

Following the Resurrected Jesus

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[0 : 00] Now, beloved, we are in the Gospel of Mark this morning. Mark's fast-paced way of showing the life of Jesus Christ in all of His goodness and glory.

So the title of my message this morning, Following the Resurrected Jesus. And that is a wonderful sentiment, isn't it? It's a wonderful truth. We follow a resurrected Lord, not a Lord who is in the grave, but a Lord who's been raised to new life as the first fruit, the Holy Spirit, and we will follow Him.

We are in Mark chapter 8, and I'll begin reading in verse 31. We'll cover some of the context around these several verses as we move through the passage together.

Mark 8, 31. And Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again.

And He was stating the matter openly. And Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke Him. But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but on man's.

[1 : 41] Now, as I reflected on the power, the force that's being communicated here, I was thinking about the gravity of these words from Jesus and just the way my little brain works.

Gravity caused me to think about NASA. My friend Jeff Brady will be very glad to hear that I thought of NASA since he is an engineer with NASA. And I did, and I thought, Man, I wonder what kind of power it takes to lift these giant payloads off the ground.

Again, you don't want to know the inner workings of my little brain, but that's just how it was going for me. So I began to look into that, and here's some info on what it took to launch, and I know it's a little bit dated, but still just listen to this, to launch the space shuttle.

If you want to know more about this and check the figures, just see Jeff after this. Raise your hand, Jeff. Let them know. Come see. There you go. During liftoff, shuttle Atlantis used 660,000 pounds of fuel a minute.

Then 17,000 pounds of fuel a minute from liftoff to orbit. That equates to the same amount of energy you use in a normal year to run your entire household, and that's just to put the shuttle in motion, not to keep it going.

[3 : 13] At a certain point in flight, the solid rockets are jettisoned. The main engine provides enough thrust to accelerate the shuttle from 3,000 miles per hour to over 17,000 miles per hour in just six minutes.

That's moving, bro. That outrun marks motorcycle, I can guarantee you. That is moving. The engine itself creates a combined maximum thrust of more than 1.2 million pounds.

Now, that's a big, huge number, and I don't understand in engineering terms what all of that would equate to, but that's a lot. Let's just say it that way. Here is the formula.

I was intrigued by this, not because I understand it, but because it's just impressive to me. Look at this. There she goes, and there's the formula that it takes, and I'm going to explain in just a minute.

Now, Jeff's probably looking at that and going, yeah. This is the equation that NASA uses to define the force needed to do what? Well, as the shuttle accelerates, the main engine burns half a million gallons of liquid propellant provided by those large, orange, external fuel tanks, and as they push the shuttle toward orbit, the engine, it says, consumes liquid fuel at a rate that would drain an average family swimming pool in under 25 seconds while generating over 37 million horsepower.

[5 : 00] The engine continues to operate like this for eight and a half minutes after launch. I just don't even, I can't conceive of how they control the heat and the friction involved in all of this, and things just don't melt at those kind of numbers.

Now, NASA apparently has been working on their new space launch system, or what they call SLS, since about 2011. It's bigger than the shuttle program, the research for this.

SLS rockets are about 385 feet tall. That's almost 40 stories tall. They have a liftoff weight of six and a half million pounds.

You got to get six and a half million pounds off the ground and into orbit and not shake it to pieces. Again, ask Jeff at the end of the thing. He'd be happy to explain all that to you, how it works.

This is an amazing, astounding accomplishment in my mind. Its four RS-25 engines provide enough power to keep eight 747s in the air at the same time.

[6 : 15] And at liftoff, it produces thrust equivalent to 160,000 Corvette engines. Wow. Now, why is this huge amount of force necessary?

Well, because of the force of gravity pulling downward during takeoff, combined with what NASA calls escape velocity. Escape velocity is the speed at which an object must travel to break free of a planet or a moon's gravitational force and get into orbit.

For example, a spacecraft leaving the surface of Earth needs to be going about seven miles per second or over 25,000 miles per hour to enter orbit.

That's what NASA's worked out. It takes a huge amount of force to overcome gravity and get a vehicle into space.

But man can build rockets to do this kind of thing. Now, all of this came to mind, again, as I thought about the force.

[7 : 26] The passage giving me the idea of this force that is necessary to free human souls from sin.

And there's no comparison with anything on Earth. There really isn't. That's the best I could do. In the way of an illustration. Just to get our minds thinking this way. Mankind has absolutely no answer to overcome the force of sin in and over the human soul.

None. We can build a rocket that can get something off the ground that weighs 6.5 million pounds. We can send it into orbit at 25,000 miles per hour. We have no answer for the issue of sin in the human soul.

None. You've heard me say over the last couple of Sundays, we cannot science our way out of sin. Can we? We cannot psychology our way out of sin.

We can't market our way out of sin. We can't political our way out of sin. We can't government our way out of sin. We can't buy our way out of sin. Man has no answer for the force of sin gripping the human soul.

[8 : 41] Friends, it took the single most powerful force in all the universe. A power far, far beyond the capacities of mankind to provide the escape velocity, if you will, needed to break you free from sin's grip on your soul.

