Matthew 22:23-33

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Date: 23 October 2022

[0:00] Let's go with me to the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 22, Matthew chapter 22, which is continuing to make our way through the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew 22. Our text this morning will be verses 23 through 33.

Now, if you remember, this is that Passion Week of Christ. This is the week where he has come in. He has gone public, so to say. He came in riding on the coat of a donkey, people going before him with palm branches.
We call it Palm Sunday nowadays. And they're crying out, Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the Son of David. And this is a direct fulfillment of prophecy of Zechariah 9, saying that your king will come to you lowly and meek and mild and riding on the coat of a donkey.
And Jesus has come in such a way that no man could doubt who he was. He's come as a king to reign in peace, right? And if you read the prophecies throughout Scripture and you know the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew is writing to Jewish people.
He's a Jewish individual writing to Jewish people. And it's so steeped in prophetic scriptures of the Old Testament. He's writing of the king of kings and the Lord of lords. And so many weeks ago and months ago when we introduced the book of Matthew, we introduced it by looking at the book of Isaiah.
[1:07] Not necessarily the first chapter of Matthew because Isaiah had foretold of this coming king. And the prophets that followed Isaiah kept talking about this coming king, kept talking about this coming king.

And now all of a sudden this king has come. He's here. And he's there. But the reality is, is he came in his rightful position, the king of kings and lord of lords.
This king is going to lay down his life. He's also the lamb slain before the foundation of the world. So he's come in this Passover week, this Passion Week. And he is being observed, watched, tested, and tried.
And we're kind of right in the middle of one of these great testings because it's a series of questions. He's been asked in the chapter, verses prior to this is about the questioning and the reasoning of paying tribute to Caesar.
Should they pay taxes or not, right? That's the Pharisees. Now the Sadducees are going to ask him a question. In just a moment a lawyer will ask him a question. And so he has a series of three questions of which, by the way, when Christ answers each one of them, there's no arguing.
[2:12] There's no kind of discussion. And then Jesus will pose them a question that they won't be able to answer. And then it says that they left him alone from that moment forward. And we understand that they're testing him, trying him.

And now we put this in the right context because since he is the Passover lamb, he has to be shown as perfect. Right? Only a perfect sacrifice perfectly pays the price of man's sins.
And this week is all about him being shown as being perfect, spotless, blameless. Perfect in not only just his answers but in his personhood, without fault, without sin.
Being able to balance the impossibilities, if you will, of all these things and having a clear understanding. So we're right in the middle of all that. But our text this morning is Matthew 22, starting in verse 23 and reading down to verse 33.
So if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God together, found in the 22nd chapter of Matthew. It says, Verse 34,
[4:12] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day. God, we thank you for the great privilege it is of gathering together as your people to sing your praises and to be reminded of all that you've done for us.

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Lord, we pray now as we've read your word and we've heard it together, we've read it together and we've seen it together. Lord, by the power and presence of your spirit, would you speak to our hearts and minds. Would you open up the word to us and open us up to the word.
God, we pray that it would penetrate to the very depth and core of our being and that it would transform us. Show us what we need to see of you. Show us what we need to see of ourselves. May we just be changed forever because of it. We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. This morning, I want us to take a moment to look at a confident assurance of a coming resurrection.
A confident assurance of a coming resurrection. Now, we would all love to be as confident as Job. Job, I love the book of Job not because it makes me feel good.
[5:19] I love the book of Job because it is probably one of the most unfeel good books in the passage of scripture. Job is an individual who suffers much and we understand that the majority of his suffering is a direct result of God's acknowledgement of who he is.

If you remember, it came a day when the sons of God came before God and given an account and Satan was there as well. The sons of God referring to angels and they all come before him and they give an account of their goings back and forth and all of this stuff.
And Satan is there and then God himself has said, have you considered my servant Job? The reality that if God had never brought up Job, then Satan probably would have never thought of doing the things which he did to him. And then we know the story, right?
Satan says, oh, Job serves you because everything goes well with him, right? He's rich, he's wealthy, he's comfortable, he's got a lot of kids. He's got everything that this world considers pleasurable and there's nothing against him. Surely he only serves you because it is good with him. And if the circumstances were changed and he wouldn't serve you anymore, God says, okay, go ahead. And you know the account of Job, right? Job's children all die in one moment. He loses all his livestock in one moment. Everything's going so bad.
[6:20] His wife curses God and tells him to curse God. His friends are of no help. As a matter of fact, they come and they just stare at him for a number of days. And then when his friends finally start to speak, they don't give him any kind of good advice whatsoever.

