

## Fresh Life Church | The Show On The Road | Pastor Levi Lusko | Fresh Life Easter

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We are concluding a collection of messages that we've called "Easter People" and looking at some of the significant stories of those whose lives were impacted by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And in my opinion, we've saved the best for last, although the series could continue. There's some stories we didn't get to. We didn't get to talk about old Peter. We didn't get to talk about how Peter experienced-- are we Instagramming while I'm preaching? That is a lot to think about.

[LAUGHTER]

So Peter experienced the resurrection because he thought he had failed Jesus and Jesus wouldn't want anything to do with him. And Jesus sought him out and restored him. I preached that text from John 21 one time and I called it "Good night, failure. Good morning, grace."

Because the night that Jesus was arrested, Peter three times swore that he had never met Jesus-- never heard of Jesus, because he didn't want to get put on a cross like Jesus. And so he denied being Jesus' friend-- said, I've never met the guy, I swear. May God send me to hell if it's not true. I've never met Jesus. I would never follow Jesus.

And he felt so bad about what he had done. And Jesus sought him out and made sure he knew it's OK. He actually arranged it to where Peter would have no mistake that he was loved. Because he had denied Jesus by a fireside, and so when Jesus restored him, he prepared a fire because he knew that memory and scent are closely connected.

And that's because your olfactory nerve runs right by the part of your brain that processes memories, and so that's why we can smell something and bang! We're taken right back to a situation. And Jesus made sure that whenever Peter smelled smoke, he didn't just remember his failure-- "good night, failure." He remembered "good morning, grace."

And he cooked him breakfast and restored him. And Jesus says the same thing to you. I don't care what you've done or how bad you feel. Maybe you haven't been the perfect mom in quarantine. Maybe you haven't learned a new language. Maybe you haven't learned how to yodel, right? Yodel.

[LAUGHTER]

What are we talking about here? You came into this time like, I'm going to do this. I'm going to clean the house. And now it's like, the house is a mess. The kids haven't done any homeschooling. You just feel like an absolute failure.

I'm just telling you, you have woken up today to brand-new grace, brand-new mercy, brand-new compassions that do not fail. Jesus is alive, and he is seeking you out. There's new grace every single morning.

So yeah, we could continue this series. We could talk about lots of different Easter people. We could talk about Paul the Apostle. He was an Easter person. He got to meet Jesus as one born out of time. And yet we have chosen to end the series here with two who met Jesus on a road.

We've been throughout this series saying that Easter is the greatest show. We began several weeks back with this idea of-- apologies to the circus. Easter is the greatest show as defined by a spectacle, a display-- something that demonstrates something. That is, in fact, Easter to a T.

You think about just what happened in the garden. The stone-- how dramatic was this? The stone is rolled away and Jesus's grave clothes are left there in the tomb. And by the way, folded. He fold-- this is not a guy who is stressed. This is not a guy who is in a hurry.

You've just risen from the dead. What are you going to do? I'm going to make my bed is what I'm going to go ahead and do. He folds it all up and walks out nonchalantly. And then the soldiers are fallen over, stupefied. The angels show up.

This is a display. This is a demonstration. And that's just what we can see with the naked eye. That's what we could see in the human. In the unseen realm, there was a whole demonstration of God's power as well.

In fact, if you were with us at our Good Friday service, we preached a message called "When Everything Changed." And it was all about how Colossians says the moment Jesus died, he showed up in the underworld. He showed up in the realm of the dead, and he had something to do.

In fact, Colossians 2 puts it this way. "He took away the weapons of the powers and authorities. He made a public show of them. He won the battle over them by dying on the cross." What Paul is saying in Colossians 2 is that when Jesus died, it was the death of death.

The enemy was fist pumping and all of a sudden, there was a tap on his shoulder and he turned around to see Jesus saying, hey, hand them over. Hand what over? Those keys-- the keys to death, the keys to Hades, to keys to hell-- for I will live forever but death must die. There was a triumphant spectacle that took place as Jesus marched the devil and his demons up and down the corridors of eternity and showed that they had been defanged. This is the greatest show. Easter-- spectacle, demonstration, display.

And this week, we're going to see the show on the road. That's the title of my message-- "The Show on the Road." Let me read to you this passage. This is Luke 24, verse 13.

