

John 19:38-20:30

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[0 : 00] It's such a great reminder of the life that we have in Christ. And I know we have a lot of visitors with us, so no matter what brought you today, whether it was to check a religious box like Christmas, or maybe you were drug here by your family or your friends, and you'd rather be somewhere else, maybe just start going through the motions of, I'm just here on Sunday, and this is just what we do, but your heart's really kind of cold and just needs to be revived. I pray that God's Word would do that for you this morning.

And it's really interesting, when you read the Gospels, a lot of the people that Jesus encounters, a lot of people that Jesus changes, are people who seemingly run into Him by accident.

That wasn't a plan, it just sort of happened. And Jesus changed them forever. So no matter why you came today or why you're here, perhaps there's more that lies in store for you than expected this Easter.

But I want to read over the story of the resurrection here in John with the hope that it will have a great bearing on your soul today.

That as we read it, the Holy Spirit would use the Word of God to convict you, to challenge you, to awaken you to your need for a risen Savior in your life, to remind those of us who do belong to Christ that it's not just a Jesus of the past that we worship, but one that's living, active, and who is returning one day.

[1 : 38] But particularly, why is resurrection so important? I kind of want to bring it to your attention by confronting our greatest fear.

And that fear would be death. The modern mood is to live life as if death was not waiting for us at the end.

We do all we can to ignore the thought of death, to avoid it. A lot of us, like I said, we eat healthy, we exercise, we try to sleep well, take medication, whatever it may be.

But not only can we not defeat death, we just can't seem to escape it. Everything around us, we live in a world that's just decaying before our eyes, and we with it.

We can't really outrun death. Death makes us uncomfortable because it makes us feel weak, vulnerable, and unable. It confronts how small and how little our strength is.

[2 : 45] But we are not very powerful at all. So death is the enemy that wins at every turn. No matter who we are, it catches us.

And some of us have been able to avoid it a lot of our lives. As a young boy, I began being acquainted with the idea of death as I've watched two of my great-grandparents die, three of my grandparents, my uncle, and then a couple years ago, my own father.

I'm thankful to say that all six of these people were believers in Christ. That's why the hope we have of resurrection.

And so, as we confront the idea of death, as we find ourselves running from it, avoiding it, ignoring it, the Bible, unlike us, confronts it head-on.

It doesn't try to get around the issue at all. If you read the earlier chapters of the book of Genesis, right in the beginning of the Bible, right after chapter 3, after the fall, you'll see all these references, this phrase is just repeated, and he died, and he died, and he died, which was not a part of the original plan, right, of mankind.

[4 : 09] But we, myself, and you, we have sinned and rebelled against God. But have you ever stopped and thought about the question, why death?

Like, why is death the answer or the consequence? Don Carson, a guy I respect and appreciate a lot, a pastor up in Canada, he wrote, But why death?

And he said, Death is God's limit on creatures whose sin is they want to be gods. Death is God's limit on creatures whose sin is they want to be gods.

By death, we learn that we are mortal, that we are not God at all. Death is God's determination to set a limit on the arrogance of man.

We think and live as if we were God. Like, I will declare what's right. I will live the way that I want to live, regardless of what God says. And in our own day, even just insane things, where people think that they are God, they can, like, declare what's right from wrong, declare what gender they are, declare all sorts of manner of things that just say that, hey, I am omnipotent, and I can decide what I want to do.

[5 : 27] But death declares otherwise. It says that we are not invincible. We are mortal, and we will taste death because of sin.

We live our lives, right, just thinking that we can somehow avoid it. But death is something that man, you and I included, we have freely bought on ourselves.

You and I, right, by our sin and rebellion against God. And the Scripture speaks of physical death, which we all will face, probably, as well as, more importantly, spiritual death.

Sin brought about spiritual death in us. That's Ephesians chapter 2. And so, this is why I want to confront the idea of death today.

This is why resurrection is so important to the life of the follower of Jesus. And we're going to look at John's account. All right? But John was a disciple of Christ, but he wasn't just an eyewitness.

[6 : 27] He was a very close observer of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. And he wrote in chapter 19, verse 35, he says, He who saw it has bore witness.

His testimony is true. And he knows that he is telling the truth that you may believe. And earlier on, if we want to just connect the dots here, in chapter 19, verses 1 through 37, it speaks of the crucifixion of Jesus.

This is where, it's more than just an innocent man dying on a cross. There is more than meets the eye. In the spiritual realms, Jesus is bearing the wrath of God, standing in our place, taking our punishment that we deserve, and bearing the just wrath of God on our behalf, though he was innocent.

And so, Jesus was fulfilling on the cross a substitutionary work that was foretold by the prophet Isaiah. But he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. And upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. And by his stripes, we are healed. Spoken 700 years before that event, Christ is fulfilling that prophecy, the punishment of our sins.

[7 : 50] And John uses the phrase, the king, referring to Jesus almost 13 times in his gospel. And isn't it such a fitting description?

Jesus walks through this gospel in the most royal and dignified manner amidst the unimaginable, unjust suffering, torture, ridicule, and persecution.

He handles it just like a king. And so, he appears to us on the outside, weak and vulnerable and dying. In reality, he is God's king.

And all throughout these last few chapters of John, it's undeniable that Jesus is in control. Even if it seems like he's not on the outside.

He told Pilate, Pilate told him, I have the power to release you. I have the power to set you free or to not execute you. And Jesus basically told him, you have no power whatsoever except what's been granted to you from above.

[8 : 53] Jesus was totally in control of his life, his death, and now his resurrection. So, he is the king. So, that's where we're going to get some of our points from today.

But before we get into our text, it is important for us to remember, I'm just going to make a note of this, but you'll understand why. The resurrection is so important.

If Jesus had just remained in the tomb, if he had simply just died on the cross, the work of salvation would be in vain. All that he said, all that he promised, all that he did would be in vain.

He would just be another dead Messiah. But Jesus had to be vindicated. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15, if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still dead in your sins.

It's a very scary thought. So, we can't, isn't it amazing that so much of what we talk about in the church and in the Christian life is just, just alone on the cross, which is vital and important, but it wasn't really so in the early church.

[10:00] They spoke of the resurrection just as much as they spoke about the cross. So, it challenged us today to speak of the resurrection in everyday life and how different it would impact us.

So, as we look at the resurrection of Christ here in chapter 19 and end of 20 of John, we'll just kind of do it scene by scene. But we'll start in chapter 19, verse 38, and this is point number one.

There's just three points. Point number one, the king is buried. The king is buried. 19, verse 38, After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus.

And Pilate gave him permission. So, he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about 75 pounds in weight.

So, they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now, in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden.

[11:14] And in the garden, a new tomb, in which no one had yet been laid. So, because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

So, let's stop and make some observations. So, first, it mentions these two men, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Joseph was a wealthy member of the Jewish ruling council, according to Matthew 27.

And he humbly asked Pilate for the body, for Jesus' body. And it says in Luke, chapter 23, it says about Joseph, he was a member of the council, a good and righteous man who had consented to the decision and action.

And he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. So, it implies here that Joseph was indeed a believer.

In fact, he's called as much a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph who also was a disciple of Jesus. And then secondly, Nicodemus, the reluctant but believing Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin.

[12:28] He was the one who spoke to Jesus in John chapter 3. And later in the Gospel of John, he confronted the Pharisees unjust, seeking to trap Jesus.

He said to them in Jesus' defense, does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does? So, we see that eventually, more than likely, Nicodemus came full circle and became a true believer of Christ.

And then we see there's preparation for the body in these verses. The final burial preparations, the final ones, were left undone due to the Jewish day of preparation, which was beginning of the Sabbath, when all work had to cease, especially dealing with a burial.

Right? So, they did minimal preparation on the body and they rushed it into the tomb. About 75 pounds of spices they used. Myrrh, which is like this gummy resin that they would grind down to powder and sort of throw it over the body to kind of stifle the smell.

linen cloth that were just wrapped around the body. And then it says the tomb, which is more than likely either rock-hewn or some sort of natural cave that existed that made it like a vault where a big heavy stone would be rolled over the entrance.

[13:52] And all of this, believe it or not, happened that the scripture would be fulfilled. The Old Testament scripture of Isaiah 53 foretelling of the burial of the Messiah.

It says, they made his grave with the wicked and with the rich man in his death. Although the suffering servant mentioned in Isaiah was condemned as a criminal, there's the with the wicked part, he was buried in the expensive tomb belonging to that rich man, Joseph.

So amazingly, right, we see these things being fulfilled before our eyes. This gets us to point number two, which we start in chapter 20. Point number two, the empty tomb of the king.

The empty tomb of the king. This is verses 1 through 18. We'll start with just a piece of it. It says, Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

[15:07] So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb, both of them running together. But the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

And stooping in, he saw linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came following him and went into the tomb.

He saw linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in its place by itself.

Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in. He saw and believed. For as yet he did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from death.

And the disciples went back to their homes. So we see that Mary Magdalene reports on the empty tomb. It was the first day of the week, which we would call Sunday, but the Jews didn't name their days, they numbered their days.

[16:14] This is why it's the first day of the week, which we would call Sunday. Mary Magdalene is the one that Jesus healed of demonic possession, and she just followed Jesus out of joy and gratitude for what he had done, even followed him to the foot of the cross.

When a lot of the other disciples were hiding, she actually went to the foot of the cross, and that's seen in Matthew 28. John also implies, right here, that she got there while it was still dark.

So low visibility, but explains that this large stone had been rolled back, right, by the angel of the Lord, which revealed that the soldiers that had been there had already gone.

They had fled the scene. So she's seeing the aftermath of the resurrection. Have you ever thought about this? The stone being rolled away, that wasn't so that Jesus could get out.

That was for us to say that he actually has been risen. As we'll see in a little while, Jesus appears to his disciples when they were behind locked doors. So Jesus and his resurrection body didn't need the stone removed, but the fact that it would be there for our faith that he is gone, he's no longer here.

[17:34] So they fled, the soldiers fled to save their own skin and conspired with the chief priest to cover it up. That's in Matthew 28 verses 11 through 15. So Mary runs and tells the other disciples.

So just imagine what's going through her mind right now. But the thought of resurrection is not on her mind. She thinks that just something has happened. She thinks that someone has taken his body.

So what is going on? Could be what she is thinking. But she tells Peter and John, says they ran to the tomb right away to explore what Mary had said. I think it's really funny that John mentions that he outran Peter twice.

So either his brotherly way of just saying he was faster than Peter or he was just immensely eager. Or perhaps Peter was just a bigger guy and not as nimble as John.

Who knows? But just the detail of the account. But upon arriving at the tomb, John went in and Peter saw it. And the Greek actually means they peeped in. And at first it was Peter.

[18:37] Peter saw it. And when he saw it, he was confused. He was bewildered. He was just like, what is going on? John stayed there and looked a little closer and first observed that he said he saw the linen cloths lying there.

The Greek seems to suggest that the garments had not been just thrown around all over the place. And if you were like taking off clothes and you just threw the linen cloths everywhere, strewned out, but they were laying exactly where the body had Jesus had been laid.

It's almost as if the body just withdrew itself from the wrappings and it just collapsed where it was. That's like what it's implying. That's just crazy. Crazy.

And also it's all the head cloth, right? Just rolled up and sitting over by itself somewhere else. Right? Nice and neat.

And again, the body just seemed to have withdrawn itself. So secondly, the face cloth put over by its own in a different place. And it says that John, seeing this astounding sight, saw and believed.

[19:54] It was like sufficient for him to at least believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. But then it says that they still did not understand the scripture, so it must imply that he at least believed that Christ had risen, even though he didn't fully know what that implied.

and it says that they didn't know the scriptures, the Old Testament scriptures that spoke of the Messiah and how he would rise from death. Right?

So just a quick thing for us to think about, will you be found faithful or will you be found in unbelief when God fulfills his word? Are you surprised or caught off guard when God actually fulfills one of his promises?

promises? Do you patiently wait in faith for God to deliver on his promises? This is a lesson for us. It says they didn't know the scriptures.

They didn't believe the scripture. Right? And now this is being fulfilled right in front of them. But see, this is very important. The resurrection, this could go on forever, I'll just make it really brief, but the resurrection is needed because it vindicated Jesus.

[21 : 08] It showed, it proved, it declared Jesus to be true and right. Right? That he was indeed the son of God and all the claims that he made. Again, he would just be another dead Messiah.

It says in Romans 1, verse 3, Jesus was declared to be the son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Lord. So Jesus didn't become the son of God at the resurrection. The resurrection was the powerful demonstration that he was indeed, eternally, the son of God.

And so after this account, all the other disciples went home, but Mary lingered. We don't know why exactly, maybe to grieve, or maybe because she was exhausted, because I just think about the back and forth.

So she's just sitting there, same thing they're thinking, what is going on? Look at verse 11. It says, Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept, she stopped to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

[22 : 23] They said to her, woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.

So, we see Mary here, brokenhearted, confused, didn't leave the tomb until she found out what happened to Jesus' body. And they asked her, why are you weeping when she encounters these majestic beings?

And Mary answers again that they did not understand the scriptures. So the appearance of the angels throughout the life of Christ, at his temptation, at his birth, now at his resurrection, they were even with him in the garden of Gethsemane.