They tell him it's his fault. And the book of Job really just kind of revolves around this reality that if you do right and do right and you please God and you live perfect, God blesses you. We call that, name it and claim it theology, right?
But if you do not have the blessings of God, it's because you're doing something wrong. And what the book of Job really tells us in a nutshell is just because bad things happen doesn't mean we've sinned. Just because bad things happen doesn't mean that there's not this, you know, name it and claim it thing that God is compelled to bless us if we live faithfully.
We understand that we need to worship and praise him even in the midst of this trials and struggles. But the reason I love the book of Job is because right there in the middle of it, now I know at the end everything is brought back to him tenfold, right?
He is enriched. He's given more children. He's given all these things, right? He's not given a double portion of children because he never lost his first kids. They just were removed from this place of eternity, right?
[7:27] He still had them. That's why he gets an equal number of place. But he gets double the livestock. He gets double the wealth. He gets the kids back in return, more kids in return, but he still has double. But anyway, in the midst of the friends telling him he's wrong, in the midst of everybody telling him, well, surely you've sinned.

And Job's like, I haven't sinned. I've done right. I know me better than anybody, right? And he wasn't boasting here. He's just being honest. He's like, let the man whom I've defamed stand up. Let the orphan that I haven't helped testify.
Let the poor that I haven't fed say something. You know, he gives everybody opportunity. But in the midst of that, Job makes these great sayings, right? He says, though he slay me, I will praise him. Though he slay me, I will praise him. And then he makes this confident assurance. He says, I know, I know that I will see my Redeemer in the land of the living.
Probably one of the boldest statements in all of the Old Testament. He makes this declaration and says, even when I die and the skin is rotting off my bones, I know that I will see my Redeemer in the land of the living.

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[8:39] Now think about that. The oldest book of the Bible. Job, in the midst of his pain, in the midst of his suffering, makes this bold declaration.

I may die because of this, but I also know that there will be a day when I come back to life and I look at my Redeemer in the land of the living. He doesn't say, I'm going to see my Redeemer on the other side. He says, I will see my Redeemer in the land of the living, which means he would be alive too.
So to say that the resurrection is a New Testament teaching is absolutely false. It's absolutely false. We see it resonating throughout Scripture.
But yet we meet now these individuals who come during this time of testing. And they come before Christ and they want to test him. And much like the mockery of the Pharisees and the Herodians. Remember, two people who would never reconcile differences. Two people who would never do things together. Pharisees and Herodians. The Pharisees were legalistic keepers of the law who thought you shouldn't pay taxes to anyone but to the temple.
[9:39] Because God said pay a temple tax. And they were paid from the temple tax. They didn't want to pay the taxes to the rulers of Rome. They didn't want to pay the poll tax and all those things. They were fine with the temple tax. The Herodians on the other side were the supporters of the reign of Herod.

And they thought you should pay that. So these two came together and tested Jesus thinking they could put him in a tight spot. He answered them just so amazing. And you can go back and read that. And you see that in the earlier part of this chapter.
But now we're introduced to the Sadducees. So if the Pharisees were the legalistic keepers of the law. They were those who said we can only carry a coffee cup so far on a Sabbath. They could tell you how many steps you could take on a Sabbath.
And still stay within the bounds of the law. But you could not walk further than that. Because then you would be breaking the law. They could tell you how much grain you maybe could pull off the head of wheat there.
And eat and not be considered gleaning or working. And they had all these rules and regulations. As a matter of fact the Pharisees took the ten commandments of God. And turned it into 634 regulations.
[10:41] Because it's just like man to take what God proclaims is simple and then make it really difficult. Right? So they recorded that as the Mishnah or the oral law. There were over 634 laws that the Pharisees wanted to keep.

On the other end of that spectrum stood the Sadducees. Now the Sadducees they weren't really concerned about keeping the law. The Sadducees weren't really concerned about all this legalistic keeping. The Sadducees were Jewish people.
But what they were concerned about was living once and living well. Sadducees were the wealthy people. The Sadducees were the people who enjoyed the Roman occupation. Because Roman occupation ended up giving them a greater opportunity to earn more money.
And they really enjoyed it because the Romes put the position or the title of high priest up for auction. Now if you know anything at all about the Old Testament. You know that the high priesthood should be a descendant of Aaron.
Right? It should be a family lineage. It's not up for sale. Oh it's birthright and it's kind of given to you there. But when Rome comes in they say well we're going to let you keep your religion, your faith and all this stuff.
[11:39] But what we're going to do is we're going to put the position of high priest. Which is the leading ruler of the Judaism culture there. And we're going to put it up for sale. They do like what good Romans do. They want to profit from what everybody else has got going on.

So they put it up for auction. Well since the Sadducees were good business people. The Sadducees could pay the higher price. And therefore by the time that Christ is walking the streets of Jerusalem. Sadducees are the ones who hold the position of high priesthood.
All this is important. Stay with me just for a moment. They hold the position of high priesthood. They are the majority ruler of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin would be the 70 that tried Christ at the end of his life.
You remember when Paul was put on trial. He noticed that half of them were Pharisees and half of them were Sadducees. Right? The Sadducees had a position of religious authority. They had a

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place of religious prominence.
They held the position of high priesthood. Now think about this just for a moment. They were high priests to the people of God. Yet they did not believe in the resurrection.
[12:44] They did not believe in the afterlife. They did not believe in the existence of angels. They did not believe in anything but what you see is what you get. That's a pretty sad state of affairs.

When those leading your faith cannot see beyond what this world has to offer, you're in a sad position. But that's what they were. They were the Sadducees who did not believe in any of these things.
They didn't believe in the existence of demons. They didn't believe in the existence of Satan. They thought YOLO, right? You only live once. You get this life. And you need to make the most of it. And they did. They capitalized. They were good traders. They were good financiers. They were good businessmen. And they could afford to earn a position. But because of that, they decided now it is our time.
Since the Pharisees and the Herodians couldn't do anything to Christ, now it's our time. We will test him. So it is kind of ironic that those who did not believe in the resurrection come and ask Jesus a question about the resurrection.
[13:48] But it's not ironic because the reality is that every question we ask Jesus pertains to something that we really don't believe in. Because every time we come to him with questions, it's not really a matter of desire to know.

It is really a matter of desire to kind of reconcile the fact that since I don't want to believe in this, I'm going to ask you this question so that I can prove what I don't believe. And that's exactly what they did.
Now that doesn't mean that we don't come with honest seeking hearts and we don't come with an honest desire to teach me, oh Lord. I'm just saying that when we come at him in this kind of really aggravated way, Lord, this can't be right because of this, this, this, this, and this.
So they come to him as those who don't believe and they pose a question about the resurrection. This will be their final question before they actually make an accusation against him and they make that accusation during the trials of Christ.
But we're looking at a confident assurance of a coming resurrection. The first thing we see, we'll see two negatives and two positives as we make our way through this. The first is the negative.
[14:51] The first thing we see is that the resurrection is not a continuance of the pattern that is before us. The resurrection is not just a continuance of the pattern we have before us.

Because when they come to him, now they did believe in Moses and they believed in the first five books of the Bible. They believed in the Old Testament. They didn't really kind of lean so much into the books of prophecy because they kind of got a little spiritual for them.
So they believed in the first five books of the Old Testament. So they come and they quote from what they believe. They say, Moses commanded us. Now the law we have here is referred to as the Leverite law.
And I know we're teaching a little bit, but stay with me. We'll get to it in just a moment. The Leverite law said that if a man was to die and didn't have any male descendants or didn't have any descendants whatsoever, because Moses did say that the ladies could inherit their father's land, since there was no descendants whatsoever, then his brother should come and raise up descendants in his brother's name.
And now this was given. Understand this because I know all of a sudden we're sitting here and some of you ladies are going, this isn't right. This woman was passed from one husband on to the next husband on to the next husband on to the next husband. And some of your husbands have brothers and you're sitting here going, this absolutely is not right.
[15:55] That should never happen. Ain't no way that's ever going to happen to me. But what you need to understand is this was a law given right after they came out of the land of Egypt. And God, if you remember, you were here with us on Wednesday night, God's concern is to maintain the purity of his people, right?

He did not want his people intermarrying. God wanted his people to be pure. And the reason he wanted them to be pure is because you attract more by being different than you do by being alike, right?

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It is not assimilation that attracts people. Really, it is being different than them. So God wanted to maintain the purity of his people. When he realized that they were going to go live in a land in which they did not belong, the land of Canaan, and he wanted to maintain that the Jewish people would stay Jewish.
So he gave them this law so that they would never fail to be the descendants of these individuals to inherit this land. Now, you need to also understand that nowhere in the Bible do we see this coming actually taking place.
And by the time Christ is walking the face of the earth, during the days of Christ, this law had almost altogether been forgotten because the Jewish people had grown so large that now there was no longer this desire to maintain the purity because they knew there were enough Jewish people that they didn't have to worry about it.
[17:00] They weren't going to lose their heritage. They weren't going to lose their land because there was enough of them. Now, we know Rome takes their land away and we go into all that later in history. But at this point in time, this is really the Levite law is not being put into place.

But yet, here is a loophole. The Sadducees think they can test Christ in. So they come to him with this story. And this story is really just blown out of proportion on purpose because they want to show the absurdity of it of this woman who's married to a man, has no children, and we don't know what's going on.
But it took all seven brothers to have her and nobody has any descendants. And then finally, she dies. Now, if we want to just really stop, I wouldn't want to, let's just kind of get light for a minute. I wouldn't have wanted to be brother number seven.
If six of my brothers had already died, I would have said, you know what? I'm sorry, lady, but you own your own. That's kind of that kiss of death there. You know what I mean? Just kind of leave it alone. But yet, for their story, the question is, since all seven have had her, then in the resurrection, whose wife will she be?
And this is where we see our first principle. That the resurrection is not simply a continuance of the pattern we have before us. That means we're just not going to do it all over again.
[18:15] Okay? It's not just going to keep being on and being on. Because they're using a law that pertained to the time in which they lived and were projecting it into the time of eternity.

God had given them a law for that time that has application and principles and fulfillment for a point in time in history. And they were trying to project it into eternity.
And they were misunderstanding what Paul would later say. Do not be deceived. We will all be changed. For the seed of grain has to be laid into the ground. And then it becomes something new. Right? It changes. It is transformed. Because it is not just a continuance of the pattern we have before us. Jesus says, you're misunderstanding. Because they will neither be given in marriage nor marry.
Now, I'm going to just speak frankness to you here and be honest with you. I love my wife. My wife is my very best friend in all of the world. She is the person that is closest to me. And she gets so mad at me when I say this.
[19:14] But it's just the reality. Right? In this life, the two have become one. So the reality and this thought of resurrection, of not continuing on in marriage, just kind of, I just wrestle with that in my mind. I'm just, just to be honest with you.

It's just, it's just this battlefield. But we also understand, let's let scripture speak of scripture. Scripture does tell us we will know one another. And we will know them as we have known each other. Right? We will know them in a near and dear way.
We will have, we will know, I will know. That's my wife right there. And I will have this. But we also understand the reality that eternity and the resurrection is not about childbearing. Some of you ladies should say hallelujah right there.
We're not trying to populate worlds. We're not trying to do any of those things that false religions are doing. Because it says we will be like angels. It doesn't say we will be angels. I got asked that question the other day.
Dad in heaven, will we all have wings? No, son, we won't have wings. Do angels have wings? Well, according to scriptures. Well, why won't we have wings? There's a reason we won't have wings because I will never be an angel. You say, wait a minute.
[20:10] Now, we're using the word messenger that is translated angel in our scriptures. And yes, I am an angel according to Revelations. But that's a pastor. That's a messenger to the churches. But

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we will never be those heavenly beings.

We will be like them in our eternal existence. But we will not be them. Because angels are created beings for a specific purpose. Right? They are created for his glory, for his honor to bow and worship before him.
We have so much better position. The Bible tells us we are higher than the angels. I don't need wings because I'll just be able to walk through locked doors. How will I know that? Jesus did it. I don't need wings because I can just pop up anywhere I want to.
How do I know that? Jesus did it. Remember the road to Emmaus? It sat down and all of a sudden he was gone. And he walked into this room. I won't need wings to get anywhere. Somehow or another, I will just be there. And to me, that's pretty good news.
But the reality is, is the resurrection is not just a continuance of the pattern we have before us. Now that is great news. Because you don't just keep living the same life you're living now.
[21:07] You're living a totally different life. You're not just trying to do it better. We call that reincarnation. There are faiths that believe in reincarnation. That is, if you don't do it right in this life, you have an opportunity when you die to come back in another form of life.

And hopefully in the next form of life, you can do it right and do it all over again. And it's just continuous cycle until you do it right. Friends, listen to me. That makes me want to beat my head against the wall in a spiritual sense. Because the reality that I have found is that I will never be able to do it right.
I don't care how many lives you give me, how many re-comings you give me, how many reincarnation circles I have. I will never be able to do it right. But there are whole faiths that are built upon the reality that I continue doing this thing called life, this pattern, until I finally get it right.
And once I finally get it right, I get to go into this blissful state of nothingness. Where the world is floating on the back of a great sea turtle in the middle of the ocean abyss called heaven.
Now that's a true faith. It's called Hinduism. And someday I will be able to fall into this nothingness because I did it right. That's not the resurrection. The resurrection is something new, different.
[22:14] It is not a continuation of the pattern we have before us. And that's good news because I don't know about you, but I don't want to do this again. I don't.

Life's not always fun. Right? It's not always easy. And I don't want to do it again. And if the hope of the resurrection was that I got to do it all over again, I'm not.
I'll just be honest with you. I'm not so sure I would want that. But Jesus says it's not that. It's not about just doing it again. It's something different.
The second thing we see is that the resurrection is not about position and place. It's not about position and place. Now, there will be positions in eternity.
I still catch a little bit of grief at home about the very first message I ever preached here on that Sunday, the first Sunday in February in 2016.
[23:15] I preached my message in view of a calling. The church was so gracious. A pastor's search committee asked me if I would come and preach a message to the congregation. If you've never been a pastor and you don't know what that's like, it's kind of nerve-wracking, right?

You meet with this pastor's search committee, and the pastor's search committee does their due diligence, and the pastor's search committee here did a fantastic job. As a matter of fact, looked at me and said, we've tried every way possible not to let you be our pastor, but God kept bringing you up.
That's what I was told, and that was okay. And I wanted that, and I respected that, and I honored that. And that's doing their due diligence, which is what they should have done. And they prayed, and they prayed, and they prayed. And it finally came to the point, and it's like, okay, we want you to come preach before a congregation.
And until you've ever walked into a church and just stood in front of people and preached in front of people you've never preached in front of, in view of a calling, realizing that they're going to vote on you when you get done preaching that day to see if you're going to be their pastor, you don't know what that feels like.
And it's just something that's kind of unnerving, especially after you've told the other church, hey, I'm not coming back. You know, but it was great. God was gracious. And I still get grief at home because I said in that message that morning that I wanted a big old honking crown.

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[24:18] I think that was my exact words because my Southernism came out. And I said I wanted to throw that crown at the feet of Christ. And I understand the Bible speaks of positions in eternity, right?

There are rewards in eternity. And I want a big crown. I want it to be a big old honking crown for lack of a better terminology. And I think I actually said I don't want a Burger King crown. I want a big crown. And I want that because not that I'm going to walk around so everybody can see my crown. We're going to cast our crowns at the feet of Christ. And I want to throw at the feet of Christ the biggest crown I can throw. I do because he's deserving of it. I think so. Also realize that the Bible speaks of eternity that we will be, you know, entrusted.
If we've shown ourselves faithful in here, we will be entrusted with more over there. And I'm content with being in a broom closet and sweeping the streets of gold. That's fine. But if he wants to put me, you know, over here, that's okay.
If he wants to put you over there, that's okay. But here's the reality is so many times we get caught up in position and place like where am I going to be in eternity? What will I be doing in eternity? When Jesus says it's not about position and place because what they wanted to know was where is this woman going to be?
[25:22] And Jesus says you've mistaken scripture. And Jesus doesn't talk about the woman. Jesus talks about God. Because the reality is in the resurrection it doesn't matter our position and place. The only thing that matters is who is there.

Right? The important thing of the resurrection is not what will we be doing, but who we will be with. I wish I could remember his name.
There was a former slave in American colonies who immediately after the abolition of slavery and that broke down D.L. Moody actually traveled to a church in South Carolina, I believe it was.
And he heard a free man preach. And it's the first time. This is African American. The very first time he'd ever preached a message before his own congregation as a free man. And it changed D.L. Moody forever.
And it changed him to the very core of his being because this former slave who is now preaching to his congregation as a free man started speaking of eternity and started speaking of the hope of eternity.
[26:25] And Moody quoted him saying it. He said when I get to heaven I won't be concerned. I can't say it the way he said it. And I can't say it the way he pronounced it. He said the only thing that's going to be of concern to me when I get to heaven is I want to see my master Jesus.

I don't care what I'm doing. I don't care where I'm at. I want to see my master Jesus. See, the resurrection is not about position and place.
That is where you're going to be, what you're going to be doing. The resurrection is about the one that's going to be there. And the last time I checked we're gathered around his throne.
We're worshiping. We're casting our crowns. There's things going on. And it's all about he who is there. And if that doesn't excite you about the resurrection, then friend, listen to me.
You need to check what's going on on this side of eternity. Because if the thing which motivates us is about where we're going to be, then that's the wrong desire. The only thing that's going to matter, the only position and place that's going to matter in eternity is where he is.
[27:33] And if I haven't found him yet and you know where he is, you better point the way to me. Because I want to know where he is. I don't care where I'm going to be. I don't care what it is I'm going to be doing.

I don't think there's going to be any jealousy. I may be in the broom closet and you may have that big old mansion on the hilltop. You could be the ruler over a multitude of cities and I could be the ruler over the push broom.
But I think in my glorified state of existence, I will not be jealous of you. Because I will be content to push my way to the throne of Jesus and worship at his feet. I just don't think that the position and place matters.
It doesn't matter. The person matters. And so the resurrection is not about position and place.
Number three. The resurrection is completely dependent upon the power of God.
Notice what it says. It says when they came to him and they asked him this question. Jesus, I love this. Jesus says you are mistaken. You are mistaken.

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[28:35] Not understanding the scripture nor the power of God. He said your theology is faulty because you don't understand some things. And messed up theology or soteriology, the existence of sin or all this other stuff, the coming events and all this problem.

He says your understanding is messed up because of your lack of understanding of scripture and the power of God. Because, see, when we rest the hope of the resurrection upon the process of man or we rest the hope of the resurrection upon the abilities of man, then we are misunderstanding that the resurrection rests in the power of God.
Let's just go ahead and say it. If he could speak it into existence, then surely he can continue it on forever. Right? If he can, as the book of Job says, take nothing and create something out of nothing and hang it on nothing and tell it to stay there.
And it did. I love that. Nobody explains it better than S.M. Lockridge. But it says in the book of Job that God created the earth out of nothing and he hung it on nothing and told it to stay there.
And then it did. I mean, think about that. You say, well, there's a gravitational pull to the sun. Well, yeah, but what's holding the sun up? Anybody ever thought about that? Right? Because without the sun being in its place and the earth wouldn't be in its place and with all this other stuff, I mean, you can keep digging down until you want to, but you tell me what's holding the sun up and I can tell you what's holding the earth up.
[30:02] And I know what's holding the sun up. It's the one who knows all the stars by name and tells them to be where they're supposed to be. And the sun is a star. Right? And he tells it where to be. So he created something out of nothing and he hung it on nothing and he told it to stay there and it did.

If he can do that, then surely he has the power to make my life continue on forever. See, he created man eternal in the beginning. Maybe we forget that.
That in the beginning, God created eternal beings called man. Because he said there were two trees in the garden, remember? The tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But then there was the tree of life.
And he created man with the ability to live eternally from the beginning. And by his power, since he created us that way, then through his redemptive work, surely he can continue us to live that way.
And we need to go ahead and make this declaration here. It is not only the good that live eternally somewhere. Friend, listen to me. All people live eternally somewhere. It is not a matter of where you live eternally.
[31:03] The matter is where you will live eternity. Because the Bible says in the book of Revelations that these go to eternal destruction and others go to eternal life.

See, the same wording used to describe the eternal life of the believers is also used to describe the eternal existence of the non-believers. They're eternal beings.
And it rests completely not upon the ability or even the understanding of man, can I comprehend it? No. I cannot comprehend it. Can I define it to you? No, absolutely not. I would not even try to.
But I can tell you that he is powerful enough to do it. And since I know that he is powerful enough to do it, the hope of eternity and the hope of the resurrection rest completely upon the power of God, not the understanding of man.
And I rested upon it because Jesus says by denying that reality, we are misunderstanding, not comprehending the power of God.
[32:02] And he defines that power for us through scripture. Now, he quotes the book of Exodus. Exodus chapter 3, verse 6 and verse 15 make this declaration.

Because he says, do you not remember what he said to you? Now, think about that just for a moment. Jesus is speaking to the Sadducees who were of Jewish descent. And he goes all the way back to the burning bush when Moses is before the burning bush in Exodus chapter 3.
And Jesus makes this declaration. Just stay with me. That what God said to Moses all the way back at the burning bush, God actually said to the Sadducees who were standing before him. Because Jesus says, do you not remember what God said to you?
Just because you wasn't there doesn't mean God didn't say it to you. There's a lot of things in the Old Testament, a lot of things in scripture. And last I checked, none of us were alive when the fullness of scripture was completed.
Anybody alive in about 100 AD? Anybody alive? No, none of us were. But just because we weren't there doesn't mean he didn't say it to us. He says, do you not remember what God said to you?

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[33:02] And he makes this quotation from scripture. And this is why scripture is important. I am the God of Abraham. I am the God of Isaac. And I am the God of Jacob. This is how God introduces himself, right?

And he says, for he is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And God does not say, I was the God of Abraham, the God of Jacob and Isaac. Or I was the God of your father. He says, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.
And when God puts himself in the present tense, God is saying there that I still am. Now God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And therefore Jesus makes a declaration that according to scripture, according to scripture, since God declared even after these men were dead, that he was still their God.
And since we know that God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living, then therefore God was declaring these people weren't really dead. Just because their bodies had been laid in a tomb somewhere doesn't mean they were really dead.
They had to still be alive because God said he was still their God. That's the power of God. Now we got one more thing. And this is probably the best. Got one more thing.
[34:13] The resurrection not only rests completely upon the power of God, the resurrection is a confession of the promises of scripture. The resurrection is a confession of the promises of scripture.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were all men who existed dependent upon the promises of God. We have the Abrahamic covenant. God says, leave your country, go to a land that I will show you. Leave your father and your father's household behind. You go to the land I show you. Remember in Genesis chapter 12, starting in verse 1, right? Go to a land that I will show you and I'll make a great nation out of you. I'll multiply your descendants and I'll make you as the sand of the seashore, right? I'll make you as the stars of heaven. I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you. He made all these promises to him. He made all these promises to Abraham. He made all these promises to Isaac.
He made these promises to Jacob. God is a God of promises. As a matter of fact, and you can turn there if you want to, but in the book of Hebrews, Hebrews chapter 11. You know Hebrews chapter 11.
[35:16] Now stay with me. I'm almost done. I have no idea what time it is, but I'm almost done. Hebrews chapter 11 is the heroes of the faith, right? It takes us through all of the annals of the Old Testament.

It talks to us of Enoch and even Cain and Abel and the blood of Abel crying out. Enoch walking with God and was not. And Abraham and Moses. And we get all these heroes of the faith.
We find people we didn't imagine we would even meet there. We find Samson. Somehow another Samson ended up there. And we find all these people. At the end of Hebrews chapter 11, we find these nameless ones. That the world was not counted worthy of them staying.
They were sawn in two. They were cast to the wolves. They were devoured by lions. They died in faith, in faith, in faith. And then the last two verses, I'll just be honest with you. I don't know how many times I've read Hebrews 11.
But I almost get so carried away reading of the heroes of faith that I forget about the principles of faith. And I get so carried away reading the chapter, I forget that there's two more verses at the end of the chapter. And I'm so excited to get to the 12th chapter.
[36:15] Because the 12th chapter says, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us press on to the goal that is set before us. Let us run with endurance the race that is before us. And I almost forget about Hebrews 11, verses 39 and 40.

Almost. But when I read the heroes of the faith. Now, Hebrews 11, 39 says this. Stay with me. And all of these.
And all of these. Having found a good testimony according to their faith. All of these. So, if you meet some people there that you didn't think would be there.
When God says that they have a good testimony of faith. Then you say, I don't know how they got it, but they got it. Right? Samson, he did some cool stuff. He wasn't a good guy, but he's there. Right? But it says, all of these.
Having obtained a good testimony of faith. Now, good testimony literally means they were accepted by God. Right? All of these. Stay with me.

