

Acts 2:22-24

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[0 : 00] It is truly a privilege to be able to preach on Easter Sunday. On one hand, it's the easiest Sunday to prepare for because your subject is already laid out for you.

! On the other hand, it's the hardest because it's probably the most important subject out there. So, with that said, it is a privilege to be up here.

Our text this morning is Acts chapter 2, verse 22 through 24 is kind of where we'll start from. And then we'll work our way out from there.

Resurrection Sunday. If you're wondering, the songs that we've just sang are Friday night songs, the cross. Today is Resurrection Sunday and you don't have Resurrection Sunday without Friday night.

And that's our thought this morning as we sing about the cross. We sing about what Jesus has done. And then after the sermon, we'll sing about the victory Sunday morning.

[1 : 08] Resurrection Sunday. Together and celebrate. Let me pray and we will get started. Father, what power, what glory, what magnificence have you shown on this morning.

By your word, by your hand, you have defeated death, defeated sin, and made it possible for us to be adopted as your children, to call you Father, to approach you all because of Jesus.

So God, we thank you for Jesus. We thank you that those of us who know you are clothed in his righteousness. We stand and sit here as if we've not sinned at all because of Christ.

So we thank you for Jesus. I ask God that as I preach, as I speak, that you would speak through me, that my words would be clear, that I would make your name great, that my thoughts would be organized.

God, that if there's anything that comes out of my mouth that is not true, that is not right, they would fall from our ears to be remembered no more.

[2 : 42] We want your will to be done this morning as we celebrate what you have done. So I pray this. I plead all of this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. The Resurrection Sunday is the climax. It is the culmination of God's plan A. It is the time, the moment, where God's plan A comes together.

And my aim this morning, what I'm aiming at, is to prove to you, is to show you that this Resurrection Sunday has been God's plan A from the beginning.

We're not going to survey all of Scripture if you were at secret church like David Platt did Friday night. because I don't have the mind for that. But we will, I pray and I hope, that I have proved it to you this morning.

There isn't a day more important that has more of an impact than Resurrection Sunday. Our lives can be forever changed through Resurrection Sunday.

[3 : 49] There's no day like it. It is that important. And here's two reasons why it's that important. Turn to 1 Corinthians 15 real quick.

Get your finger in Acts chapter 2, because that's where we'll come back to. 1 Corinthians 15. He used the words of Paul to prove, just for a moment, and we'll come back to this verse in a little bit, just to prove for a moment the importance of the Resurrection.

In 1 Corinthians 15, we have Paul's full argument about the importance of the Resurrection. I just want to show you a couple verses. Start reading in verse 13 of chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians.

It says, But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been risen. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain.

Useless. Pointless. Like chasing smoke. We are even found to be misrepresenting God because we testified about God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if it is true that the dead are not raised.

[5 : 00] For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. There is no hope for you and I.

If Christ has not been raised. So we have the words of Paul here who wrote most of the New Testament. We also have the words of Jesus. And we'll find it in Matthew 28, verse 6, where the angel at the tomb, where Nathan just read about, to the kids, speaks to the women.

The women go to prepare Jesus' body. And the angel says to them, He is not here, for He has risen, as He said, being Jesus.

Come see the place where He lay. Now here's why this is important. Because if the resurrection didn't happen as Jesus said it happened, then all of Jesus' teachings are not true.

Then we drop all of Jesus' teachings because Jesus taught that He would raise again. Now, this is important also because Jesus gives us promises in Scripture.

[6 : 12] If we can't cling to these promises, then there's nothing to celebrate on Resurrection Sunday. So those two things, Paul's words and Jesus' words and Jesus' teachings, make Resurrection Sunday, Easter Sunday, very important.

Now I want to talk about you for a minute. Some of you guys are here because you come to Christ Family Church regularly. Some of you are here because family has come into town and you want to take them to church.

Some of you are here because it's your religious activity to come to church on Easter Sunday.

Some of you are here and you don't even know why you're here. You're just here.

I want you to do one of two things this morning. I want you to either receive what I give you this morning. Receive the Word of God. Receive the truth of God.

Receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Or reject it. Those are your only two choices this morning. You can only receive it or you can only reject it. Now, of course, I want you to receive it.

[7 : 18] I want you to receive the truth of God this morning. But whether you have been a Christian for 50 years or you're not a Christian at all, you have a choice to make. And I want you to receive the truth of God.

You cannot be neutral this morning. You cannot avoid the truth of God this morning. You cannot ignore Resurrection Sunday this morning.

So receive it. Receive it this morning, the truth of God, as we walk through Scripture. And to be honest with you, if this is your first time here, if this is the first time being at church on Easter Sunday, I want you to come back.

I don't want you to come back to Christ Family Church necessarily, but I want you to come back because the Holy Spirit spoke to you. Because the Holy Spirit opened your eyes to the truth of God's Word. That's what we want to see happen.