So it's just consistent with the ministry of Jesus. But imagine, try to, being in her place, heart pumping, shock, adrenaline running through your body, and asking, is this really happening?

Did Jesus actually do what he was going to say he did? And then immediately, verse 14, having said this, right away, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

[23 : 39] And Jesus said to her, woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

And Jesus said to her, Mary. She turned and said to him in Aramaic, Rabboni, which means teacher. Jesus said to her, do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

But go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. So suddenly, right, she whips around and saw Jesus standing there, and she didn't recognize him, but he asked the same question that the angels asked, why are you weeping?

She didn't recognize Jesus, maybe because it was early dawn, still outside, maybe the tears blurred her vision, didn't expect to run into Jesus, but maybe even his resurrected body looked a little different, not for sure, we don't know, but what any cause, Mary didn't recognize him at first until she said his name, her name, said Mary, and then he recognized I've heard him say my name before, this is him, right, very clear that when Jesus calls us, he calls us personally, that we know his name, Jesus said that earlier, my sheep know my voice, I call them and I give them eternal life, and then he says, go and tell them that I'm ascending to the Father, right, Jesus wanted them to know that he was going to go back, so he said, go and tell the others what you've seen, go and tell them that I am indeed alive, and so we keep going, we get to number three here, this is the last point, the king appears to his hiding disciples, the king appears to his hiding disciples, this is in verse, sorry, in verse 18,

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that he had said these things to her, on the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked were the disciples, were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, peace be with you, and when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side, then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord, Jesus said to them again, peace be with you, as the father has sent me, even so I am sending you, and when he had said this, he breathed on them and

said to them, receive the Holy Spirit, if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven, if you withhold the forgiveness from any, it will be withheld, and so, let's walk through this quickly together, so these fearful disciples, like they ran away, when Jesus was arrested, they fled the scene and left [26 : 50] Jesus to be alone, to face all of this alone, it says that they ran and fled, they forsook him in Matthew chapter 26, so they were not brave, they were weak, their faith was weak, let's not be quick to judge, because we don't know what we would have done, we hope that we would have stuck with Christ, but don't be too quick to judge the disciples who ran away in fear of their lives, but they're hiding behind locked doors, feeling afraid, confused, bewildered, and especially after hearing Mary, like what is going on?

So they're traumatized, and they're fearful of what's happened, but Jesus appears to them, I love that, just sort of behind the locked doors, he just sort of appears, standing there, talking to them, and he says, peace, be with you, be still, rest easy, all is well, because I mean, obviously they would have been frightened, they would have been scared, as would all of us if we saw something so supernatural, because it really is me, I'm alive, touch me, look, see my hands and my feet, and he reminds them of the events of the cross, that he was the crucified sacrifice, but now he is the risen Lord, that he has overcome the world and secured their place in heaven, and then he says to them, he breathes on them, it says, receive the Holy Spirit, now we know if we read the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit came on them at Pentecost, almost 40 days later, so this is best understood as a kind of active parable pointing forward to the full endowment of the Holy Spirit, the pledge of the Spirit, Spirit, and then lastly, in this section, he commissions them, he says, the Father sends me, so I now am sending you to go out into this dark, dying world and to proclaim the message of forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God through the Savior. The message of the gospel has to go forth to all ethnos, all nations, all peoples, and so watch with great anticipation in the years, to come to see how God is going to reach the unreached of the world.

And though the initial establishment of the church fell to the apostles, I hope that you feel that weight to advance the name of Christ, the kingdom of Christ, no matter where you are in your life to those who are around you.

[29 : 29] It continues to this day. So then we'll wrap it up, we'll keep going in verse 24 and we'll land the plane. Can't leave this out. Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the twin, was not with them when Jesus came.

So the other disciples told him, we have seen the Lord, but he said to them, unless I see his hands in the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.

That might be a lot of us saying that. eight days later, his disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, peace be with you.

And then he said to Thomas, put your finger here and see my hands. Put out your hand and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.

And Thomas answered him, my Lord and my God. Jesus said to him, have you believed because you have seen me?

[30 : 41] Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Man, eight days later, right, Thomas was like, I don't buy it, guys, unless I can see him and touch him, as y'all did.

He probably kicked himself. Imagine like an event you would not want to miss out on, like, I missed it. So Jesus appears to him, especially, right, and shows him.

