

1 Corinthians 15:1-26

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[0 : 00] the book of 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians chapter 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15 is where we will be at. And I will tell you that at the end of the service, the close of service, we'll take the Lord's Supper together.

Our kind of focal passage there is 1 Corinthians chapter 11. So if on your way to the 15th chapter, you pass the 11th chapter, throw a bookmark in there if you want to, or I'll read it to you here in just a moment.

But we will be taking the Lord's Supper together. You should have the communion cups that are there. I know they can be a little bit difficult to open, so I'm kind of giving you forewarning. They're there.

If you don't have any, if we're a little bit short, our deacons will be sure to get you some. But we will be taking that as a church family at the close of our service. But we're in 1 Corinthians chapter 15. We're going to look at verses 1 through 26.

We're stepping away from our study or our sermon series through the book of Matthew. We've been gathered together looking at the gospel of Matthew, and we've been looking at the King of kings and Lord of lords. We've been looking at who Jesus Christ is through the gospel of Matthew, and it's been astounding to see the truths that are there.

[1 : 01] But on this morning, we stop and we pause, and we go to consider what Paul declares as a first thing, its first importance of priority. And we'll look at that together as he's writing to the church at Corinth.

Just to kind of get you a little bit of background information here, Paul is writing to the believers in the city of Corinth. Corinth is a city that really is very reflective of the society in which we live in.

It is a city that is a conglomerate of information. It is a hub of society, and it is a very populous trading route in the Roman Empire. It is a very prosperous nation or a very prosperous city, a very strategically located, but it is also a city that is affected by multitudes of sins and temptations.

Within the city of Corinth, there was any number of temptations that any believer could take part in. Things were permissible, if you will. It was really this big metropolitan area. And there was a church there, and the church we're not going to say was thriving.

The church was struggling just a little bit. To say it was struggling is really an understatement because the church at Corinth is the most wicked church which we find in Scripture. It is here at this church that we find things going on that even would appall us just a little bit.

[2 : 05] But Paul refers to them as saints. He says, To the saints which are at Corinth. And that's how he opens his letter. So he's writing this letter to the saints that are at Corinth. People that have issues, they have problems, people that make mistakes, and people that are even doing things knowingly that they probably know they shouldn't do.

I don't know if that resonates with anyone, but it tends to resonate with me just a little bit because Paul refers to them as saints. He doesn't refer to perfect people. He doesn't refer to people who have it all together.

He's talking to people with issues. He says, You're the saints which are at Corinth. Now, let me undergird and strengthen that. And Paul goes throughout this letter, and we don't have time to get into it, and he's really just encouraging.

He addresses their issues. If you go read the book of 1 Corinthians, and if any of you are with me, you say, Well, this is a long introduction, and you're not used to this. If you understand, in every text we come to in Scripture, we want to take it within context so that we don't take it out of context and make it say whatever we want it to say.

So this is why we take so much time into first just to kind of lay the foundation. It is the church at Corinth where he addresses one individual and says he hands him over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh. Now, that doesn't sound very reassuring, does it?

[3 : 11] But he says he does it so that he will go be with the Lord. So there's a hope even in that rebuke. There's a hope even in that correction. There's a hope even in that disciplinary inaction which he has to that individual.

And why could Paul say such things? Because he's writing to the saints. And even in his rebuking and correcting and chastisement and disciplining, he still knows who they are in Christ.

He knows they are saints. And he is not so concerned about temporal things or things that are going on in the earth, but eternal things. And he really brings that to the head in 1 Corinthians 15, a passage which is very familiar to us, especially the latter part in it.

The latter part of 1 Corinthians 15, it's a very lengthy chapter in the book. It is there that quite often we read it about the sounding of the trumpet in the dead, and Christ shall rise, and shall meet their spirits in the air.

And this glorious, really, picture of the believer's resurrection. But he opens that chapter with our passage that we have this morning in 1 Corinthians 15, verses 1 through 26, laying this foundation.

[4 : 13] That it is this hope and this comfort and this reassurance that we get from the resurrection. So what I want you to see this morning is the hope and wonder of the resurrection found in 1 Corinthians 15, verses 1 through 26.

If you're physically able and desire to do so, we'll ask you to join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God. As Paul writes to the saints which are at Corinth, and friend, listen to me, his writing to the saints which are at war trace too.

He says, Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, and which also you stand, but which also you are saved if you hold fast the word which I preached to you unless you believed in vain.

For I deliver to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve, and after that he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles and not fit to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God, but by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace toward me did not prove vain.

[5 : 29] But I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. Now if Christ is preached, that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God because we testify against God that he raised Christ whom he did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless. You are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who are asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order, Christ the firstfruits. After that, those who are Christ at his coming. Then comes the end when he hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when he has abolished all rule and all authority and all power.

[6 : 46] For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. Verse 26, the last enemy that will be abolished is death. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day.

Lord, we stand in the glory of Resurrection Sunday and we stand in the wonder of the events that take place so long ago. Lord, may it come upon us with fresh power, fresh vigor, and fresh wonder.

Lord, may the very word of God resonate within our hearts and minds and may you be glorified through it. May it not be the opinion of man or the thoughts of man, but may it be the very word of God which penetrates us to the very depth of our being.

Lord, may it draw us closer to you and make us who we ought to be for your glory. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. We are looking here at the hope and the wonder of the resurrection.

Paul starts this chapter with three things that are essential there and three things which we must hold on to. It is three things that he said really go around the gospel, things which have really direct attainment or pertainment to the gospel.

[7 : 46] He says, I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received and which also you stand. So here we find in the resurrection the truth in which we stand, by which also you are saved, and that is also the hope by which we are also saved.

And if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, and it is the trust in which we hold fast. Now that's not my three points. These are just three things that we need to remember. Here is a truth in which we stand, a hope by which we are saved, and an expectation and a comfort in which we can hold fast.

Because in the resurrection we stand in amazement of these things. This is something which we can stand on. This is something which we are saved by, and this is something which we hold fast to. When we come to the resurrection, everything else centers around the resurrection.

That Friday didn't change history. The Sunday did. The Friday was a common event in the Roman Empire. Multitudes and multitudes and multitudes of individuals were crucified. Jesus himself was crucified with two other criminals.

History tells us that at some point the Romans would crucify up to 2,000 Jewish individuals, just to make it a point. Well, the crucifixion really doesn't change history until Jesus comes out of the tomb.

[8 : 56] Because it is there that we see he is the perfect lamb slain before the foundation of the world. It is the acceptance of that price he paid. Now it changes history in theology.

It changes history and application. Because at that point in time, people saw it as a normal event. It is only when everything else transformed, everything else is changed, because the tomb is empty that people look back in hindsight and go, there's something special about that man hanging on the cross.

There's something different about that individual. There were a few who understood it when he was there, but the world didn't take notice of it until after the event. Because at that time, it was just something normal in society.

It wasn't until the ground was shaken, the tombs were opened, the veil was torn, and the tomb was empty, that people realized there's something different about that man. Because that wasn't man, that was God in the flesh come to die for the sins of mankind, to pay the price.

Now we know that it changes everything. The cross changes everything. But if Jesus died on the cross and stayed dead, then there is no hope, because even Paul, him says, even then our faith is worthless.

[10 : 02] It is the resurrection which leads to the affirmation that the price that has been paid has been accepted. Jesus died in our place, and that is good news.

That is the gospel, right? That one has died for the sins of the multitude, that the lamb slain before the foundation of the world has already been offered. But how do we know that God accepted that sacrifice?

Through the resurrection. It is through the empty tomb that he says, yes, this is an acceptable sacrifice for you, so that he may be the first fruits. Here is a truth in which we stand. Here is the hope by which we must be saved.

And here is the comfort in which we can hold fast. And we see it because of these three things. We know that this is a truth, because it is based on eyewitnessed events. Paul goes into the text here and he says, this isn't something that might have happened.

This isn't something that could have happened. This is something that did happen. Friend, listen to me. The facts and the truths that surround the resurrection are really undisputable. I know that man tries to dispute it.

[11 : 02] I know that man tries to contradict it. And I know that man tries to convince you that it did not happen. But the reality of it is when Paul wrote this letter to the church at Corinth, he starts testifying to the witnesses which saw not only the crucifixion of Jesus, but also the resurrection of Jesus.

He says, he appeared to Cephas, that is Peter. Now that's not a mistake. That's not something that happened coincidentally. This is something that happened intentionally. He appeared to Cephas and then to the twelve. And then he appeared to more than 500 at one time.

And then he appears to James. And then he appears to all the apostles. And Paul says, and then he appeared to one born out of undue season. He appeared to me. All of these are eyewitnesses. And I love the reality that when Paul wrote this, Paul says some of these and multitude of these eyewitnesses are still alive.

He says, many of whom are still alive today. Now why would Paul write that to the city of Corinth, to the believers of the city of Corinth? Because what he is saying here is if you want to check my facts, go ask the people who saw him.

Paul was not standing up as a renegade giving an opinion. He was not standing up as a lone individual distributing what he thought was a fact. He was declaring an emphatic truth in which he said there are a multitude of others who can testify to this as well.

[12 : 09] I love the reality that when we read scripture, we are told the name of the individual who helped bear the cross of Jesus. We know that it is Simeon, right? We know that he helps bear the individual.

We also know the name of his children. We know the name of one of his children is Rufus. And we understand that. And we also know that the gospel that records the name of one of his children is Mark.

And we know that Mark traveled with Peter. These are things that we get from history. And we know that when Mark was traveling with Peter, the gospel of Mark was written by an individual who was frequent with the people who Peter came into contact with.

We also know historically that Peter went to Rome. And we know from the book of Romans, when Paul wrote the book of Romans, he mentioned an individual named Rufus. And told the believers in Rome, if they wanted to talk to anybody about what was going on, go see Rufus.

Why could you go talk to Rufus? Because Rufus' dad was there on his way to Golgotha. Rufus' dad was the one who helped carry the cross of Jesus. And he had an eyewitness account.

[13 : 12] And then when Paul writes to the city of Corinth, when people are saying, well, we don't understand about the resurrection. We don't know if the resurrection is true. We don't think God raises the dead. Paul says, well, let me tell you who you can talk to.

And he begins to speak of a truth on which we can stand. Friend, listen to me. The resurrection is not a hope-so-think-so-maybe-so event. The resurrection is a true event that actually happened in which we place all of our hope, all of our anticipation.

All of our eggs are put in that one basket. The fact that the tomb is empty. And we are not standing. As the book of Hebrews says, faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

The conviction of things not seen. The reason I have an assurance of the fact of the resurrection. The reason I have the conviction of the thing of the resurrection, though I was not there and saw the tomb empty, is because I know that I'm standing on a truth.

And it is not a truth that is put in philosophical manners. This is a truth that is put in very literal manners. Paul writes and says, you can't argue with this. I love the sermon that many of you probably did not hear.

[14 : 17] It was played before the service. S.M. Lockridge, greatest sermon ever preached is how it's titled. My brother Jerry played it, and I've heard it a number of times. And it's Jesus is Lord.

And if you ever want to go back and you can listen to it, you can. And I love how S.M. puts it there. He said, don't buy into that swoon theory. Don't buy into any other theories. I mean, he was dead. He says, he was really dead.

And then S.M. goes into this thing, and you really got to listen to it. I told my wife, if there's one preacher in history I'd like to go listen to in person, it would have been S.M. Lockridge. And I only missed it by a few years. I think he died about a year or two after I was born.

But S.M. Lockridge builds up in that sermon. He said, you know, it used to bother me that he was buried in a borrowed tomb. And he starts going into the qualities and characters of Christ. He who created it all, who heaped the hills up, who spoke the mountains into existence, the holes of the world and the palms of the land, laid in a borrowed tomb.

And you can almost hear the congregation kind of getting hushed and quiet, and the reality that they laid Jesus in a borrowed tomb. And I love how S.M. stops right there and he goes, but he wasn't going to stay there long anyway.

[15 : 19] He didn't need the tomb. Right? This is a fact from the very beginning of history. The crucifixion is essential, but for the hope that was set before him, he endured the cross.

And the hope that is set before him, according to the book of Hebrews, is the empty tomb. The cross is not the final answer. The empty tomb is. We stand in the truth of the resurrection.

And it is the truth of the resurrection that changes history. It is the truth of the resurrection that changes man's eternity. Sure, we rejoice and we ought to rejoice because that was our sin that was born on the cross.

That was my punishment and my chastisement. That was my penalty. I deserve that death. That is my death. That is my discipline. He died in my place. But more than dying in my place, he raised to walk so that I too can walk in the newness of life.

We're not brought to a place of death in the gospel. We're brought to a place of life. Many religions, my friend, will take you to a martyred saint or a martyred prophet or to a martyred messiah, so they claim.

[16 : 29] Many religions can take you to a place where you can see enshrined, a place of admiration or even worship of this is where the founder of our religion has perished and this is where he has died.

Many religions will take you to a place of persecution and a place of suffering. Christianity alone will take you to a place of rejoicing and it's the most unlikely of places and it's to a tomb that is empty. We stand in the truth of the resurrection.

And we are saved by the hope of that resurrection. Because see, my friend, this is number two, an essential element of the faith. We've said it over and over and over again and we continue to say it because Paul says, many declare that there is no resurrection.

He said, and if there is no resurrection, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain. Friend, do you understand that? If Jesus has not been raised, then we might as well not gather.

If Jesus has not been raised, then there is no need to preach. I don't want to preach about a dead messiah and I don't want to preach about a dead saint. I want to preach about a risen savior. There's no need declaring about those who have gone before.

[17 : 37] I want to declare about he who went and then left before. Right? I don't want to declare those who went to the grave. I want to declare him who went out of the grave. Paul says, if he is not raised, then we might as well not preach. He says, if he is not raised, not only is our preaching in vain, but your faith is in vain.

See, the reality of the resurrection is absolutely essential element of the faith. Because if he has not been raised, there is no need in faith. Because he said, it's worthless.

Have you ever thought about this just for a moment, just as what Paul says here? If we have hope in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

One of the truths of the gospel is this. Accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior does not guarantee to make this life easier. As a matter of fact, Jesus says, as they have persecuted me, so they too will persecute you.

And as they hate me, so they too will hate you. Accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior really does not benefit this life from the world's perspective.

[18 : 47] Because it has eternal ramifications, not temporal benefits. Now, there are the benefits of a peace that passes understanding, but why do you need peace unless you're going through a hard time?

You don't need peace when everything's going good. You don't need a peace that passes the world's understanding when everything's pleasant. When he offers you peace, it is because of the reality that he knows it's going to be difficult.

You need peace in the difficult moments. You need comfort in the dark moments. You need assurance in the uncomfortable moments. You need the painful moments. That's when we need the presence of Christ.

Someone once said that Jesus whispers in our good times, He speaks in our difficult times, but He shouts to us in our worst times. It is in that valley of the shadow of darkness where we need Him the most, and that is where we meet Him the most.

And the reality is, this is the hope we have. It is an essential element of our faith. Because if Christ has not been raised, then our faith is worthless. But He has been raised.

[19 : 46] The resurrection is absolutely essential. It was so essential that the believers, the early church believers, were all Jewish individuals. We understand that. There are a few mixed multitudes there, but primarily they're Jewish individuals.

They changed their day of worship. Now sometimes I think we forget the Jewishness, if that's a word that we can use here, of the apostles. And the reality that the 11 that are left behind, we know Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ and taken his own life.

But the 11 that are left behind, all of them are from Jewish descent. All of them would have really revered and held on to the Sabbath rest. And all of them would have had a Saturday worship. We understand that, right?

They would have had that Jewish worship the day of Saturday. But they changed that until the first day of the week. Why? Because of the resurrection. Early on the first day of the week, Jesus was raised.

It is absolutely essential. It's so essential they said, we're going to change how we worship. We're going to change how we do it because this is the thing we want to focus on. Easter Sunday is not the only time we celebrate.

[20 : 47] Every Sunday is Resurrection Sunday. That is a reminder. We understand that this is just the time where we come with a fresh vigor and a fresh renewal. This is just the time of the year where we're reminded of the historical events that took place.

This is one of the very few times that we can tell you accurately when it took place in history. We cannot tell you accurately when Christ was born. I don't want to burst anybody's bubble, but it more than likely was not Christmas.

It was not in December, more than likely. If you look historically at it, the fact that there were shepherds in the field and the sheep were out there and all the events going on, we don't know. I can't even tell you when it was.

But I can tell you when Good Friday was and when Easter was because it was based upon the Passover and based upon the events that happened. This is the one event in the life of Christ that we can absolutely tell when it took place.

We know that he was about the age of 12 when he was left behind at the temple. You know how we count his going back and forth? You know how we know that he had three and a half years of ministry? Some of you do.

[21 : 54] Do you know how we know that he was about 33 years old when he was crucified? Well, he was about 30 when he was baptized. We don't know. He could have been 30, 31. He could have been 29. We don't know, but he was about 30. We know he has three and a half years of ministry because we can count the Passovers that he celebrated in Jerusalem.

Only by reading the Gospels and counting how many times he went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover events can we know how long he had a public ministry. And it is that last Passover event which we focus on because that's when he himself was the lamb slain and three days later came out of that tomb.