Now, in this passage that we just read, Jesus himself is telling us that it took the miraculous power of God himself to free sinners from the grip of sin on our lives.

What did it take, Jeff? It took God's love for sinful souls. The most powerful force in the universe is the love of Almighty God.

There's nothing greater than God's love for sinners. It took God acting in love by sending His only Son to the cross.

And when we hear that, we need to remember how this scripture and Jesus himself tells us the cross event relates to us. It's one thing to say, yeah, I believe that there was this man long ago and he lived and he was a good prophet and a good teacher and he was a good Jew and they tortured him to death on a cross.

[9 : 56] It's another thing to say that that same sinless, perfect man went to the cross and that man died as my substitute.

That sinless man was buried in a tomb in my place. That sinless, perfect man was raised to new life for me.

He died as my substitute, taking my place on the cross. Why did I deserve to be that person on the cross? Because of my sin.

The Bible says that all the people who sin, which would be all of us, deserve the death penalty for that sin. Even one. Folks, that penalty has to be paid.

God cannot overlook the sin that you and I live in. He cannot do it and be a just God. And so what God did was He took your sin and my sin and He put it on His Son and He sent His Son to this place, the cross.

[11 : 06] As your substitute and my substitute, Jesus stepped forward to say, I will take His sin. I will take her sin on myself. Lay it on me as if I committed it.

And then God poured out His full fury against sin on His Son. And Jesus died paying the price for my sin and your sin as a substitute in your place.

And it's very personal. Very personal. Then they put Him in a grave. Dead. That death representing the death that you and I experience in Him.

He is still our substitute even in the grave. He died to pay our penalty. He's in the grave as a result of paying our sin debt. And then God did a miraculous thing.

He raised Jesus after three days to new life to tell the entire universe that the sacrifice that my Son made for your sin-sick soul, I accept.

[12 : 13] What my Son just did is sufficient for all time and forevermore. If you come to Christ trusting in Jesus being that substitute for you in that personal way, trusting what Jesus is and did for you on the cross, there is no power in all the universe that can overcome what God will do in your soul to rescue it from sin and death.

That is the promise of the Lord. Now folks, that's the escape velocity that it took to save your soul, to save my soul. And this is what Jesus is speaking about in this text.

It's very sobering, isn't it? And it should be. As you and I contemplate celebrating today the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, it's a glorious thing. What we don't need to forget is that before the resurrection, there's death.

And that death means something. Because without the death, we can't have the resurrection, can we? You and I face the same thing. We're going to die. Everybody in this room is going to die.

You have no idea what day that's going to be. All of you hope to and expect to get to the point where you're like me. You're getting gray, you're getting wrinkled, you've lived a long life kind of thing.

[13 : 32] Now I'm still a young man, I'm only 62. No amen. Alright. You're going to be a tough crowd, that's fine. That's fine. It took the love of God to do this for us.

Look with me in the passage. Let's go a little bit before and grab a little bit of the context running into this because it's very interesting. If you'll look with me in Mark chapter 8, verse 27. Jesus went out along with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi and on the way he was asking his disciples, saying to them, who do people say that I am?

That's the most important question in the universe that any human being can face. And the disciples said this to him. Well, they say that you're John the Baptist. The reason that was important was because John the Baptist was a prophet but John the Baptist was dead.

Some say you're John the Baptist raised from the dead. Some others say that you're Elijah. Elijah was another great prophet, also dead. Others say one of the other prophets.

In all three cases, they're saying that you're some resurrected entity from a previous life or whatever. Then he continued questioning them, but who do you say that I am?

[14:50] Let's make it personal. Who do you say that I am? And so Peter, typically being the spokesman as it were for the disciples, Peter answered and said to Jesus, you are the Christ.

You are the Christ. Now in verses 31 through 33 where we started this morning, Jesus is following up on Peter's confession that Jesus Christ is indeed the Messiah, the long expected and promised one, the deliverer, the one who will rescue God's people from their sins.

Friends, there are more than 300 separate prophecies in the Old Testament about Messiah coming, about this promised one coming who will do what Genesis 3.15 says he will do.

He will crush Satan's head. That is, he will crush the power of sin and death over us that we all experience as we take on the nature of Adam and Eve. Human nature is that of rebellion against Almighty God since the fall in the garden.

But now we're dealing with the reality here. Peter got it right. Peter said again, you are the Christ. Peter got it right. That is true.

[16:07] Wow. So why then does Jesus include verse 31 in this particular moment of teaching his disciples? Look at verse 31 with me again, my friends.

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

Now that, that teaching is coming on the heels of Peter's confession. You are the Messiah. You are the Christ. You are the promised one.

Friends, Peter's confession is true, but it is also full of Peter's bias. How so? Well, overall, the Jews saw their future Messiah as someone who would give them victory over their enemies and their struggle for political and cultural freedom.

Our Messiah is going to come and deliver us from, in this case, Rome and any other enemies that would try to suppress our religion and our culture and our way of life as Jewish people.