So I want you to receive the truth of God's Word this morning. In my studying this week, I learned that the resurrection, the doctrine of resurrection, the teaching of Resurrection Sunday, is a greatly ignored truth.

[8 : 31] It's a greatly ignored truth. We talk about the cross. We sing about the wonderful cross. We talk about Jesus taking our sins and paying it all for us.

We talk about us being made righteous because of Christ. But what we miss is we miss the resurrection that makes all of that possible. And so it's a doctrine that gets missed.

And I pray that that's not the case here. I pray that we lift up Jesus, the victory over death, Easter Sunday, but the truth is, it gets ignored often.

So as we study, as we go through here, celebrate the truth of God's Word. If you are a Christian, I'm not going to tell you anything new.

I'm not going to tell you anything you haven't heard. If you've read Scripture at all, it'll be right out of Scripture. Celebrate. Revel in it. Soak in it this morning. And if you don't know Jesus, if you're not a child of God, hear, listen, and ask God to speak.

[9 : 35] Acts chapter 2. We're going to read verse 22 through 24. And then we'll just kind of dig through it.

Verse 22. Now, a little background here real quick. This is Peter preaching his first sermon at Pentecost. Days after Jesus ascended into heaven.

Weeks after Jesus died on the cross. So here's Peter. In verse 22. Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst. As you yourselves know, this Jesus delivered up according to

the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

Plan A. You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. Let me just stop there for a second. Now, the reason why I told you this is days after the ascension and weeks after the resurrection is this is the same Peter who denied Jesus three times and one of the same disciples who fled and hid after Jesus died.

[10:51] After He was buried. Okay? And now, He is poking at the religious leaders of Israel and saying, this Jesus whom you crucified. He's making a statement to them.

He's being bold because the Word of God and because of the Holy Spirit moving. Verse 24. And here's our Sunday morning. Resurrection Sunday.

God raised Him up. Loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for Him to be held by it. Now, in verse 22, it starts with men of Israel.

And, Peter, preaching to the religious leaders in Jerusalem, just because it says men of Israel does not mean it's not true for you and for me.

Okay? Just because Peter is speaking to the religious leaders in Israel 2,000 years ago does not make it less true for you and I.

[11:50] Okay? I want to make sure I'm not going to dig through Scripture any more than, any deeper than that. But I want you to understand just because it says men of Israel does not mean it does not apply to you and to me.

I want you to look at look at this language in verse 23. This language, it says, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

Definite plan and foreknowledge of God. Now, some would teach that foreknowledge is God looking down the chasm of time and seeing what happens and then backing up and saying, okay, I need to do this and I need to do this.

Kind of like a DVR. You know, Jesus is sitting on his sofa or God is sitting on his sofa and he's like, let's see what those guys in Dablonega do in 2012. Bloop, bloop, bloop, bloop, bloop.

Oh, well, I've got to make a plan. I've got to put some things together for them. That is not the case. Foreknowledge here is an intimate knowledge basically birthed out of God.

[12:53] So we have the definite plan of God here. God making plan A. And plan A starts with creation. You and I were created in the image of God.

We were created as image bearers of God. As worshippers of God. That was our main intention.

That was our purpose for being on earth. Was to bring glory and honor to God.

That was Adam and Eve's main purpose. God did not make them because He was lonely. God did not make them because He needed them. God created man to bring glory to Himself.

And here's the truth. The darkest chapter in all of Scripture is Genesis chapter 3. It's where the fall occurs. It's where Adam and Eve and you know the story, the kind of cartoon story of Eve eating the apple and passing it on to Adam and they eat the apple, they disobey God.

Well, that little story there is a story of truth. The impact, though, ripples through time and through eternity.

[14:05] We have been cursed because of the choice of Adam and Eve because Adam and Eve chose to worship, not God, but worship themselves. To make a decision for themselves instead of a decision for God.

So this ripple effect changed them and changed us. We no longer can worship God on our own. We no longer can be image bearers of God and reflect His glory.

We no longer can do any of that because of the ripple effect of sin and the choice of Adam and Eve. We now are worshipers of ourselves.

Ephesians chapter 2 We go to Ephesians chapter 2 quite often and Ephesians chapter 2 tells us some of us it reminds us of who we are who we were before Jesus Christ entered our lives.

