

**Easter 2026
Risen
Matthew 27:62-28:15**

This is my message written out prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This was meant to be spoken.

⁶² The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' ⁶⁴ Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

¹ Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." ⁸ So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

¹¹ While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers ¹³ and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day. (Matthew 27:62 - 28:15)

Introduction

- **He is Risen!**
- Are you sure?
- And if so, what does the resurrection mean for you and me?
- That's what we are going to look at today.

- Now in many parts of the world **Easter Sunday** is still considered a major **"Religious Holiday"**
- And even though we've added **bunnies and eggs and candy**.
- I think most people still know that **Easter** is the celebration of **the Resurrection of Jesus Christ**.
- So, you might think that **whether Jesus actually rose from the dead or not** would be a question that most people would want an answer for.

- **But that's not the case?**
- Most people, relegate questions about the resurrection or any other "so called" **miraculous event** to the area of **religious faith**.
- And for them what you have **faith in what you believe** is up to you.
- **You can choose whether to believe it or not.**
- Some choose not to believe in God **or anything miraculous or religious**.
- To them the **resurrection** is a legend for a myth.
- While others view **religious faith** as something helpful.
- Something that teaches **morality, how to be better people**, or something that can **give us hope**.
- To them the **truth** of the resurrection **isn't that important**.
- **If believing Jesus is Risen**, is helpful for your life then good for you.
- Whether it actually happened or not is secondary.
- But the problem is, this way of thinking about the resurrection, or faith in general,
- **Totally ignores TRUTH.**
- Believing or not believing in something is **irresponsible and meaningless if it's not true**.
- People say, "**Well, truth is subjective**."
- Something may be true for you, **but not true for me**.
- I never really understood this because no one lives that way. **Just think about it...**
- Where, in anyone's life, do they actually make decisions (take action) without caring about what is true?
- **For example**, Christina and I just flew to **St. Louis** over Spring Break.
- **We went to visit our Grandchildren (and their parents)**
- And to get there I had to book a flight that was going to **St. Louis**.
- Now suppose **after doing all that** and then **getting on the plane**.
- The pilot decided that **for him St. Louis** was actually **Seattle**,
- and so, we ended up in **Washington** instead of **Missouri**.
- **Ridiculous right.**
- Or what if you take a job and agree to a specific salary.
- When payday comes and you get less than promised,
- you don't want your boss to say that promise may have been "true for you,
- but it wasn't **true for me**."
- **Again ridiculous.**
- And these are just two simple examples; **we could come up with thousands more**.
- In our lives we make important and even unimportant decisions based **on what is true**.
- **And we expect others to do the same.**
- **So why**, when it comes to the **most important** issues of life and death and eternity, would we want to **throw truth** out the window?

- And that brings us to the **Resurrection of Jesus Christ**.
- **Did Jesus, as Matthew and other NT authors proclaims, rise from the dead?**
- And let's be very clear...
- This is a question of **truth**, either **He did**, or **He didn't**.
- And knowing the correct (true) answer is vital for us all.
- Because as we'll see the **ramifications are enormous**.
- If Jesus didn't rise from the grave, **then we're wasting our time this morning**.
- If the resurrection didn't happen, then believing in it is **not helpful or hopeful**, it's foolishness.
- In **1 Corinthians 15:14** Paul says that very thing...

14 ...if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:14)

- And in **verse 32 of the same chapter**, defending the resurrection of all who believe, **he adds...**

32 ...If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." (1 Corinthians 15:32)

- If Jesus didn't rise, **then Christianity is vain folly**. Our faith is based on a lie.
- We might as well focus on **bunnies and eggs and candy for tomorrow we die**.
- **However**, if Jesus did rise from the grave, **the opposite is true**, our faith is essential.
- It's based on the **most important event in human history**.
- And we must live for more than eating and drinking for tomorrow **we rise!**
- I hope you're beginning to see the importance of **knowing the truth about the Resurrection**.
- But, since none of us were there to witness Jesus' death or resurrection.
- **How do we get at the truth?**
- Well, we can begin by establishing **two facts** that even **most secular scholars** agree with.
- **Fact One:** 2000+ years ago, almost overnight, an entirely new religious **movement** was formed.
- And its adherents **claimed** that **Jesus, died, was entombed and on the day rose from the grave**.
- **Fact Two:** this **movement (which came to be known as Christianity)** has survived and thrived for **over 2,000 years**.
- Those who claim to be followers of Christ and believe in the resurrection, (Christians: whether Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox) make up close to one **third of the world's population**.
- **These two facts are not in dispute**.
- And what this means is, **if you don't believe in the resurrection**,
- Then you must provide a **plausible explanation** for how Christianity,
- which is based on the **Resurrection of Jesus Christ** started and continues to thrive.

- And throughout history people have sought to do this.
- There is no shortage of theories (**possible explanations**) for what took place to cause people to believe in a **resurrection that didn't actually take place.**
- But the question is, are these **theories plausible?**
- I use that word **plausible** because when talking about history there's virtually nothing that can be established with **100% certainty.**
- Take **another historical** event from much more **recent history.**
- An event that took place a little over **62 years ago.**
- I know that because I was **2 days old** when it happened.
- This event, the assassination of **President John F. Kennedy**, took place on November 22, 1963,
- And it was even captured on film.
- So, scholars and filmmakers have been studying it for **62 years.**
- And there is still controversy over how the assassination took place, and who was involved.
- So, when we look at **historical events.** We must ask the question.
- What is **the most plausible explanation** for the set of facts that we have?
- And again, in our case, the facts are these:
- Over 2,000 years ago a new religious movement was formed around the claim that Jesus Christ not only died on a cross but rose from the grave.
- And that movement (Christianity) survives and thrives to this day.
- So how do you explain these facts?
- Or more specifically...

What are the Explanations for the Resurrection Claim?

- Now today, I'm going to briefly touch on 5 possible explanations for what caused people to claim Jesus rose from the dead.
- There are others, but these 5 have been around the longest and are the most common.
- The **first** is the...

1. The Mistaken Identity Theory

- This proposes that Jesus didn't even go to the cross, that someone else was crucified in his place.
- So, of course, when the actual Jesus showed up on the third day, people believed he rose from the dead.
- **Muslims, who believe Jesus was a prophet,** adhere to this theory.
- The **Koran** (written six hundred years after the resurrection) teaches that somebody who looked like Jesus went to the cross instead.
- But those much closer to the historical situation (Christian and non-Christian alike) reported that it was Jesus who died on the cross.
- There is nothing in the historical record that points to it being someone else.

- Also, this would mean that Jesus not only didn't rise from the dead but that that he was a liar.
- Because he claimed to be risen!
- So is the **Mistaken Identity Theory** the most plausible explanation for the resurrection claim?
- **Then second is the...**

2. The Swoon Theory

- This explanation proposes that Jesus did not die on the cross but only passed out (swooned).
- Yes, it was Jesus who went to the cross.
- And Yes, He was hurt very, very, very badly, He even lost consciousness, so that everyone thought He was dead, but He wasn't.
- They took him down from the cross before he died,
- They put him in the tomb, and later he regained consciousness and escaped.
- Now just so we're clear, this explanation assumes that Jesus withstood a brutal scourging,
- had thorns thrust into his head,
- had nails hammered into his hands and feet,
- And after hours on a cross had a spear thrust into his side.
- Then he was wrapped in grave clothes and put in a tomb
- A stone was rolled over the entrance.
- And a Roman guard was posted.
- So, if Jesus never died then we're to believe that he regained consciousness,
- He got up, he moved the stone out of the way, and he slipped past the guards.
- **Possible?**
- Well, it depends on how you define the word.
- But plausible, **I think not.**
- The evidence points to the fact that **Jesus actually died on the cross.**
- Then **third we have...**

3. The Stolen Body Theory

- This explanation proposes that Jesus disciples conspired together and stole his body from the tomb, **faking the resurrection.**
- Now this is certainly the oldest theory.
- It's the story we read about it in **Matthew 28.**
- The Jewish leaders conspired with the Roman guards to say that the disciples stole Jesus' body.
- Now there's two strong reasons why this is unlikely.
- **First**, this would mean that those weak, scared Galilean disciples (fishermen, tax collectors) were able to outmaneuver a guard of highly disciplined/skilled Roman soldiers. **Maybe**