[17:20] That's what our Messiah is going to do. That's what we envision. Thousands and thousands of Jews look at the Messiah coming in that way. And Jesus tells them his disciples very plainly what kind of Messiah he is.

How does he do that? He tells them what he must do to follow God and to free them from sin. That's what he's telling them.

That's what's at stake here. For me to follow God and be faithful to my Father, this is what has to happen. I must do this. And to free you from sin, I must be this kind of Messiah.

Not the kind you envision. Does Jesus know what's in Peter's heart? He does. He knows that Peter is looking at this situation and basically doing this.

And here's the danger. Here's where we've got to come in and understand how this translates over into us as human beings. Peter is right. Lots of people say Jesus is the Messiah.

[18 : 29] He was the Jewish Messiah. Lots of people even say he's the Son of God. There are other religions out there that say that that are cults. He's the Son of God. How does that happen?

Peter is saying you are the Son of God. Where is it all falling apart? Peter's bias. We're going to see that in just a moment. Peter is making Jesus into the kind of Messiah he wants.

And that's what we do. That's where we get in trouble. I want to make God and Jesus be what I want so it stays convenient for me. So that I can have the kind of God that I want to worship.

You're going to see this with me as we go through it. Jesus is going to peel that back. Do the disciples believe that Jesus is the Messiah? Yes. Do they have all kinds of weird ideas about what that Messiahship means?

Yes. And Jesus is going to love them through that. He's going to walk them through that patiently just like he does with us. When you came to know Jesus Christ as a Christian assuming that you are did you know as much then as you know now about what it means to follow God?

[19 : 35] No. Me neither Ben. Me neither. I knew enough to know that I needed Christ to forgive me for my sins. It was very personal. That cross whoa that was personal. But I've grown so much more in my understanding and knowledge of who Christ is.

Why he did what he did and what it means to follow him. That's what's happening here. We need to bring this into understanding the spiritual reality given the human dilemma that these people find themselves in as they try to understand this enigmatic man saying hard things as he teaches them the truth.

Jesus Christ has to be the kind of Messiah that he says he needs to be. This is the high cost that Jesus himself is willing to pay as God the Son the Messiah the Savior.

Now so ask the question with me. What did it cost Jesus to follow God and fulfill his purposes? What did it cost God the Father to pave the way for sinners like us to follow him?

Well we look to Jesus for these answers. Where else would we look? If we want to know these answers about Jesus and God we go to Jesus we go to God the Father and we ask.

[21 : 03] The only place we can do that is in the scripture. Jesus Christ himself is the way the truth and the life. That's John 14 6. There is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Just the name of Christ. Acts 4 12. To look to Jesus friends is to look to life. That's why Christians make such a big deal of Jesus Christ.

He is the life. It's not just simply following him. it's understanding that he himself is life. He brings life because he is life.

It's amazing. Following Jesus is a matter of life over death. That's how serious it is.

Now what does following Jesus then look like? If following Jesus is a matter of life over death what does it look like to actually follow Christ?

[22 : 10] That's what this passage is all about. What does that look like for us? The disciples didn't know even though they thought they did.

Peter's answering correctly and they thought they knew what it meant to follow the Lord but they don't. Men have no idea what it means to know and follow God. Men don't know how to rescue themselves.

We don't. We look to all kinds of different things in life to help us move through life to help us answer the questions that all of us ask about what's most important in life?

What's most purposeful? How do I know that I'm living my life in a way that matters? And some of us will define it and say well as long as I love my family as long as I give to my kids and provide a good living for my family and those are good things.

But those are not the things that rescue souls. Are they? And we're talking about rescuing souls here. We're not talking about having a good life.

[23 : 13] We're talking about having life. That's the difference. Scripture draws sharp lines when it comes to this kind of thing.

Why? Because it's a matter of life and death for you and for me. And so we need the scripture to do that for us. We have no idea how to rescue ourselves.

Folks, there are so many different false religions. There are so many ungodly ideas and unbiblical practices about knowing and following God.

It's actually pretty easy to get wrong. And I can tell you what every one of the false systems of the world have in common. They get Jesus wrong.

And that's death. Getting Christ wrong is death. They don't know Jesus as Messiah according to the way the Bible describes him living, dying, and rising again from the dead in the power of God.

[24 : 22] They may be able to recite facts like that, but it's never become personal to them. They've never come to the place in their life where this God of the universe who's done this incredible and miraculous thing becomes personal to them.

They haven't seen it as this is between me and God. It's not between God and my family, my work associates, or anybody else. This is about me and God because God made me and I'm accountable to him.

Now what am I going to do with that? Where am I putting my hope? What am I looking to for meaning and purpose? What about my life after death?

What does all this mean? How do I think about this? How do I follow the Lord? Well, this is what the disciples need to deal with right now.

This is what Jesus wants to teach them and what they need to accept. Looking to Jesus means life. Following Jesus means you must die.

[25 : 34] Jeff, how does that even make sense? Looking to Jesus means life, but then if I follow him, it means I have to die. What in the world?