Some of you here this morning this may be you right now. In Ephesians chapter 2 verse 1 it says and you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world following the prince of the power of the air the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

[15:35] This idea of dead isn't just you're not just sick you just don't have a problem you just don't have an issue you're dead we were dead before Christ we were I read a sermon this week from Charles Spurgeon if you don't know who he is look him up he's a pretty incredible guy he's dead of

course a little dead guy they call him one of the greatest preachers who ever lived this is this guy and I am not articulate as he is I am not as well of a literary mind as he is so he's describing this dead he's using these adjectives and I'm like oh my gosh I couldn't stand up there and say any of this he's just painting the picture for you this dead is dead smelly stinky dead dead that's as far as I get dead we are dead in our sins before Christ which means that because of sin we can't do anything on our own you don't see a dead man walking around you don't see a dead man getting water to drink or getting dressed that's the picture that Paul is trying to paint here that he does nothing we can do nothing to help ourselves help our souls okay so that's that's that's the New Testament describing who we are well the Old Testament we have the fall we have creation we have fall we have the Old Testament pointing to Jesus we have the Old Testament pointing to not to us not to what we're going to do but what Jesus is going to do we have the law that God puts in place for his people the people of Israel the people that he's setting apart making a nation set apart from the world to be the illustration of the church the illustration of God's people he sets them apart he says follow these laws follow these rules do these things and what happens it's a law written that they could not follow it's a law written that that they could not keep and the purpose of that purpose of that was not to not to be mean and not to be this cruel God who's just up there pointing his finger and moving chest pieces the purpose was to point to someone who could follow the law the purpose was to point to Jesus if you know anything about scripture you know that

Jesus lived a perfect sinless life he fulfilled the law he kept the law to a T we cannot do it we also have we also have the prophets in the Old Testament pointing to Jesus we have Jonah you know the story of Jonah who stayed in a whale for three days like a tomb like Jesus who stayed in a tomb for three days Jonah pointing to Jesus turn to Isaiah 53 we have another prophet named Isaiah this is written hundreds of years before Jesus hundreds of years before Jesus by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 53 starting in verse 2 it says for he grew up before him like a young plant and like a root out of dry ground he had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire him he was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised and we were esteemed and we esteemed him not 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 he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his strife we are healed all we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to his own way we have worshipped ourselves and the

Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all this is Jesus he is talking about he is writing about hundreds of years before Jesus even comes to earth born as a baby see the Old Testament points to Jesus so now we have Jesus Jesus is here 100% man 100% God he lived a perfect sinless life those moments where you nail your thumb with a hammer and thoughts and words come out didn't happen to Jesus guys those moments when you see a beautiful woman and thoughts jump in your head didn't happen to Jesus those moments when he was wronged or when you are wronged by someone and you just hate you are just angry with hate didn't happen to

Jesus Jesus lived a perfect sinless life why for God's plan A in verse 23 of Acts chapter 2 this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God Jesus is delivered up for us a perfect sacrifice for you and for me now this this delivered up is is not this presentation like I don't know like you take your kid to summer camp and you say here's my son it's not like that it's not a present wrapped up and God just this delivered up here is the most horrific vulgar excruciating death that you can imagine Jesus' face was unrecognizable when they got done beating him and it gets worse it's worse than anything you can think of in Mark chapter 14

Mark gives us an account of Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethsemane the night of his betrayal and Jesus takes three disciples with him Peter James and John and he says sit here I must go and pray sit here and wait for me and he goes and he says my soul is very sorrowful even to death he tells them and says remain here and watch and in verse 35 and going a little farther he fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him that what was to come might pass and he says Abba father daddy father all things all things are possible for you remove this cup from me right this is this is pre friday night

[23 : 37] Jesus knows what's about to occur he knows what's going to happen and he's not worried about the pain he's not worried about the suffering because Jesus words tells us to suffer with joy he's not he's not worried about the mocking he tells us that people will mock you because

of me because of him because of Jesus not because of this guy he's not overwhelmed and wants this cup to pass because he's worried about what other people are going to say when he's up there Jesus wants this cup to pass because Jesus is going to bear the full wrath of God for our sins for the sins of the world the full wrath the full anger the full hatred that magnitude that we deserve

Jesus bears on the cross and that's why Jesus says let this cup pass before me because Jesus is innocent he is sinless he is perfect we are the guilty ones nonetheless he ends that by saying your will be done God father whatever you decide to do is okay by me I will obey Jesus willingly laid his life down for you this is why in Acts chapter 2 he was delivered up for us he was delivered up for us in a definite plan and foreknowledge of God turn to 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 around here a very familiar verse this is

God's plan as well this illustrates God's plan a verse 21 of chapter 5 2nd Corinthians for our sake for us for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God he was delivered up for us now see this what I mentioned at the introduction about the resurrection kind of being missed and ignored and neglected a little bit sometimes we want to end in verse 23 we just want to say Jesus bore our sins we became righteous because of Jesus we bear righteousness we be able to stand as Hebrew said we are able to approach the throne with boldness because of Jesus but if you go back to

Acts chapter 2 God's plan A continues and we get verse 24 we get Friday night that's happened and we get to celebrate Sunday morning verse 24 God raised him up loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it so God raised him up Jesus didn't raise himself up God raised him up only God can raise him up Jesus died on the cross hung died he buried he was buried to be raised up now if somebody is raised up that means they got to be down they got to be dead right Jesus died and he was raised he was resurrected he wasn't he wasn't brought back to life like

Lazarus was Lazarus was brought back to life in order to die again he was going to die again see Jesus in resurrection teaches in the bible that that Jesus was brought back to life to live forever so he wasn't just revived he wasn't just brought back to life just as a normal human being maybe no he was brought back to life to live forever!