- But **second**,
- If these men stole the body and told people Jesus rose from the dead, then they concocted history's greatest hoax, **and they were a bunch of liars**.
- Is that possible, **I suppose**.
- But history records that **Jesus' disciples** were persecuted and killed for their faith.
- In fact, they were killed **for proclaiming the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ**.
- So that means they **all went to their graves never recanting** the lie that they had devised.
- Never telling anyone **they stole the body**, never confessing where the body was located.
- Now, **certainly men will die for a lie**.
- But **what man would die for a lie that he knows is a lie**.
- **Pascal** said about the **witnesses to the resurrection**,

I believe the witnesses that get their throats cut. (Blaise Pascal)

- So, is it possible that Jesus' body was stolen by the disciples? Maybe?
- But is it plausible?
- Does this explanation best fit the historical facts? **I think not**.
- **The fourth explanation is commonly called...**

4. The Hallucination Theory

- This theory suggests that the disciples and early followers experienced subjective visions or grief-induced hallucinations of a risen Jesus.
- It isn't reasonable that the disciples stole Jesus body,
- then invent the resurrection and died for their lie.
- But maybe they weren't liars,
- maybe in their pain and grief over Jesus' death they still believed that he was guiding them.
- They had visions in their minds of Jesus speaking to them.
- Maybe they really believed He was still alive, or maybe they knew He wasn't,
- but they believed He was **spiritually alive**,
- And over the years that just developed into a **myth** that Jesus rose from the dead.
- **Maybe?**
- **Or maybe not.**
- The main problem with this theory is the number of people involved.
- **All 12 disciples** (11 + Matthias who replaced Judas) would have had the same delusion of Jesus' resurrection.
- Maybe a couple of people could have been deluded into thinking they had seen Jesus,
- But this theory says that **all 12 were delusional**.
- And they were **so delusional** that they were willing to die for their delusion.

- **But wait it's not just 12.**
- **Acts 9 records** that Jesus also appeared to **Saul of Tarsus** (the Apostle Paul).
- So that's **13... but there is more...**
- **Paul writes in the first century**, just a few years after the resurrection...

6 Then he (Jesus) appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. (1 Corinthians 15:6)

- In **1 Corinthians 15**, Paul is giving evidence for the resurrection of Jesus.
- He says, Hundreds – not just the disciples – but hundreds of people saw Him.
- Paul is saying to the **Corinthians...** If you don't believe in the resurrection,
- then go ask those who saw Jesus alive after he was crucified.
- They can verify that Jesus did rise from the death.

- So, if you we're to believe the disciples were hallucinating,
- We must also believe that there were hundreds of others who were also hallucinating.

- And there's one other obvious problem with this theory.
- If the disciples (and Paul and many others) were delusional,
- If Jesus had not risen from the dead,
- Then all his enemies would have had to do would be **to produce the body.**

- The **Pharisees or the Romans** could have and would have rolled the stone away.
- Took Jesus' body out and paraded through the streets.
- This would have ended any notion **that Jesus had risen from the dead.**
- But that didn't happen. **A dead body was never produced.**

- So, is it possible the disciples plus many others had some mass delusion or hallucination?
- Maybe? **But is it plausible?** I think not.

- Now the **final explanation** is what is recorded in the NT,
- and what the church throughout history has believed is the best and only plausible or possible explanation. **I'm calling it...**

5. The Bodily Resurrection Theory

- That Jesus actually died on the cross and rose from the dead.
- Is this the most plausible explanation for the facts that over 2,000 years ago a new religious movement and community was formed around the claim that Jesus rose from the grave...
- And that movement survives and thrives to this day.

- This is certainly what Matthew believed.
- And he was not alone, the **other 3 gospels** as well as the rest of **the NT** echo the words the angel spoke to the women at the empty tomb...

