemies. Some people that hate us or against us for whatever reason. But for every person in this room, death is an enemy.

It is our enemy. And the Bible recognizes it as such. You see, the resurrection of Jesus was not the end of something.

[ 41 : 18 ] The resurrection of Jesus was the very beginning. Here, Paul calls it the first fruits of a great harvest. He was the first of many to rise from death when all those who have put their faith in him will rise again.

Not with spiritual bodies, with flesh and bone bodies that will never corrupt, that will never decay. The Bible says that we will live forever with him.

Because that last enemy, the enemy of us all, death, will finally be destroyed. Forever. Just as he said.

Just as he said, I'm going to die and I'm going to rise again. And he proved that he had the power and the trustworthiness to bring it to pass.

We know that we can put our faith and our trust in him. That he will accomplish what he promised us as well. Are you grateful for his promises to you this morning?

[ 42 : 34 ] Are you grateful that he is trustworthy to keep those promises? So I'm going to end with this. You know, there are, there may be some here who have never made this decision to put their trust in Christ.

And this is a matter of immeasurable and eternal importance. You know, there's lots of religions out there. Lots of religions to choose from. But you know, there's only, so most of the other religions, what they teach is about all the things that you must do for God.

Right? And that makes a lot of sense, right? Because, well, God created us and we owe him our very lives and our very existence. We ought to live for him. We ought to do whatever it is that he asks of us.

But did you know that that's not the central message of Christianity? The central message of Christianity is not what we can do for God, but it is what he did for you and I.

This is what it says in Romans 5, 8. I love this passage because it summarizes really the whole message of the Bible in one verse.

[ 43 : 47 ] Romans 5, verse 8. Here's what it says. Romans 5, verse 8. Listen closely. But God demonstrates his own love towards us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

That's it. That's the story of the Bible, the whole Bible. While we were yet sinners, he wanted to show us that he loved us and make a way for us to be with him forever.

And so he made a way through the death of his son, Jesus Christ, for us. You see, all of us have to stand before God one day. There's going to be a day the Bible talks about, the final judgment.

And there will be two options on that great day, kind of two foundations, if you will. One, we could stand before him based on the foundation of our own goodness, our own good works, our own good deeds.

And we can be judged by that, whether we have done good or whether we've done evil. And we could put our faith and our trust in that as the foundation for our eternal souls.

[ 44 : 53 ] But there's a second option that Jesus provided for. Instead, we could stand before God based on one deed that one man did on our behalf.

Trusting in the foundation of his goodness, his mercy, and his love. And being weighed, not based on the good or evil that we've done, but being weighed solely on the work that he accomplished for us.

So what do we have to do to take option B, to take door number two? It's as simple as can be. And so many people make it complicated, even among Christians.

They make it way too difficult. But it's as simple as can be. And I'm going to say the same words that Paul says. And here's what he said at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 15. He talks about this message of faith.

The gospel, the good news. And he would say, this is the message that I received and I'm delivering to you, he said. And I say the same thing to you today. This is the message I'm delivering to you.

[ 46 : 07 ] That Christ died for our sins. That's it. That's the message. You don't have to become a theologian to be a Christian.

Even though that's fun, I like theology. You just have to believe that one message. You just have to confess that Jesus, the one who accomplished that, is your Savior.

Your Savior. And believe that he rose, that you might have eternal life. In Romans chapter 10, here, and we'll end with this. Romans chapter 10, Paul says this to the Romans.

He talks about this word of faith, this message of the gospel, the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins. Romans 10, 6. But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way.

Do not say in your heart, who will ascend into heaven? That is to bring Christ down from above. Or who will descend into the abyss? That is to bring Christ up from the dead. He's saying, hey, this thing that we're supposed to do or believe, there's no mountain we have to climb.

[ 47 : 17 ] There's no depth of the ocean that we have to swim down to to find this message, to find this faith, to find salvation. The message is right in front of you.

Here's what he says. But what does it say? The word is near you. It's right there. It's within your grasp. It's in your mouth and in your heart. That is the word of faith that we preach.

That message of the gospel that Jesus died for your sins. That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

There's a judgment coming. You can be saved from that just by looking to him and what he accomplished for you. Will you believe it? Will you receive it for yourself?

So here's our opportunity. We're going to end the service but I'm going to take some time. We'll finish with a final song. But before we do that, I want to, here's an opportunity.

[ 48 : 19 ] This is the gospel message and there may be some out here who have never taken action on that. I want to give an opportunity for anyone here to take action. We're going to just bow our heads briefly in prayer.

and I'd like, if you've never made that decision, you consider doing that now. You know, some people have looked at the Bible and they're kind of skeptical and I don't know, is this story really true?

Can I believe it? And many people who are in this room who are believers today, they've been there. I'm not sure whether to believe this or not.

And so many have prayed something like this. God, if you're real, if this story the Bible tells is really true, I want to know it.

Just a little bit of humility towards God. Would you reveal yourself to me? What a great first step. So let's all bow our heads right now.

[ 49 : 24 ] I'm just going to leave some silence. If this is something you've never done, just take the time, just in your heart, you don't have to say anything out loud. God knows our thoughts, he knows our hearts. And tell God that you want that gift of eternal life through Jesus and you want to put your trust and your faith in him instead of yourself.

Father, we love you today.

We're so grateful. Today is a wonderful day to celebrate really the most important event in the history of the world. I pray that if there's anyone out there that showed some kind of faith to you this morning that you would work in their hearts to reveal yourself to them more and more each and every day.

Thank you for the promises that you've made to all of us who put our trust in you. that life, this life even with all its pain and difficulties along with joys all mixed together that we can have a future and a hope to look forward to to living with you forever and ever and ever just as you intended us to.

We thank you for that promise and for your trustworthiness that we have every reason to have confidence in what you say is true and will come to pass just as you said.

[ 51 : 24 ] We pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen.