

# Resurrection Sunday: The King's Resurrection

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning, everyone. Happy Easter, Resurrection Sunday. It's a joy to worship with you. If you have your Bibles, please turn with me to John chapter 20.

And if you do not have a Bible, please raise your hand. We'd love to bring one over to you that you can use while you are here. John is in the New Testament. It's the fourth book in the New Testament.

We're in John chapter 20, verses 1 to 31 today. Let me pray for the reading and preaching of God's word. Heavenly Father, we have gathered to celebrate the joyous occasion of our Savior's resurrection from the dead.

Just as he rose on the first day of the week, we gather now on the first day of the week to worship him, to worship you.

Be pleased by our worship, Lord. And now address us as we humbly incline our ears and hearts to your word. Speak to us from your word. That your word may land upon our hearts with conviction.

[ 1 : 2 0 ] By the power of your Holy Spirit. That he may give us life. Life in Jesus' name. Eternal resurrection life. All to your glory.

In Jesus' name we ask. Amen. Please stand if you're able for the reading of God's word from John 20, verses 1 to 31. 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.

So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in a place by itself.

[ 2 : 3 9 ] Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

Then the disciples went back to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept, she stooped 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. 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. Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

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.

[ 3 : 45 ] 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. 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 where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, Peace be with you.

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, And 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 them. If you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.

[ 4 : 59 ] 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 in his hands 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.

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you. Then he said to Thomas, Put your finger here and see my hands, and put out your hand and place it in my side.

Do not disbelieve, but believe. Thomas answered him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said to him, Have you believed because you have seen me?

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in the 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.

[ 6 : 15 ] This is God's holy and authoritative word. You may be seated. If I told you that someone I know who recently died has come back to life, would you believe me?

Probably not. You'd probably say, Well, I'll believe it when I see it. And that's probably what I would say too if you told me the same thing. Because believe it or not, people back then, at the time of Jesus, had just as hard time believing that someone was raised from the dead as we do now.

And yet, Jesus' followers believed that Jesus really was raised from the dead. And they passed that message on generation after generation after generation.

And we see here in John 20 why they believe that Jesus was raised from the dead. We're going to see first how John sees and believes, and then how Mary sees and believes, and then the disciples, and then Thomas.

And then finally, John's main concern in writing this book, that we might believe in Jesus, even though we have not seen him. That's the main point of this, that we should believe that Jesus is the Savior King, being the Son of God, who died and rose again, so that we may have life in his name.

[ 7 : 45 ] And to convince us, John peppers his account here with things that can only be explained by the historical bodily resurrection of Jesus. Read verse 1 with me in chapter 20.

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 Mary, it says, while it's still dark, dark early in the morning, goes to the tomb to visit Jesus.

And when John tells us that it's still dark outside, he's not just telling us that the sun hasn't risen yet physically, because he uses the metaphor of light and darkness effectively throughout the entire gospel to communicate who is spiritually in the dark and who is spiritually in the light.

Because Jesus said in John 8, 12, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. So if you follow Jesus, then you have light and you have life.

But if you do not follow Jesus, then you have darkness. And you have death. And so John is giving us here a hint about the state of Mary and the other disciples.

[ 8 : 56 ]     Though they knew Jesus, though they admire Jesus and follow Jesus, they are still in the dark about who Jesus really is. They do not yet understand that he has been raised from the dead.

So they are spiritually lost in the dark. And Jesus is about to reveal himself to them. When Mary arrives in the tomb, she discovers that the stone that had formerly blocked the tomb, the block, the entrance of the tomb has been rolled away.

And, and this is important because we know from chapter 19:41, that Jesus was laid in a new tomb where no one else had been laid. So Jesus had the tomb all to himself.

That detail is important because it tells us that when the tomb is empty, there's only one possible explanation. Jesus has been moved because Jesus was the only one that was in that tomb.

And now Jesus isn't there anymore. So this account confronts us with the reality of the empty tomb. 2,000 years ago, a man named Jesus of Nazareth was crucified.

[ 9 : 58 ]     That's recorded in the history books. And then he was buried in a tomb. But then on Sunday morning, the first day of the week, his tomb was empty.

What do you make of that fact? If Jesus's tomb had not been empty, all that the Jewish leaders and the Roman rulers had to do was invite the new followers of Jesus into a brief tour of his grave where Jesus's corpse still lay.

But they couldn't because they didn't have the body because the tomb was empty. So intrigued by the empty tomb, Peter and John run over to verify Mary Magdalene's report.

And John's the author of the book. And he often refers to himself here as the disciple whom Jesus loved. I don't think that's conceited at all. I think that's actually a very sweet way of remembering the way Jesus loved him, how he had affection for him.

And that's how I think of myself and how you should think of yourself for a follower of Christ. I am one whom Jesus loves. You are one whom Jesus loves. And Peter and John start running over at the same time.

[ 11 : 17 ]     But apparently Peter is a little bit out of shape because John outruns him. And Peter is lagging behind. But even though Peter is not as fast as John, Peter is much more decisive because John hesitates once he gets the tomb.

He's just stooping in. And then Peter just barges right into the tomb to see what's going on. And this is what they see. He says, He saw the linen cloths lying there and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in a place by itself.

This is a very curious detail. It tells us several things about what has happened. It rules out several things. First, if the linen cloths are still lying there, then they didn't just move Jesus' body to a different tomb because they would have taken Jesus' body along with the linen cloths that were wrapped around him.

Why would you want to touch the bloody corpse? Secondly, it rules out grave robbery, which was not uncommon in those days because why would they take the time to remove the linen cloths from Jesus' body if they really wanted to fake Jesus' resurrection?

If they were there for money, then why would they leave the linen cloth, which was the most valuable item in the tomb along with the expensive spices that were in there? Third, this is not the case of someone who just kind of wakes up startled in a panic, someone who had fainted but is resuscitated by the cold, chill air of the grave.

[ 12 : 50 ] This is not what's going on because if you remember, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead in chapter 11 of John, he came out with his hands and his body and his face still wrapped in the linen cloths because he was confused.

He had no idea what was going on. He was dead and then now he's alive and he's like, what am I doing here? And he just came right out of the tomb. But that's not what's going on. The linen cloth, the face cloth is folded.

Jesus was in full perception of himself. He was raised from the dead by the power of God as he said would happen. And then he took his time, folded the linen cloths and then came out of the tomb.

And so as he is looking around at what's happened inside the tomb, John is able to connect the dots and make sense of what has happened. It says in verses eight to nine, John saw and believed for as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.

This language of seeing and believing is a recurring theme throughout the book of John and throughout this chapter in particular. John saw the empty tomb and believed that Jesus was raised from the dead in fulfillment of the scriptures.

[ 14 : 07 ] Several Old Testament passages must have been swirling through his head at this moment. This is John's aha moment. He thinks of Hosea 6, 2, which we prophesied concerning God's people Israel.

After two days, he will revive us. On the third day, he will raise us up. That verse, all of a sudden, makes more sense. John thinks, oh, Jesus represents God's people.

He is the new Israel. He's raised from the dead. Or Isaiah 53, 10, which prophesied of the Messiah, the suffering servant of Yahweh, who would be crushed as a sacrificial offering for guilt.

But then it says right after that his days would nonetheless be prolonged, even though he's already been crushed, and that he would triumph and divide the spoils of victory. When you read Isaiah 53, without thinking of Christ at all, it doesn't make sense.

But then when you think of Christ, what happened to him, his death and resurrection, you read Isaiah 53. It reads like newspaper that was a report of Jesus that was written 700 years ahead of time.

[ 15 : 18 ] This is the point when this started to click for John. John and the disciples were not expecting Jesus to rise from the dead. They did not yet understand that what that had to happen in accordance with the scriptures.

This is when they start to make the connections. So that means this is not the case of confirmation bias. This is not the case of self-fulfilling prophecy because none of them was expecting Jesus to rise from the dead.