5 ...“Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. (Matthew 28:5-6)

- The Biblical and historical evidence says that Jesus died by crucifixion.
- The evidence shows that His followers believed that He rose from the dead and appeared to them.
- They not only believed, but they were transformed.
- They were changed from men who were hiding from their enemies and even denying Christ, into men who were willing to die for their belief in Jesus and His resurrection.
- In Peter's first Sermon he proclaims...

²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. (Acts 2:23-24)

- This was and continues to be the consistent message regarding the resurrection claim.
- But as Matthew tells us, from the beginning, people have tried to cover up Jesus' resurrection,
- But every proposed possible explanation falls short of the most plausible explanation.
- **That God actually raised Jesus Christ from the dead.**
- And I would add that the only reason people continue to try and explain away the resurrection is because of what it implies.
- **They have an agenda.**
- They come from a **naturalistic worldview** that denies **both God and the miraculous**.
- **And if the resurrection actually took place**, then it **shatters their faith in their worldview**.
- The resurrection **shouts that there is a God** who does the miraculous and Jesus Christ is His Son.
- **AMEN!**
- **So**, if Jesus did die on the cross and rise from the dead, the implications are huge.
- There is a God, Jesus Christ is His Son, Miracles do occur, The New Testament is True...
- And more...
- In fact, I want us to take a few moments and answer the question...

What are the Implications of the Resurrection?

- Now we don't have time to look at all the implications of the resurrection,
- so I'm going to focus on three that specifically relate to how we must see Jesus.
- If he didn't rise from the dead, then we can dismiss him as just another **failed Messiah**.
- But, if he did rise from the dead,
- Then that says he was the true Messiah, the Son of the Living God...
- And therefore, everything **he did, and said, is right and TRUE**.
- The resurrection put's God's stamp of approval on the person and work and words of Jesus Christ.

- It shows His absolute authority.
- In **chapter 28**, right after Matthew records Jesus' resurrection, in **verse 18** Jesus says...

18 ...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (Matthew 28:18)

- The resurrected Christ has been given all authority. What does that mean?
- Well, **let me point out three things...**
- First, because of the resurrection...

1. Jesus Has Authority Over Life and Death

- Listen to his words before He died...

18 No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. (John 10:18)

- Who determines when they live?
- Who can decide that one day, "I think I'd like to live,"
- And so, you persuaded your parents to bring you into the world?
- And who when they're dead. **When their heart flat lines.**
- Who has the power to say, "I'm coming back to life"?
- If Jesus rose from the dead, then He clearly has absolute authority **over life and death.**
- Which means he has authority over **your life and your death as well. More on that shortly.**
- So first, **the resurrection means Jesus has authority over life and death.**
- **And then second**, because of the resurrection...

2. Jesus Has Authority Over Sin and Satan.

- In **Romans 6:23** Paul wrote...

23 For the wages of sin is death... (Romans 6:23)

- Sin earns death. **Death is the payment for sin.**
- Death entered the world when Adam sinned, **and we die because we sin.**
- Because we've turned from trust in **God to trust in ourselves.**
- We've denounced the authority of God in our lives.
- We don't obey God, we don't follow God, we follow the God of this world Satan.
- As the Prophet Isaiah declared...

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way... (Isaiah 53:6)

- Every one of us has turned his own way of thinking, her own way of living...
- and the consequences of this sin against God, is death.
- Everyone dies...because everyone sins.

- You and I will die...because we have sinned.
- **But there is One Man in all history who never sinned, Jesus Christ.**

- You say, “**Well then why did He die?**” I’m glad you asked!
- He died for your sin and my sin.
- He paid the price for our sins.
- Again, as Isaiah declares.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6)

- Through his death on the cross, Jesus took on our sins.
- But death was not the end for Jesus.
- He rose from the dead,
- Not just in victory over death, **but in victory over sin and Satan.**
- In **1 Corinthians 15**, right after the Paul talks about all the people who saw Jesus alive after the resurrection, **we read these words...**

55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)

- If Jesus rose from the dead, He has authority over life and death, sin and Satan,
- Which leaves one **unavoidable conclusion...**
- **And this is where the rubber hit the road on Easter Sunday.**
- Because of the **Resurrection...**

3. Jesus Has Authority Over You and Me

- What does Jesus’ authority over us mean? Well, first It means...