That doesn't... See, this is why I don't read the Bible. It's so confusing. There are so many things in it that don't make any sense. How is anybody supposed to understand? Well, you can't understand this apart from the power of God to help you understand it.

That's what the Bible says. We need God to help us understand these things because God's not confused about any of this. Jesus shows us that resurrection to new life first requires a death.

Jesus himself is the resurrection and the life. Jesus Christ alone paid the cost and paved the way for being forgiven by God and for following God in faith.

Jesus alone understands and knows what it means to be forgiven. He purchased that for us, that forgiveness, and he understands what it means to follow God in faith.

[26 : 40] So what we have here, friends, in Mark 8, 31 through 33, Jesus reveals two critical characteristics of any person who claims to follow Jesus as he followed God.

And that's what this is all about, following the resurrected Christ. What does that mean? Well, the first thing that I want to point out to you from verse 31 is this.

The first characteristic of someone following Jesus as the resurrected Christ is a heart devoted to God's will. A heart devoted to God's will.

Notice in the text with me, here's the emphasis I want to bring to you. And he began to teach them. Do you see that in verse 31? He began to teach them. The point is this.

This was an ongoing teaching ministry to his followers. In other words, this is a process that's very encouraging. This is a teaching that Jesus would expand and expound on and one they needed time to grow into.

[27 : 43] And that's good news for you and I because we need time to grow, don't we? We need time to take this big Jesus in and begin to grow in him and relate to him.

Look, for those of you who are married, how did you get to know your spouse? Most of you guys dated for a little while before you got married. You spent time with each other, didn't you?

You asked each other questions. You got to know each other. This is what Jesus is doing with his disciples. Come, draw near to me, learn of me, be with me, get to know who I am, why I came, what I'm doing to help you know the Father.

Be with me. Now, folks, the reason I'm doing this is because Jesus is trying to tell the disciples that this is about a relationship with him. This isn't about a set of do's and don'ts and rules and regs.

This is about a relationship with Jesus Christ. That's where it starts. You have that relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and it moves from there.

[28 : 53] This is what the Lord is bringing to these men. Teaching was the medium. It was the tool, the vehicle to this process of learning and growing in Christ.

In fact, and this is so encouraging, later, much later, 30 years later, when Peter's writing his letters and encouraging the churches to follow Christ, 30 years after the resurrection or so, Peter is writing and this is what he reminds his readers.

Listen to what he says or look at what he says. Be on your guard. Why? Lest you, having been carried away by the error of unprincipled men, fall from your own steadfastness in the Lord, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Peter's saying that's a process that goes on throughout your life. Growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Getting to know him. Being in relationship with him.

Praying and relying on him. Confessing to him. Worshiping him. Spending time in wonderful worship with him. Letting the peace of Jesus balm your soul.

[30 : 11] Now, yes, you say, Jeff, how do we then, how do we grow spiritually like this? How do we respond to this in the Lord? If he's telling his disciples this is what has to happen to him and this is how to have a relationship with him, how do we grow spiritually?

How do we know how to follow Jesus and be faithful to him? Well, the answer is really straightforward, friends. You learn from him.

You come to him, you learn from him. This is why Greg and I, as pastors here at Grace Church, this is why he and I keep teaching and preaching God's will for us in his son, Jesus Christ.

What does that mean? We keep teaching the scripture. We keep preaching and teaching the Bible. We keep gathering us together and going into the passages of scripture and teaching through these passages to help us know Christ better, to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not just to give you facts, not just to help you tick a box that says I was spiritual today, but to know your savior. In fact, we can go to John.

[31 : 24] I think I have that verse. Yes. Look at the bottom of the screen here where Jesus says this about himself to the religious leaders. You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life.

It is these, the scriptures, that bear witness about me and you are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life.

You search the scriptures, you're good at coming up with laws, you're good at picking stuff apart, but when it comes to understanding that these scriptures speak to me, they speak about who I am and reveal to you who I am, you're unwilling.

You're unwilling. And so what do you miss? You miss life. Folks, that's what's at stake. You miss Jesus, you miss life. life.

We are celebrating today resurrection life. But we need to understand more of the full meal deal about what that means. What does it mean to celebrate resurrection life and follow the Lord?

[32 : 38] What does it mean to be in Christ? Jesus expressed his own single-minded purpose in life. And what was it? To do the will of God. Jesus Christ came to do the will of the Father.

Now I want to show you a couple of places where he speaks to this. If you'd hold your hand here in Mark and go over to John 6. John chapter 6. Let me help you see this.

Jesus speaking to the reality of coming to do the will of the Father. We're going to look in verse 35 of John 6.

And Jesus said to them, all these people who had gathered around him, I am the bread of life. There it is again. Life.

He who comes to me will never hunger and he who believes in me will never thirst. Now of course he's speaking here about spiritual reality, your spiritual soul.

[33 : 43] But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me and the one who comes to me I will never cast out.

Hallelujah. For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. Now this is the will of him who sent me that of all that he has given me people souls I lose nothing but raise it up on the last day.