As yet, they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead. So far from making up the story of Jesus' resurrection to fit their preconceptions and expectations, they only understand the fulfillment of the scriptural prophecies after they are confronted with the reality of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

And today, on Resurrection Sunday, April 9th, 2023, you too are faced with a choice. You're not here by accident.

Will you let the reality of Jesus' resurrection alter your faith, change your life, or will you deny the reality of the resurrection to make it fit your worldview, your faith?

[ 16 : 36 ] Peter and John return home, and then verse 11 says that Mary stayed there weeping outside the tomb. The grief from Jesus' death is still fresh on Mary's mind, and she is distraught that she has no idea where Jesus' body is.

Somebody's moved it and now she can't pay respects by visiting his tomb. But then now when she looks inside the tomb, it says in verse 12 that she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

And then one of the angels asked her, woman, why are you weeping? Why are you weeping?

And then she tells them that they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him. But at that moment as she is conversing with the angel, she senses that there's somebody behind her, and she turns around and she sees Jesus.

But she doesn't yet know that it's Jesus, and so she asks him the same question. Where have you, have you taken away my Lord? I do not know where they have laid him.

[ 17 : 42 ] If you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away. This is a really moving example of Mary's devotion to Jesus because even though she is convinced that Jesus is dead, she wants to be able to attend to him, take care of him, and so she weeps at the thought that she might not be able to visit his tomb.

So she is talking to Jesus as if he's the gardener, saying, sir, please, tell me where you have laid Jesus. I'll take care of him. I'll take him off your hands. But then Jesus says to her, Mary, and this is Mary's aha moment.

The moment she hears Jesus calls out her name, she remembers, and she knows in her very soul that the man that is addressing her at that moment is the Lord Jesus.

And so she responds in Aramaic, in their mother tongue, in the language that they had often spoken to each other in, Rabboni, which means teacher.

It's such an intimate moment of mutual affection. We know from Luke 8, verse 2, that Mary Magdalene was one of those women who followed Jesus around and provided for him and his disciples out of her own means.

[ 19 : 02 ] She apparently didn't have family obligations and had the freedom to travel with Jesus and his 12 apostles. We also know from the same verse that she came from a spiritually broken background.

It tells us in Luke 8, 2, that she had, that seven demons had gone out of Mary Magdalene. And I assume it was Jesus who cast the demons out from Mary. Number seven implies completeness.

So she was a woman who was under complete demonic bondage, under the bondage of evil spirits. And yet Jesus delivered her. So Mary is not some prominent, unblemished individual.

She has a checkered history. She was no Paul, circumcised on the eighth day, a Hebrew of Hebrews as to the law, a Pharisee as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

No, Mary was not blameless. She was full of blame. She was no Jewish scholar. She was no upstanding worshiper. And yet Jesus had mercy on her.