See, friend, this is an essential element to the faith. If there is no resurrection, there is no reason to believe. It is absolutely essential. And Paul declares it here and says, this thing we must hold on to.

And he says, but Christ has been raised from the dead. And if this is so essential and if it is a truth in which we can stand, then this is full deserving of all of our faith and all of our hope, which leads us to this third and final thing.

This is the comfort in which we rest upon. This is the comfort in which we hold fast to because we see here the empowering nature or the empowering outcome of the resurrection.

[23 : 07] There is comfort and we hold fast to this because of the empowerment that comes from it. Do you see what Paul says? Jesus Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection. Now, Jesus is not the first to be raised.

He's not even the first that he himself raised. Right? As a matter of fact, he raises the widow's son from Nain and he raises Lazarus out of the tomb.

Now, he raised himself too. If you read the Gospels and you read Scriptures, the resurrection is attributed both to God the Father, God the Spirit, and God the Son. All three members of the Trinity are attributed to the reality of the resurrection.

But the widow's son from Nain, when Jesus is walking into Nain and he says a widow coming and her son, her only son, is being carried out, he stops that funeral procession, lays his hand upon that dead man, and that dead man comes to life.

A little bit later, when Martha and Mary call him from Bethany and his friend Lazarus is sick, he waits four days to make sure that Lazarus goes to sleep, or he dies, so to say, and he waits until he's dead and he goes and he calls Lazarus back to life.

[24 : 07] Those two resurrection events. You know what the difference is between Lazarus and the widow's son? Both of them died again. They're not the first fruits. They're just some of the fruit of his ministry.

Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection. He raised them temporally so that they would live a little bit longer and they ended up dying again. Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection.

And the reason we put first fruits in there is because first fruits come with an anticipation of more fruits. In the Old Testament, when you bring your offering of first fruits, when your harvest comes in and your garden is plentiful, your fields are ripe for harvest, and you go and you gather, and you remember you have planted, and you have sown, and you have labored, and everything's there.

We're in that gardening season, right? I'm way behind on our garden, but we're in that gardening season, and we're not in the good part of gardening. We're in the working part of gardening. When you're getting the ground prepared, and you're laying a seed, and you're waiting, and you're waiting, and you're waiting, and there's all this anticipation until there finally comes a time where something is finally growing, and you can go get it, and you can glean from your garden, and you get to eat that.

And man, that is such a good thing, right? In the Old Testament, when it finally came that time, and all the effort, and all the labor, everything paid off. The very first thing you picked, the very first thing you gathered from all of your effort, you took it to the Lord.

[25 : 23] You didn't take it to your table. You took it to the Lord. And the reason you took it to the Lord because you were saying, Lord, I trust that by giving this to you, you will give me more in return. I'm going to give you the first of my efforts because I'm trusting that what you provide after that is going to be greater than what I'm giving you now.

It is your offering of first fruits, and the first fruits come within an expectation of more fruit. Jesus is the first fruit of the resurrection which anticipates more fruit. The Bible in the book of Hebrews tells us he is the forerunner or the trailblazer.

He is the one who cuts the path. He is the one who makes the way. And the reason he makes the way is because there are more who are following him. This is the comfort on which we hold fast because the Bible says that just as all died in Adam, all will be made alive in Christ.

By one man came death and by one man came life. As in Adam, all die so. In Christ, all will be made alive. Now, I believe in the resurrection of all.

I mean, I believe every man, every woman, every boy, every girl, every person that's ever died in history, every individual that's ever died, ever will be raised again in Christ. I do not believe that they will all spend eternity with him.

[26 : 38] Some will be raised to everlasting life and some will be raised to everlasting punishment. But there is a resurrection for all. As in Adam, all were made dead, so in Christ, all will be made alive.

And here is the empowerment of the resurrection because we realize that our hope is not in this life only. We are not of all men most to be pitied because that while in this life we still may, by faith, walk through the same struggles, the same pain, the same discomfort, the same sicknesses, the same darkneses, the same temporal deaths, the same miseries that everyone else in this life is walking through.

This is not our hope. In Christ, the empowerment is that we know we will live eternally with him. There is a resurrection that is soon approaching.

There is a day that is coming as he ends this chapter where Christ will come in the air and the trumpet will sound and the dead in Christ will rise and join their spirits that are in the air and so they will be with him forever.

See, there is this empowerment that though we do not trust in the resurrection to make today better because here's the reality. Today may not be that great but the resurrection makes eternity.