There's your resurrection. For this is the will of my father that everyone who sees the son and believes in him will have eternal life.

And I myself will raise him up on the last day. Now is that resurrection? Amen. This is why you've come this morning isn't it to celebrate a resurrection?

Well Christian you are resurrected with him. You are celebrating resurrection your resurrection in him.

[34 : 54] We're celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. We need to understand that as Christians we're celebrating our own resurrection in him. This is a foretaste of you and I saying that with the eyes of faith we see our own selves resurrected with him.

Remember the sermon that I told you was my pre-easter sermon last Sunday? Remember what I told you? I'm just getting you ready for Easter Sunday. What did I tell you? We are to set our minds on him.

We are to set our hearts on him from Colossians 3 1 through 4. Why? Because he is in heaven seated at the right hand of God isn't he? And it goes on to say when Jesus comes back when he comes back in his glory we will be seen with him in that glory because we are in Christ.

In God's mind we are positioned with Jesus already in the heavens sitting at the right hand of God the Father. That's how fixed that reality is in the mind of God. You are with Jesus.

You are fixed in that position. It will never change. We are celebrating resurrection today because Jesus Christ is the life. What does he say?

[36 : 08] And I myself will raise him up on the last day. That's our hope isn't it? That's our hope. Let's look at one other place. It's back in Mark.

Mark chapter 14. Verse 32. Jesus again speaking of him doing the will of the father.

Then they came to a place named Gethsemane. That's the garden of Gethsemane. This is right before Jesus is going to be arrested and crucified. And Jesus said to his disciples sit here until I have prayed.

He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be very distressed and troubled. Jesus is very deeply distressed in his soul about what's about to happen to him.

And Jesus said to them my soul is deeply grieved. to the point of death. You ever been so grieved you thought you would die? Remain here and keep watch.

[37 : 07] Then Jesus went a little beyond them and fell to the ground. That's so hard. Our Lord falling to the ground. And Jesus began to pray that if it were possible the hour of the crucifixion might pass from him.

Verse 36. And he was saying in his prayer, Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me.

Yet, not what I will, but what you will. Jesus Christ was so deeply distressed in his soul that he was going to take on the sin of the world and be separated from the father.

That never happened before. that it was grieving him to the point of death. He asked God, I know all things are possible for you.

Can this cup pass from me? Nevertheless, your will be done. That's the heart of a disciple. Nevertheless, your will be done.

[38 : 12] In Mark 8, 31, Jesus is explaining what being the Messiah means for him. It's always been God's will that Jesus, the Messiah, suffer.

It's always been God's will that the Messiah be rejected, be killed, and then be resurrected to new life to live forever. Now, notice, if you will, in this passage, please notice the emphasis that Jesus is using in this verse.

Jesus says, the Son of Man must suffer many things. Must suffer. Do you see that there back in 8, 31?

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things. Friends, Jesus Christ was born for that purpose. He lived to fulfill that mandate from God the Father.

His life was a life of service to God's will. Which brought suffering, it brought rejection, and it brought death. Do you hear what I'm saying now? In other words, Jesus being faithful and doing exactly the right thing all the time in every instance, whether he was speaking or thinking in the attitude of his heart or acting.

[39 : 36] He always did, thought, and spoke perfectly. No sin. And what did it get him?

Crucifixion. Living a faithful life to God and doing God's will got Jesus killed. Now you think about that.

No one could ever live a more perfect life than he lived. No one could ever express love to another human being as perfectly and sweetly as Jesus did to the people around him.

No one. No one could be more forgiving to human beings than Jesus was to the people around him. Nobody. Nobody. Nobody could come close.

And what did Jesus get for all that? Faithfulness to God the Father by giving himself up for us. Jesus could not have offered himself in death or been resurrected to new life to give us hope had he not lived a sinless life.

[40 : 45] Amen? It's all the gift of Jesus. He is the gift of life. What is Jesus talking about?

What is he dealing with here when he talks about suffering, rejection, and death? Jesus is talking about the cross. That is what it meant for Jesus to follow God.

Before Jesus could be resurrected, he had to die. Now, a quick caveat, my friends, what I'm not saying. We are not, we as Christians, are not called on by God to be a kind of Messiah for ourselves or other people.

Only Jesus could fulfill the role of Messiah. And he did fulfill that role of Savior on the cross. We're going to define more of what he's talking about.

Hear this. Before the resurrection, there had to be a cross. In laying down his life, Jesus models the one characteristic characteristic of a life that denies itself and takes up its cross faithfully to follow God.

[41 : 56] What is that one characteristic? It's the one I've been talking about all this time. It is a heart exclusively devoted to doing God's will in all things. Who can do that?

Who can live that? Well, that's what we live in Jesus. That's how God sees you and I in Jesus. That spiritual union that God does by a miracle of faith, that union is how God is able to look at you and I and see someone worthy of heaven.

He sees us union to Jesus so that when he looks at us, he sees the perfect sinless life that his son lived on our account as if we lived it. Jesus gets your sin and death as a result of your sin and my sin.