- [ 20 : 10 ] And note also that Mary was a woman in a society where women were often treated as second-class citizens. And according to the Jewish law at the time, a woman's witness was regarded as inadmissible in court because they were considered unreliable.
- So if Peter and John had seen the resurrected Jesus earlier, they would have been able to testify legally that they saw Jesus. But Mary could not.
- And yet, surely Jesus could have appeared just moments earlier when Peter and John were there. But he didn't. He waits.
- And the first person he shows up to is Mary. the woman who was weeping in front of his tomb, Jesus gives her the privilege of first announcing to the disciples, I have seen the Lord.
- Do you doubt that the Lord Jesus could have any regard for you? That he would pay any attention to you? that he would have mercy on you?
- [ 21 : 22 ] If you doubt that, look at Mary Magdalene and think again. See how tenderly Jesus cares for her here, how Jesus loved her, and how Jesus loves you too.
- And Jesus asks you the same question that he asked Mary, whom are you seeking? Whom are you seeking this morning? Is it Jesus? Or is it someone else?
- Do you hear him calling your name? Mary? Jeffrey? John? Daniel?
- Jen? If so, turn toward him in faith. Because he will not turn you away. But Jesus' sweet reunion with Mary has to be cut short because he has a mission to give Mary.
- And he tells her in verse 17, 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.
- [ 22 : 32 ] Jesus is telling Mary, hey, you don't need to cling to me yet. I'm not about to disappear. I'm not ascending just yet, but I will ascend soon. So you need to let the brothers know. But the way Jesus gives Mary this mission is amazing because we know that Jesus is telling Mary to go to his disciples because that's exactly what Mary does in the following verse, verse 18.
- That's what he means. But he doesn't call them his disciples here. He calls them his brothers. And this is the first time in the Gospel of John where Jesus refers to his disciples as his brothers.
- He tells them, I'm ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Jesus is God's only begotten Son. He's the only one who shares the Father's divine nature.
- There's no one else like Jesus in the whole world, in the whole human history. and Jesus says that he's going to my Father and your Father.
- That's a staggering statement. Jesus is speaking of the Christian's adoption. Romans 8.15 explains that those who put their faith in Jesus receive the spirit of adoption as sons so that we cry out to God as Abba, Father.
- [ 23 : 57 ] That means the same privileges that Jesus enjoys as the Son of God, the only Son of God, his access to the Father, the favor of the Father, the sharing in the Father's rule and in his kingdom, the eternal heavenly inheritance as the heir to the throne, they are all ours in Jesus because we have now been adopted into God's forever family.
- I don't know if you've ever seen those adoption surprise videos. You guys know what I'm talking about? It's the videos where like an orphan who's been living with foster parents for a long time first finds out that she is now going to be adopted by her foster parents and then she just breaks down in grateful, happy tears.

or the video of a father, of a foster parent, father who's been caring for a foster child for a while who is then surprised with the letter or legal request, formal request by his daughter asking him to adopt her as his own and then the father just trembles all over and hugs the girl and loves on her.

I don't know why but almost always, every time I've seen these videos, it's like this huge burly man with tattoos all over his body that looks like he's never shed a tear in his whole life but as soon as he hears the request from his daughter, can you please adopt me as your daughter?

Can you give me your name? He just starts crying like a little baby. I love those videos because not only because they remind me of my daughters but because they remind me of our father's love.

[ 25 : 42 ] how he adopted us into his family. Christian brothers and sisters, you are not an orphan. you are no longer an illegitimate child with no lineage or family or name.

You have been adopted into God's own family. You have his name. You have his inheritance. Does that make your heart sing with praise?

When you repented and believed in Jesus as your Lord and made a public profession of your faith by getting baptized, you received the Holy Spirit who is in your heart, who is sealing you and indwelling you and crying out, God's, my child, my daughter, my son.

You're taking on Christ's name when you are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. So as you conduct yourself here on earth, don't ever forget who you are.

[ 26 : 53 ] Remember your venerable heritage. Remember whose name you bear and remember the Father's care for you. After Mary's witness to the disciples, Jesus himself appears among them.

It says in verses 19 to 20, on the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for faith, and the fear of the Jews, that Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, Peace be with you.

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side and the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus is able to walk through doors as it seems, which shows that his resurrected body is not of the exact same kind as our perishable bodies.

And as Jesus stands among them, he says to them, Peace be with you. This is the disciples' aha moment. Jesus pronounces peace over them three times in this passage.

Peace be with you. And in the Bible, the word peace doesn't merely refer to a calm or a lack of disturbance or a quietness that comes after the noise dies down.

[ 28 : 05 ] It refers to something far deeper than that. The word shalom, the word for peace, conveys a sense of wholeness, the sense of fitting into God's order and plan, being restored to right relationship with God.

That's where you have peace. And that's a blessing that is way beyond our deserts. We deserve to have enmity with God, to be his enemies.

We deserve God's condemnation and judgment. We should be objects of God's fiery wrath because we are sinners, full of hatred, selfishness, greed, envy, idolatry, lust, unrighteous anger, pride.

But instead, Jesus offers us peace. Peace. peace. This is only possible because Jesus has died on the cross for the sins of his people and he has satisfied God the Father's righteous wrath against sinners.

It's because Jesus has done what we could not do. It's because on Good Friday, Jesus said on the cross, it is finished. That now, on Resurrection Sunday, Jesus can say, peace be with you.

[ 29 : 29 ] So even when your life is surrounded by chaos, there is a peace that transcends understanding that can rest in your heart in Jesus.

Do you have that peace with God? Believe in Jesus, the Savior King, the Son of God, who died and rose again, then you can have that peace with God.

Jesus continues to speak to his disciples. Again, he says in 21-22, peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you. And when he has said this, he breathed on them and said to them, receive the Holy Spirit.

The word send is a key word in the Gospel of John as well. God the Father, he says again and again that he sent Jesus. Jesus is the sent one. And now Jesus sends us out in that same cascade of sending from Father to the Son to the church in the power of the Holy Spirit and we are sent out to bear witness, to extend the peace that we have received from God to others.

Because humanity can never know peace apart from being reconciled to God and having peace with God in Jesus. But Jesus knows that this mission is too much for us to handle in our own strength.

[ 30 : 50 ] He says Jesus breathed on them and he says to them, receive the Holy Spirit. This breathing of the Holy Spirit recalls Genesis 2-7 when God, after creating the life, the creatures, he breathes life into them so that they become living creatures.

It's reminiscent of Ezekiel 37 when God commands Ezekiel to prophesy to the wind for the breath to come and fill the dry bones so that dead dry bones are raised up and filled with life and become an army.

The breath of God has generative power. It creates. And so here, as Jesus breathed on his disciples, he is making them a new creation, giving them a foretaste of what will happen when the Holy Spirit comes down in power at Pentecost in Acts 2.

The presence of the Holy Spirit is yet another reality that confronts us and confirms to us that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead. Throughout the New Testament, the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit serves to assure us that we are God's people and that we belong to his family.

That's why in Acts 19, verse 2, when Paul is trying to verify that a group of people are actually genuine believers in Christ, this is the question that he asks them. Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?

[ 32 : 10 ] The Spirit of God is invisible, but that does not mean we cannot know him or feel him. On an overcast day, you will not see the sun anywhere, and yet you know that the sun is there because you see everything around it by its light.

In the same way, you might not see the wind, which is invisible, but yet you can know that the wind is there by the streaming flag outside or by the swaying branches.

Likewise, we can know that the Spirit is there by his unmistakable effect on our lives. According to 1 Corinthians 2, 14, we cannot even understand the spiritual things of God apart from the help of the Holy Spirit.

Was there a time in your life when the truths of God's words seemed strange and foreign and untrue, and yet one day you're reading the Word and it seems it strikes you that this is true, that this is good, and that this is beautiful.

That's not something you accomplished. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8, 14 to 17 says, the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

[ 33 : 23 ] Do you know this moment that you are indeed a child of God, that you are a beloved son or daughter of our Heavenly Father and you have peace in your heart knowing that you sense his love?



That's not your own accomplishment. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. Acts 4, 31 tells us that when we are filled with the Holy Spirit we speak the Word of God with boldness.

Have you ever had and felt faith and courage rising up inside you that enabled you to share the Word of God with others in spite of all your fears and apprehensions? That's the work of the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever noticed that you have grown however incrementally over the years since coming to faith in Christ in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control?

That's the work of the Holy Spirit because those are fruit of the Holy Spirit. If you are not acquainted with the work of the Holy Spirit then you must believe that Jesus is the Savior King who died and rose again and then he will send the Holy Spirit to you.

[ 34 : 32 ] And because the church is the gathering of believers who have been indwelt by the very Spirit of God, they have the God-given authority as his representatives to forgive or withhold forgiveness.

That's what verse 23 is speaking of. It's the same authority that God gave to his apostles and by extension to his church in Matthew 16 and Matthew 18 the keys of the kingdom that whatever we bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever we loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

This is an amazing responsibility that as the church that God's forgiveness or withholding of forgiveness in heaven is tied to our forgiveness and withholding of forgiveness.

This is why the church has the authority to baptize which we will do shortly. Receive new members into the family of God. they're extending God's forgiveness proclaiming that that person is forgiven and when that happens it happens in heaven.