[27 : 58] better. The resurrection is a hope for eternity. It's not a hope for time and space. It is a hope that transcends this day. It is a hope that transcends our pain.

It is a hope that transcends our discomfort. It is a hope that transcends our circumstances and it is a hope that transcends every one of our obstacles. Friend, in this life we will not have everything that we were created to be.

In this life, according to Ecclesiastes chapter 3, there is a time for everything and in that list of a time for everything, not everything there is pleasant. There is a time to be born and there is a time to die. There is a time to rejoice and there is a time to mourn.

There is a time to mend and there is a time to be broken. In this life, not everything is pleasant. But then in that same chapter in the book of Ecclesiastes in which the author writes there is a time for everything, in that same chapter, about halfway through the chapter, he says that God has set eternity in the heart of all men.

Because the reality is even though we know that in this life there is a time for everything that promises, something to the very depth of our being says we were created for more than that. Something to the very depth of our being says we were not created to be limited to time and space.

[29 : 05] We are eternal beings created by an eternal God and the comfort of the resurrection on which we stand and we hold fast is the empowerment of the reality that in Christ and in Christ alone we understand that we will be made alive and we understand that his resurrection is the promise of the anticipation of our resurrection and we understand that by his resurrection he has paved the way for our resurrection and his death was our death and now his life is our life.

And as John records, he who has believed in me, what does it say? I've said this over and over again. One of my favorite verses to ever preach at a funeral of a believer. One of the verses that if I preach my own funeral, I will probably preach my own funeral and I'll have it recorded as this and if I don't and one of you preach my funeral, please say this at my funeral.

The Gospel of John, Jesus says, he who has believed in me has passed out of death and into life. It is a past reality. The moment I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I have already passed out of death because as in Adam all are made dead, so in Christ all will be made alive because in Christ, I'm like Frosty the Snowman, I'm all living and such because we can't stop it.

The empowerment of the resurrection is that I now no longer have to live a life of dying, but I live a life of living. This flesh may break down, this flesh, this tent, as Paul says, may be laid low, but it does not mean my life has stopped because the resurrection is the assurance of the reality that his life is my life.

His death was my death and his life is my life and that changes everything. Here is the hope and the wonder of the resurrection.

[30 : 54] Now we're going to take some time in just a moment. We're going to have a time of invitation, a time of singing, we're going to have a time of praying, then we're going to have a time of taking the Lord's Supper together.

Now what I don't read when I read 1 Corinthians chapter 11 is the part in which Paul admonishes the church in Corinth to be careful how you take the Lord's Supper.

To be careful how you take the Lord's Supper. Because see, our taking of the Lord's Supper is a reminder of his death, burial, and resurrection. It is a testimony to us the price that was paid.

It is a testimony to us of the body that was broken, the blood that was shed, and the penalty that was paid. And he says, we shouldn't take that lightly. Now we know the reality is, as I said, that Friday didn't change history, the Sunday did.

The reality is, when we look through the lens of the empty tomb back to that cross, everything changes there. Because that should have been us.

[31 : 53] And it says that we shouldn't take that lightly. So if he is a risen Savior, and he is. If his resurrection is an essential element of our faith, and it is.

If he is alive and present with us today, and he is, then we need to be at least intentional about the way we remember what he did for us.

So during this time of invitation, this is my invitation to you. Examine your own heart and your own mind and see where you stand in light of the resurrection of the risen Savior. If there is anything that needs to be confessed, you confess that to whoever you need to confess it to.

If there is anything that needs to be asked for forgiveness, and you go, you don't need a priest, you have a high priest who is Jesus Christ, who daily lives to intercede for you. This is your opportunity to do that.

You don't get to pray to a dead servant, you get to pray to a risen Savior and ask him to intercede for you. Because we are going to take this time of invitation as a time of preparation for remembering the price that he has paid in light of the resurrection.

[33 : 01] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you. We thank you for this day. And God, as we come to a moment of response, we pray that by the power and presence of your spirit that you would speak to each heart and mind.

We pray that the truth of scripture would captivate us, but Lord, the presence of Christ would motivate us to, Lord, just to be who you've called us to be. We thank you for the resurrection.

We thank you for the empty tomb and the hope that is present there as a result of it. Lord, right now, may you search and try me. May you test my heart and know my thoughts.

Or may you prepare each of us for to testify to the price you paid for each one of us. We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[35 : 05] Amen. Thank you.