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[37:17] Having obtained a good testimony of faith. Died. Without receiving the fulfillment of the promise. Let me just break it down for us.

Let me just break it down for us. These people were accepted and acknowledged as right before God. A holy God received them based on the testimony of their faith. And because he is a holy God had extended promises to them.
But they died without receiving the fulfillment of everything God had promised them. Staying with me so far? They died without getting that which God had promised them.
And then it goes into that 40th verse and says, so that. Now, I'm paraphrasing. I haven't turned there. You probably have. They would be perfected or completed through us.
Now, let me just see if I can understand this right. And see if I can help you understand it. The Bible says that God accepted these people based upon their faith.
[38:23] But even in their acceptance, they did not receive everything God had promised them. Is that not what it says? That's what it says. That God had made promises to them. But yet they died without receiving those promises.

Now, all of a sudden, we ourselves are caught between a rock and a hard place. Because if God had made a promise to them and yet they don't receive that promise before they die, then one of two things is accurate.
Either one, God is a liar and he cannot fulfill his promises. Or two, they ain't dead yet. That's the only two options we got. You say, oh, but they're dead. Every one of them in that 11th chapter, it says they died without receiving the promise.
Right. But God does not fail in his promises. What God has promised will come about. If God fails in one promise in Scripture, then we cannot hold him to any promise in Scripture.
And since we know that the Word of God is sure, since we know that the Word of God is true, and since we know that what God has promised he will bring about, it doesn't matter if they've already died in the flesh because there will be a day of fulfillment in the promise.
[39:27] God's promises will be fulfilled to them. The Bible says Abraham wandered around not looking for Canaan. It says Abraham wandered around looking for a city whose builders and foundations were God.

Right. There will be a day when he gets there. And he was made perfected through us because when the Bible was written, according to the, in the book of Hebrews, that was the person of Christ. And we know that Abraham didn't get to heaven without Christ because he had to go as the forerunner before him.
No one went before him. All went after him. And Jesus is the trailblazer. Abraham's in this place awaiting. And he's waiting. He's waiting. And he's sitting down there. He's going, but God promised. But God promised. But God promised. But God promised.
And Jesus comes and says, today is the day of the fulfillment of the promise. And he leads him home. I know there is a hope of the resurrection. I know there is a hope of the resurrection. Because I read promises in Scripture that God has told me will come about.
And I don't see them coming about yet. And I know that even if I die, since God has promised it, then he must bring me back to life so that I can see it come about. He's told me there will be a day where the lion and the lamb will lay down together.
[40:29] He's told me there will be a day where the boy will put his hand in the serpent's hole and won't be bent. He's told me there will be a day where no tear will come from my eye, but all the tears will be wiped away. He's told me there will be a day where I'll walk next to the river of life and eat from the tree of life.

He's told me there will be a day of peace that passes all understanding. And he's told me, listen, God has made promises. And since God will not fail in his promises, surely he has the power to bring me back to life so that those promises can be fulfilled in me.
Because, see, listen, the hope of the resurrection is the reality that the promises of God will not fail. It doesn't matter if I die or not before I see them. Because much like Job, I know.
I mean, I know. That I will see my redeemer in the land of the living. And on that day, I also know the lion and the lamb, they're going to be laying down over there.
That boy's going to have his hand in the snake's hole and it won't matter. See, I know that there'll be no tear. Because God's already promised me that these things are going to happen. And it's important to know the promises of God so that you can look around and understand that though we

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don't see it yet doesn't mean we won't see it.
[41:40] It just means he's got a better day. We won't just continue to live this life over and over and over and over again. There's a better day coming and the better day is the resurrection.

And it says, and they all walked away speechless. Because see, the reality is, is the hope and the assurance of the resurrection changes everything.
Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day. God, I thank you for your word. I thank you for the confident assurance that it brings us. Lord, we understand there's so much we don't know. Lord, there's so much that our finite minds cannot comprehend. Lord, I pray that our trust would be in you and you alone. Forgive us for where we misunderstand scripture.
Forgive us for where we fail to fully comprehend the power of God. Lord, we pray that you would do a mighty work in us for your glory and your honor. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.
[42:40] Amen. Amen.

Amen.
Amen.
Amen.
Amen. Amen.
[45:59] Thank you.

Thank you.

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