[28 : 21] forever to defeat death and sin look at this in verse 24 loosing the pangs of death the agony the anguish of death now that does not mean that does not mean that there's not going to be sorrow here on this side of eternity it does not mean that there's not going to be sadness what it does mean is that we through Jesus if you know Jesus if your faith is in Jesus that we are no longer separated from God we will no longer be separated from God we will be able to stand eternity with God and not separated from him see in the garden of Eden we talked about the fall what happened was that God separated them from his presence

God removed them from the garden forever! And that was to signify for us as we! the story that we are separated from God we no longer have fellowship with him apart from Christ the pangs of death the anguish and the agony no longer being separated from God is you yours and my possibility through Jesus so we can say because of Jesus resurrection death death no longer has power because we know that we will no longer be separated from God now here's here's the trick death no longer has sting only if you know Jesus only if your faith is in Jesus only if you have trusted in Jesus now to do that is simple repent of your sins admit that Ephesians chapter 2 being dead in your trespasses and sins is who you are turn from that and believe and put your faith in Jesus trusting him as Lord and Savior that is when death no longer has sting and only Jesus and only God can make you alive can give you a new life can make what was dead alive Lazarus did not assist Jesus in coming back to life it was a one man show Jesus walked up Lazarus has been in the tomb three days I think stinky smelly rotten disgusting the ladies even said don't go near that he smells he's dead and

Jesus walks and says Lazarus come forth and Lazarus comes out it wasn't Lazarus saying hey Jesus call me out buddy I'd like to come out I'm feeling better no it was a one man show and like Lazarus not assisting God we cannot assist God in making us alive so so coming to church once or twice a year or or trying to be a good person or trying to love people or saying you believe Jesus died for your sins with your head and not with your heart none of that loosens the pangs of death none of that removes the sting of death it's God opening your eyes revealing the truth of God's word revealing that you were and are dead and asking him to save you that the one man show in

John 14:6 Jesus words he says I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through me God's plan a Jesus Acts 4:12 says there is no salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given among men by whom we must!

[33:09] be saved Jesus and real quickly here's a couple of reasons why resurrection Sunday is so important in Romans chapter 4 flip over one book Romans chapter 4 verse 23 through 25 and here Paul is writing about justification he's talking about Abraham in verse 23 of chapter 4 it says but the words it was counted to him were not written for his sake alone but for ours also it will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord resurrection Sunday who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification see in verse 25 we get that Jesus was delivered up for our trespass and raised for our justification the reason this is important is we can talk about Jesus paying it all we can sing about Jesus bearing our sin on the cross we can read 2 Corinthians 5:21 that we did 10 minutes ago but without the resurrection none of that has power see he was raised delivered for our justification meaning that through the resurrection it's the gavel that hits the table in the courtroom or the desk it's that moment where Christ's righteousness is given to us and our sin is taken away it's that moment where there is power in that great exchange here's what a professor at Southern says by raising Jesus from the dead God approved the work of Christ on the cross for our sins God declared his son's work complete the penalty for our sin has been paid and no guilt remains the gavel has hit the desk it is done if God did not raise Jesus from the dead it would be as if God was not satisfied with Jesus death and life and death on the cross for us it would be it would be as if Paul as we read at the beginning in 1st Corinthians 15 that we were still in our sins and if we're still in our sins and there's no hope we are unjustified condemned and dead guilty in front of a holy and just God there's nothing to hope for in that case do the resurrection resurrection Sunday brings all of that together binds it all together and makes it what it is God did raise Jesus from the dead Sunday did happen and we can celebrate this morning the work of Jesus on the cross the work of God on Sunday morning Jesus resurrecting from the grave because of the resurrection you can find purpose for your life you can find purpose you can do what you created to do worship God with your life because of the resurrection you can trust God that he will do what he says because of the resurrection you can know that no matter what God loves you because of the resurrection there is no no thing you can do to make God love you any more and no thing you can do to make God love you any less because of the resurrection you can know that when the loss of a child occurs or cancer strikes the God who raised Jesus from the dead is in control because of the resurrection you can be comforted!

[37:45] in your hardest of times because of the resurrection you can have peace in the darkest of moments God's plan A is being fulfilled and the resurrection is the climax it is the gavel striking the desk and now we wait for his return come quickly Lord Jesus let's pray together a ending a ending ending ending