A. He Reigns Over Us Supremely

- As we saw last week on Palm Sunday...
- Jesus is our KING, our Lord.
- And this is true, whether we believe it or not.
- Just as the grass is green and the sky is blue regardless of whether you believe it,
- Jesus is Lord – the absolute authority, **the sovereign Ruler**, the majestic King – over your life.
- People say, “**I’ve decided to make Jesus Lord of my life.**”
- I hate to break it to you...**you didn’t have a choice in the matter.**
- **Jesus is Lord over your life.**

- The Bible says that one day

***10 ...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
(Philippians 2:10-11)***

- One day every person who has ever lived will bow before Jesus Christ.
- Some will, after denying him throughout their lives, will bow with regret, **Jesus Christ is Lord.**
- And some will, after receiving him as their Lord and Savior, will bow with great joy. Jesus Christ is Lord.
- The question is not whether He's Lord...the question is,
- **“Will you submit to Him as Lord now...or will you bow in regret, when it is too late?”**
- **Because the Risen Christ** reign over us supremely, and second...

B. He Loves Us Deeply

- Jesus said...

13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

- Jesus said it and then he demonstrated his deep love for us by laying down his life for us.
- But he did not remain in the grave. **He rose.**
- And because of the resurrection we know he is who he claimed to be, that his words are true.
- The resurrection of Jesus validates everything He said and did.
- He came to reign over us supremely,
- He came because He loves us deeply,
- And finally, he came, died and rose from the dead therefore...

C. He Will Judge Us Eternally

- Jesus said in **John 5:21-22,**

21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, (John 5:21-22)

- Jesus will be our Judge! **And this is good news for all who trust in him.**
- Because **he paid for our sin**, it was laid upon him.
- And **even more we receive his righteousness.**
- We are **righteous, holy before God because of Christ.**
- Therefore, when we are judged we will be found not Guilty because of Christ.
- We will be saved from **God's holy wrath.**
- We will be saved from **eternal separation from God in Hell.**

- **And there is more good news.**
- Because the resurrection says that this world is not all there is.
- There is more in this life as we enter into relationship with God through Jesus Christ,
- and there is life after death, **there is Heaven.**
- There is eternity in the presence of the living God.
- I believe we all have a built-in longing and desire for meaning and purpose and hope that says,
- **This world is not the end, this world is not all there is, this world is not the last word.**
- Disease or Death don't have the last word.
- Violence and War don't have the last word.
- Whatever personal problem you are facing, no matter how great, it does not have the last word.
- Jesus' resurrection from the dead reminds us, **"He has the last word."**
- And this means that **He will have the last word in each of our lives for all of eternity.**
- **And that brings us too...**

What are the Applications of the Resurrection?

- The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the greatest historical event of all times.
- And it has **powerful implications for our lives.**
- But this Easter morning you must decide what you are going to do regarding the resurrection.
- And there are two basic applications... **First...**

1. Believe in the Resurrection

- Paul says in **Romans 10:9...**

⁹...if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

- This is where the message of Christianity is so different from every other religion in the world.
- **Biblical Christianity** is not a list of dos and don'ts designed to please God.
- It's not a set of rituals that if followed earn you a place in heaven.
- It's **truth to be believed.**
- Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins and rose from the dead proving his victory over sin, death and Satan?
- If you don't, if you would not say "**NO**" then what other explanation is more plausible?
- But if you would say yes to the truth of Jesus' resurrection,
- I want you to notice something very important in **Romans 10:9.**
- Believing in the resurrection is crucial but it's not all that's involved in salvation.
- No, there's no work that's involved, **no list of things to do**, but there is **a confession to be made.**

- If you are a **regular church goer**, then you need to **wake up and listen**.
- We are in church, and most people here would say that they believe in the resurrection of Jesus.
- But the reality is: belief in the resurrection of Jesus alone does not save you.
- In fact, belief in anything about Jesus (alone) does not save you.
- And the reason I say that with confidence is because speaking of belief in God...
- **James** tells us...