God does that. This is why your membership in a local church matters. Yes, the church is a universal fellowship of believers that transcends all geographic borders but the universal church manifests in a real way in a local embodied gathering of believers in local churches.

[ 36 : 02 ] Jesus. And so far we've seen how John saw and believed Mary saw and believed and how the disciples saw and believed but it turns out that one of the disciples was left out.

Thomas was not there when Jesus first appeared to them and even though the other disciples tell him we have seen the Lord Thomas is skeptical he says hey unless I see him with my own eyes and touch him with my own hands I will not believe him.

I know there's there are several people I think maybe many people here in our building who share Thomas' skepticism. He's the kind of guy who thinks logically and relies on empirical evidence to assess situations.

He's the scientist and he says unless I see his hands the marks of nails and place my finger into the mark of the nails I will not believe.

And the amazing thing is Jesus could have spurned him he could have said well then forget it. But he's so gracious he accommodates Thomas and appears to him again in shows himself in a way that he will believe and understand.

[ 37 : 13 ] It says eight days later verse 26 to 28 Jesus appeared stood among them he says peace be with you and he singles out Thomas he said to Thomas put your finger here and see my hands and put out your hand and place it in my side do not disbelieve but believe and then Thomas answered him my Lord and my God Thomas and many others would have never believed Jesus had they not seen him themselves but they did see Jesus and they told other people about it and then they told other people about it and so on down to our very generation and here we are reminding each other once again that Jesus really did rise from the dead if Christ had not risen from the dead Christianity would have been like a ship parked at the dock that can never take off without an engine Christianity would have been dead in the water but Christianity grew into the largest religion in the world it has spread into every continent

Asia Europe North America South America Africa Oceania and even Antarctica but how how did a religion whose central tenet is that a man who is claimed to be God died and was raised from the dead ever get off the ground because it really happened Thomas came to that same conclusion and he exclaims my Lord and my God and that's no easy thing for a faithful Jew to say the Jews have been worshipping Yahweh and saying that there is no no God but Yahweh the Lord is one for thousands of years and yet confronted with the reality of Jesus resurrection Thomas dispenses with his theological qualms and skeptical instincts and proclaims that Jesus is God the son of God and this is the kind of God we get to serve the mark of the great love that Jesus showed us is forever stamped upon his human body in his wounds even in his glorified resurrected body

Jesus has nail wounds in his hands he has the wound in his side where the Roman soldiers had speared him through to make sure that he's dead Jesus carries with himself these wounds as an eternal reminder of his undying and unchanging love for us what God in the world was wounded for you what God in the world died for you only Jesus there's no better person to call my Lord and my God Edward Shillito a Christian minister in England during the first world war wrote a beautiful poem entitled Jesus of the scars and part of it goes like this Lord Jesus by thy scars we claim thy grace the other gods were strong but thou wast weak they rode but thou didst stumble to a throne but to our wounds only God's wounds can speak and not a God has wounds but thou alone our

Jesus alone has wounds our Jesus alone loved you to his death and therefore Jesus is uniquely worthy to be worshipped to be loved so who do you say that Jesus is today do you confess him as my Lord and my God John Mary the disciples and Thomas all saw and believed and they bore witness to us and they bore and John bears witness in this book so that we who have not seen him might believe and that's his purpose it says in verses 30 to 31 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 Jesus promised to give us life and life abundantly God God it's it's when you believe in Jesus the risen Christ that you are adopted into God's family it's when you believe in Jesus that you have the love that you're assured of the love of our Father Heavenly Father by the Holy Spirit who indwells you this is the king that we get to serve and remember on Resurrection Sunday have you tasted and seen the abundant life in Jesus my hope and prayer for you this morning is that every single one of you will leave this place saying Jesus is my Lord and my God let's pray together Jesus you are my

[ 42 : 53 ] God you are my Lord I love you I give my life to you it is our joy and honor to serve you so help us Lord to be faithful witnesses pointing people to the risen Lord and all those who do not yet have faith please give the gift of faith today that they too may profess you confess you as their Lord and Savior in Jesus name we pray amen God and we