He gets to death and we come over here to this other side and we get the life. God imputes to him, credits to him, my sin. And on the other side of the cross, God imputes or credits to me his perfect sinless life.

So when God looks at my life as Jeff Jackson, as a Christian, as someone trusting in Christ, what does God see? He sees the sinless life of his son in me.

[43 : 09] It is a righteousness that Jesus purchased for me and credited to me. It's not mine. It's his. And he gave it to me as a free gift and that's what God sees me in. Now that's a hallelujah moment, folks.

You don't deserve it. I don't deserve it. And yet God bestows it on us by grace through faith in Christ. Here's the formula that I'll give you at the end of the sermon. By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

That's the hope. Or there is no resurrection. Not for you. I'm going to say it again. With all love in my heart, it is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, or there is no resurrection for you.

Not for heaven. You'll be resurrected to live in the devil's hell for all eternity. Now that's the truth. It pains me to say that.

I don't like saying that. But it's the truth. We want you to be rescued from being resurrected to a life of hell. Separated from God for all eternity.

[44 : 16] And the only hope for that to not be the case is to share in the resurrected life of Jesus by grace, through faith, in Him alone.

And you say, Jeff, how does that even happen? Well, here's what Jesus says. Come to me, all ye who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

What does that mean? Come to Him. Come to Christ. Come to trust that Jesus has done this for you. Not just for the whole world.

For you. That's where it starts. That's where we have to settle our own hearts. Well, let me give you real quickly the second characteristic of a person following the resurrected Jesus.

Here it is. It's a mind set on God's interests. You set your heart to do God's will. You set your heart on God's interests. But now notice how Jesus deals with this.

[45 : 15] Verse 32. He was stating the matter openly. What matter? Well, He was telling him, this is the kind of Messiah that I am. I must suffer all these things at the religious leader's hands.

And they're going to kill me and after three days I'm going to be raised to new life. He was stating that plainly now. Openly. Well, Peter, Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke the Lord of glory.

How about that? But turning around and looking at His disciples. Why did Jesus do that? Most likely, Jesus is turning to look at His disciples because He realized that Peter's speaking on their behalf.

He's the spokesman. So He turns around with Peter standing there next to Him and He looks right at all of them and what does He say? Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on God's interests but man's.

Now hold the phone. We've got to go right back up into the text in verse 29 and we've got to look what Peter said there. You are the Christ. Now go down to verse 33.

[46 : 17] Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on God's interests but man's. What happened? What happened? We've got to do something with that.

Well here, look. The first thing to keep in mind is that God's ways are higher than man's ways. Now this isn't a cop-out. This is something that we all need to understand as we deal with these spiritual things.

Look. God says in Isaiah, for my thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Here's what I'm saying. Peter saw Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the Deliverer, sent by God. But here's the problem. Peter did not accept what Jesus told him about what being the Messiah meant for Jesus.

Now why is that important? Peter not accepting what Jesus himself told Peter about being the Messiah and what it meant for Christ.

[47 : 22] Peter's blindness to Jesus' suffering makes Peter blind to what Jesus' sufferings mean for Peter. That's where we get in trouble. I hope this makes sense to you.

You get Jesus wrong, you get you wrong. You convince yourself through your life, I'm okay. I'm okay. I got time. No, you don't.

You don't know that. How prideful. You're not okay in God's eyes, but God has done something about that in Jesus. Now folks, this is the point of Jesus' earlier encounter with the blind man.

All this starts coming together as Mark shows it to us. Look back in chapter 8 verse 22. Again, I say to you, Peter did not accept what Jesus was saying.

So Peter's blindness, the disparity, the lack of clarity that Peter has in this moment as Jesus tries to tell him, this is the Messiah that I am, Peter, and if you get me wrong, you're going to get you wrong and you're going to be blind.

[48 : 27] This is what Jesus is doing earlier in the text. Look at verse 22 of chapter 8 with me, beloved. They came to Bethsaida and they brought a blind man to Jesus and pleaded with him to touch him.

Taking the blind man by the hand, he brought him out of the village and after spitting on his eyes and laying his hands on him, he was asking him, Jesus was asking the blind man, do you see anything?

And the blind man looked up and was saying, well, I see men for I see them like trees walking around. Then again, he laid his hands on his eyes and he looked intently and was restored and began to see everything what?

Clearly. And then he sent him to his home saying, do not even enter the village. What's going on with this? Peter was like the blind man. In what way? Well, the blind man saw men around him but they were like trees.

The blind man began to see enough to recognize that what he saw were indeed men but he didn't see clearly enough to distinguish the details of who they were.

[49 : 31] He couldn't make them out clearly. Friends, this is the point that Jesus is bringing to bear now as he asked this question of Peter and the disciples and here's the problem.

In his blindness, Peter saw Christ but he didn't see the cross. That's the problem. That's where so many people trip up. They see Jesus and they're willing to say kind things.