19 ...Even the demons believe—and shudder! (James 2:19)

- Even the demons, the devil himself believes in God and Jesus and the resurrection of Jesus,
- and he is certainly not saved from his sin.
- If the devil himself were here this morning, and I were to ask him,
- “Do you believe **the Bible is the Word of God?**” If he was being honest, He’d say, “Yes.”
- If I were to ask him, “**Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?**” He’d say, “Yes.’
- If I were to ask him, “**Do you believe Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead?**”
- He’d say, “Yes.”
- If I were to ask him, “**Do you believe Jesus is the only way to be saved?**” He’d say, “Yes.”
- Because you can believe every single one of those things and **NOT be saved from your sins**.
- But do you know what the key question is...
- The question that would change everything in that conversation
- If I were to look at the devil and say,
- “Do you repent of your sin and surrender your life to Jesus as Lord?”
- **And if Satan were honest**, he would say, “**Absolutely not.**”
- And **Church** here’s why this is so important – Because we’ve said...
- “Believe in Jesus, pray some prayer at some point in your life and you will be saved”
- **And it’s a lie from the pit of hell.**
- Thousands of professing Christians have believed only half of **Romans 10:9**,
- And they think they are saved from their sins when they’re not.
- There are many people – **likely some in this room** – who would give lip-service to Jesus,
- but whose lives are not surrendered **to His absolute authority**.
- And that takes us to our **second application**...
- Yes, you must first believe that Jesus Died for your sins and Rose from the Dead in victory of sin, death and Satan.
- But **second you must** also...

2. Surrender to The Resurrected Christ

- This is what it means to

confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord.

- It’s not just to say magic words.

- **It's having a heart that says**, yes, I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sin
- and yes, he rose from the dead as my Savior, and yes, my life belongs to Him as Lord.”
- **I give myself fully to HIM.**
- Belief is not a matter of preference or opinion; it's a matter of **truth**.
- And so, I want to ask every single person in this room, **every person watching online....**
- Whether this is the first time you've been in a church,
- The first time you've been in church in a long time,
- Or if it is your regular practice to be in church.
- **Whether you are a guest this morning or a member of Bridges,**
- Regardless I want to ask you:
- Do you believe in **the historical bodily resurrection of Jesus?**
- And as a result, **have you surrendered your life to His complete authority over you?**
- And if you haven't, I want to invite you to consider doing that this morning.
- Not because of anything I've said, but because of who Jesus is and what He has done for you.
- Considering His loving authority over you.
- Believe in Him...surrender to Him.
- And if you do, then as Paul said, **you will be saved.**
- You will be saved from your sin, **and you will receive the gift of eternal life.**
- And this makes all the difference.
- So, at the end of this earthly physical life....
- When you find yourself lying on a hospital bed, **and the prognosis is not good,**
- **What matters on that day** is not whether **you've believed a set of facts,**
- Or **prayed a certain prayer** or been a good, smart, kind, successful person in the eyes of others.
- What matters on that day is whether you have truly trusted in and given yourself to the One who has all authority over life and death, sin and Satan, **you and me.**
- Because when you have, then you don't have to worry or be afraid of **diabetes or cancer or kidney failure or brain tumors or anything.**
- Because when this body can take it no longer, when you breathe your last breath,
- And your heart stops beating, **you have victory in Jesus.**
- Because you have **united your life** with the One who rose from the dead...
- The one who conquered death, and in Him, through Him, **you will live forever.**
- That's the gospel, **the good news of Jesus Christ.**
- That's the greatest news our world could possibly hear.
- **As Jesus said...**

⁵ ... “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26)

- That's the question, for each and every one of us, **do you believe this?**
- Do you believe, not only that Jesus died for you sins and rose from the dead,
- but do you believe in JESUS.
- Have you trusted in Him, have you surrendered your life to the authority of the Resurrected Christ.

- If so, then continue to live in trust and submission to Him.
- Looking forward to the day when you will be resurrected unto eternal life.

- But if not, if you are still trusting in someone or something else, most likely yourself.
- Then I would call you to humble yourself before the living God.

To confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised from the dead,

- That you too might be saved.
- That you too might enter relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- That like Jesus ***the firstborn from the dead,***
- you too might be resurrected into the eternal presence of God.

- **Would you PRAY with me?**