Thomas had known to have been loyal, but sometimes pessimistic. And Jesus doesn't rebuke him. He doesn't like, you know, to say, come on, Thomas. He just simply, humbly shows him compassion and offers proof of his resurrection.

And so Thomas' response is astounding. what other response could you have to someone who has risen from the dead? He understood more.

He's standing, God in flesh, standing right in front of him, the crucified Christ, but now the risen Lord. And his response is, my Lord and my God, declares that Jesus, the man in front of him, is divine, risen from the dead.

[31 : 53] God. And so does a passage like this just give you chills? Does it make you joyful and inspire hope? Does it terrify you, fearful? What Jesus say to you today, why are you crying?

Stop your doubting and believe. Because a lot of us live life in that sort of defeat, as if Jesus had just stayed in the tomb. So how does this impact us?

We learn something very important here about the nature of faith. We've been taught by society that seeing is believing. Very clearly Jesus says that it is not.

You don't have to see Jesus in the flesh to believe in him. None of us have. Jesus states that just seeing him isn't necessary for belief, but faith in God doesn't depend on seeing him, but trusting! in this person and his work for our behalf by faith is sufficient for salvation. And so Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1 verse 8, so I imagine that Peter remembers this scene and he's like using it as a reference. [33 : 03] He remembers what Jesus told Thomas. 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 8, though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with the joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

So, blessed are those who have not seen me, Jesus says, and yet will believe. In 1 Corinthians chapter 15, I'll read you just a section of this, but Jesus appeared to many people other than the disciples, all according to the scriptures, all according to the fulfillment of what God had spoken hundreds and hundreds of years earlier.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15 verse 3, For I delivered to you as first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried and then he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve, then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep, then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all, as to one untimely born, he also appeared to me.

So, amazingly, back in this day, he says he appeared to all these people, and a lot of them are still alive, go ask them, they saw him, and then Paul clues himself at the very end, and then finally he appeared to me on the Damascus road, right?

So, some quick application, and then we'll wrap it up. Each one of these could be their own sermon, but I'll wrap it up really quickly, but because Jesus is alive, we can be sure of our eternal life.

[35 : 07] Every now and then a Bible writer may tell you why they wrote the book. At the end, look at chapter 20, verse 30. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

So does the thought of death scare you? Does the consequences, the thought of facing the consequences of your own sin frighten you? You can know by believing and throwing your life completely in the risen Son of God that He will save you, He will deliver you.

It says He will give you eternal life. If you believe in His crucifixion, His paying the price for your sin. So that's the hope we have when we pass away that we will be raised.

Right? Jesus said around the death of Lazarus, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live.

And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? So because of a living Savior, we can taunt death. Saying as it says in 1 Corinthians 15, death is swallowed up in victory.

[36 : 33] Oh death, where is your victory? Oh death, where is your sting? Secondly, you can be assured that Christ will return. He has fulfilled His word so far, every bit of what He said.

The entire New Testament entirely depends on the assumption that Jesus is alive, living, reigning at the right hand of the Father and that He one day will return. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 14 through 17 mentions that because Jesus is risen, He will return.

And when He comes back, He's coming back to save those who have hoped in Him and to judge those who have rejected Him. To judge and to make war.

It says that He will judge the world and righteousness in Acts 17. So that gives us authority unlike anyone else. Like why? Why is Jesus a big deal?

Because He's alive, He's returning, and you will have to reckon with Him one day, either as His friend on His terms or enemies on your terms.

[37 : 40] Then lastly, because He lives, because of the resurrection, we can possess as followers of Christ the greatest motivation for living. You don't have to spend your days and years searching for the right thing to live your life for.

All things are in vain. All things will perish and fail. But if we wrap up our whole life in following the living Christ, we can even recklessly throw our lives away for Christ.

And it will not be in vain. Right? We can live for Him, sharing the gospel with the dark and dying world around us, because we live for an unconquerable immortal.

Savior. You don't have to live your life filled and paralyzed with fear, anxiety, depression. You don't have to, because Christ is alive. Think about this.

All the disciples ran. They were afraid of death. They were afraid of facing punishment. What happened? You know, we all know how most of them died. They all died martyrs.

[38 : 44] What changed them? What made them into this fearless band of followers who declared Christ boldly, almost a complete 180 in a short amount of time.

They knew that Jesus was living, and they were happy to live and die for Him. Bold witnesses. So in other words, in one of my own fathers and one of my grandfathers' favorite old hymns, because He lives, I can face tomorrow.

Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future. life is worth living just because He lives. So, let's pray together.

Let's go.