I believe Jesus is the Son of God. I believe this about Jesus and that about Jesus. Where they trip up is the cross. I'm going to show you why. Peter didn't yet realize just how sinful, needy, and helpless he is or was and all of us are because of the ravages of sin on our heart.

But I'll tell you this, very soon, Peter himself will feel the stinging reality of his sinful heart and what Jesus would say next to him.

Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your mind on God's interests but man's. Here's a man pulling Jesus aside and you think, boy, he cares for Jesus.

[50 : 39] He doesn't want Jesus to be harmed or hurt. He's expressing his love and now Jesus looks at him and says, get behind me, Satan. That's harsh. You've got to remember this is the Lord of glory looking into the human heart.

Sin is harsh. That's what's harsh. So what is he talking about here? This stunning teaching comes on the heel of get behind me, Satan.

Look at this. Verse 34. Jesus summoned the crowd along with his disciples and this is what he said. If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it. Whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words and this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

[52 : 01] Wow. My goodness. Later, during Jesus' trial when they come to arrest him, Peter would see his need for God's grace in Christ even more clearly than in this moment.

When in a soul-crushing moment of just utter cowardice, Peter would deny and abandon the Lord and it would crush him.

Just crush him. For now, Peter's confession is true but incomplete. Now please keep this in mind, beloved. Peter confessed Jesus as Messiah.

He trusted in Jesus Christ as God's promised one. But, Peter did not understand or accept what Messiah must do. That's why Jesus chose those words so carefully.

I must do this to free you, Peter, from your sins. This has to happen to me. And now I'm going to set the standard and the precedent for all that's going to be from my followers who will follow me as I followed God and done God's will.

[53 : 13] Peter's rebuke of Jesus was the way of self and Satan and Jesus told him so. It's one thing to say that you believe Jesus is God's son.

Well, the demons believe that. It's another thing to follow him as your Savior and Lord in that belief which the demons do not do.

So, here's the question. Why did Peter rebuke the Lord? Why did he do that? How bold? Boy, I wouldn't have done that. Don't be so sure. The first reason because Peter had his mind set on things of this world.

Isn't that what Jesus told him right out of the scriptures? Get behind me, Satan. You're not setting your mind on God's interests but man's. Peter, this is totally selfish. This is even satanic.

This is exactly how Satan works. When Satan came to tempt Jesus after the 40 days of fasting in the wilderness, he tempted him at three different levels with earthly stuff, didn't he?

[54 : 19] Bow down to me and worship. I'll give you all this. You want all this? And Jesus was like, dude, I already own all this. What are you talking about? You can't give me what I already own. It's ridiculous, but that's what he does.

Peter's mind was set on earthly things. Again, this is why I draw your attention to Colossians 3, 1 through 4 from the sermon from last Sunday. It set the stage for all of this.

Peter's mind was set on earthly things. Peter was remaking Jesus into his own expectation. An earthly king who would lead Israel to military and political victory over her enemies.

Peter, Peter and the disciples had their own version of what they wanted their Messiah to be and to accomplish for them. How prideful. The second reason that Peter rebuked Jesus, and this one's harder.

Here it comes. Peter was ashamed of Jesus. Oh, man, are you sure about that? Well, Jesus' way was shameful. It was humiliating from an earthly perspective.

[55 : 27] And so Peter didn't want any part in what Jesus was describing here. Peter was actually ashamed to even think of sharing in such a fate as suffering, rejection, and glorious death.

Do you remember when they came to arrest Jesus? The night that he was praying in the garden and he finished praying and they came to get him and he told his disciples, keep watch, and they kept falling asleep.

Well, what happened? Well, they came to arrest Jesus Christ. And what took place in that moment? Peter drew his sword and in a flash he cut off a man's ear.

Peter was ready to go down fighting. He was ready to lie. Let's go out fighting, man. Let's go out in a brazen display of bravado here. Because he couldn't accept the defeat of Jesus willingly dying in such humiliation.

No, I'm not going to let him take you. That's why he pulled Jesus aside. He would be... This will never happen. God forbid, Lord. God forbid, Lord, that this would ever happen to you.

[56 : 32] Get behind me, Satan. What are you talking about? This is why I came. This is Peter. No, no.

We're going to go out in a blaze of glory. Look, they've got all these soldiers that have marched in. These guys are professionals. They've got all these guys coming in. We're going to arrest Jesus.

We have to take him by force. We will. Peter's like, fine, we'll go out in a blaze of glory. Whack! He was probably going for the guy's head. The guy probably moved. He whacked off his ear.

Let's go. We'll all die. Maybe Peter was thinking in that moment, run, Jesus, run. We'll hold him off as long as we can. That's Peter.

Isn't that Peter? Mouth first. All the time. That's not what Jesus had in mind. Jesus calmly led Peter, sheathed your sword.

[57 : 31] Put it away. Now I want you to look, Peter, with the eyes of faith that I'm going to a humiliating death because it's the reason I became a human being.

Then Jesus miraculously healed the severed ear of the servant Malchus, the man that Peter tried to kill. Jesus put his ear back on and healed it in a moment.

Boy, don't you think in that moment all those guys watching this whole spectacle would be like, yeah, I'm not arresting him. You can arrest him. I'm not arresting him. I'm going to follow him.

Now you'd think that's just not the way human reason works in a sin-sick soul, is it? By God's grace, Peter would come to know and understand that the glories of resurrection life in Jesus come at the cost of death on the cross of Christ.

Now in my introduction, I gave you this formula for defining the force that's needed to overcome gravity's grip on the space shuttle. Here it is.

[58 : 41] Now I don't understand any of that. I know that F is force, M is mass, V is velocity, and T is time. That's the best I can do. But then, in conclusion now, I'm going to give you God's formula for defining the salvation needed for God to overcome sin's grip on the human soul.

And here it is. S is salvation. Salvation equals Jesus' life plus Jesus' death plus Jesus' resurrection applied by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

And only God could come up with that computation. Man could never figure it out. And that's what Peter's struggling with. God forbid this would be so, and Jesus said, no, your math is all wrong, Peter.

This is why I came. This is why I came. Now I'm going to give God's word the last word on all of this. I'm going to go to Acts.

Now if you just listen, I don't want you to go there, just listen, and let me read you about this man, Peter.

[59 : 53] Peter is preaching a sermon. This is after Jesus has died and been resurrected to new life. Peter has an occasion to preach.

Men of Israel, listen to these words. Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst.

Just as you yourselves know, you were witnesses. He is speaking to the men that surrounded the whole deal and watched Jesus be crucified and cheered it on.

This is who he's preaching to. This man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to the cross by the hands of lawless men and you put him to death.

But God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death since it was impossible, impossible for Jesus to be held in its power.

[60 : 58] for David says of him, I saw the Lord continually before me because he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken.

Therefore, my heart was glad and my tongue exalted. Moreover, my flesh also will live in hope because you will not forsake my soul to Hades nor give your Holy One over to see corruption.

You have made known to me the way of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. Psalm 16. Men, brothers, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David, he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this very day.

And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him an oath to set one of the fruit of his body on the throne that he had promised David that from his line would come the Messiah, David looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ that he was neither forsaken to Hades nor did his flesh see corruption.

The psalm we read earlier. This Jesus God raised up again to which we are all witnesses. Therefore, having been exalted and exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you both see and hear.

[62 : 28] What's he talking about? He's talking about the miraculous way that the Holy Spirit came upon this group of men so that they started speaking in various languages known to different cultures and people who were in the crowd at the time and now those men who had never spoken those languages before are speaking in ways that the people are hearing and understanding.

Hey, he's speaking my language about all of this miraculous stuff that God is doing. Yeah, and he's speaking in my language. Oh, and that one over he's speaking in my language and all this is going on and Peter is saying this is the miraculous thing that you're seeing happening right now.

For David did not ascend into the heavens. He himself says the Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand until I put your enemies as a footstool for your feet. He's just simply saying David died and went into the grave.

Therefore, let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ. This Jesus whom you crushed.

God has made him both Lord and Christ. Now let me give you one more passage and then we'll pray. Listen to this from the book of John the gospel of John.

[63 : 46] Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb where they had laid Jesus while it was dark.

She saw that the stone across the tomb had already been taken away. So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved that's John and said to them they have taken away the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid him and she's distressed.

So Peter and the other disciple went forth and they were going to the tomb. The two were running together so now you have the picture of Peter and John running together to get to the tomb based on what this woman has told them that Jesus is gone they've taken him.

But the other disciple John ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first. John then stooping and looking in saw the linen wrapping lying there but he didn't go in.

And so Simon Peter also then came following him and he entered Simon just bursted right into the tomb and he saw the linen wrappings as well lying there and also the face cloth which had been on Jesus' head not lying with the other linen wrappings but folded up in a place by itself.

[65 : 09] And so the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered in and he saw and he believed for as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise again from the dead.

I must go to the cross because I must rise again from the dead or there's no hope for life after death with the Lord.

this is what Jesus did for you and did for me giving his life that we might have life in his name and that's why we're celebrating the resurrection this morning.

Will you bow with me in prayer? Almighty God we thank you that the formula for salvation is a person.

Father we thank you for Jesus your son we see in him through the eyes of faith that you have given us hope for life evermore with you.

[66 : 18] God we understand the scripture teaches that every single human soul will be raised to resurrection life. The issue is where we will spend that life and so I pray now that every soul in here will take careful stock that you require a death before there can be a resurrection.

We have to die to ourselves in order to follow Jesus and we thank you for the gifts of grace that you give to us as we come to you in faith and say Lord please forgive me for my sins cleanse me from unrighteousness and make me a child of almighty God help me to walk in this resurrection life that's been talked about this morning help me to know the peace with you that only Jesus can bring to my soul.

God I pray for my beloved brothers and sisters in this room today that they will all have that kind of hope and assurance and certainty they will come to you and give their lives to you trusting in Jesus as their savior and their lord.

Thank you for this text of scripture that points us to Jesus. it's in his name that we pray and for his glory. Amen. Amen.