It says, "Now that same day," which is Resurrection Sunday, "two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As

they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them, but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?' They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened here in these days?' 'What things?' Jesus asked.

'About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.

And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the woman had said, but him they did not see.'

He said to them," verse 25, "'How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going father. But they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening. The day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?' They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.

There they found the 11 and those with them assembled together, and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread."

And Father, I believe that even just the reading of your word has power-- power to shape us, to encourage us, to calm us, and to wake us up. And I pray for those of us who are watching this in homes and apartments and condos and vehicles-- all around the world-- someone watching maybe in their backyard, feeling the sun warm on their face. I pray that as these words penetrate us, that we would encounter you.

Just like those two had no idea that they were in for the conversation of a lifetime as you showed up on the road,

we pray that as we've all from our church buildings where we would normally maybe be, have gone mobile to different homes-- we've gone on the-- we pray that your great show of the Easter power would go on the road to us even now in a new way. Meet us where we are. They weren't in Jerusalem. They were in Emmaus and they were amazed in Emmaus.

We pray for something like that to happen to us today. And we pray that you would do what we've been seeing you do all weekend long-- draw people to yourself who don't know you. For the one person perhaps right now who just needs to know they're loved and can be forgiven-- that there is hope.

We pray you would touch them, Jesus. And we pray that this would be happening at churches and broadcast as they go out all around the world today. Thank you that your Son is alive. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

Amen.

I think Mark Twain once said that-- and he defined golf this way. Golf-- what's golf? He said golf is a good walk spoiled. And not being much of a golfer myself, I've always kind of liked that, right? Might as well just go take a walk. Why mess the walk up by having to golf while you're doing it?

This is a sad walk brightened. These two were sad as they walked on the road. The text says their faces were downcast and that they stood still when Jesus said, hey, what are you so sad for? They stopped.

They were walking. They stopped because they were stunned that anybody would not be sad and not understand the cause for the sadness. It's an amazing thing how quickly what you thought was going to be your life can just come to an end-- can be derailed.

Feels a bit like-- you know that horrible sensation when you're sleeping but you have that weird-- what is it, like you're falling? Anybody with me? Come on. Raise your hand.

Have you ever had that where you're like-- for me, it's almost always just after I've drifted off to sleep. You'll have the dream where you're falling in a pit and you kind of lurched to wake. For me, it's always like a weird leg kick.

It's like, uh! I don't know what I think I'm going to do it, but I'm lying there-- uh! It's such an awful feeling, right? Just because to all of a sudden being a freefall and to feel your stomach-- because the whole ground just gave way beneath your feet.

For many of us, that's how this time feels. It's like everything that was-- 2020 was shaping up to be oh, this is going to be this amazing year. 2020-- the year of vision. The year of seeing new things, man. 2020 is our year.

And then all of a sudden it's like, oh, economy. Oh, my business. Oh, school. Oh, graduation. And then for so

many, they've been plunged into grief, just like that freefall. Just doesn't matter how you kick. You are still falling.

And it's crazy for me that earlier this year, I had the team put this image on the screen. I was preaching a message in our "Not Quickly Broken" series and I made reference to the Dust Bowl-- this time in America in the 1930s when you couldn't leave your house without a mask on if you lived in Oklahoma-- Texas. Many people are watching from these parts of the country.

And I remember putting this on the screen and saying, how crazy is it that kids had to have masks on to keep dust out? Well, it's not for dust, but today we're very much living in a time when masks are now being recommended. Don't leave your house without a mask. CDC says children should wear face coverings. Here's how to make your own.

How incredible that what at one point just months ago seemed outlandish is now like, well, I need to get me a mask. I'm preaching to many camera operators wearing masks at this moment. We're trying to be safe. We're distancing.

As a team, it's like, how did we get here? How are we now in what is normal what just a minute ago seemed absolutely ridiculous? The ground gave way beneath our feet.

These two were downcast-- sad as they walked. And in that situation, Jesus came to brighten their perspective. Jesus came to inform their understanding. Not to change any of the situations-- not to change the reality, but to help them see it from a different perspective.

Here's the first takeaway truth I need you to jot down this Easter. The circumstances you face aren't nearly as important as the conclusions you draw. The problem wasn't what had happened. The problem was the conclusions that they had come to as a result. Jesus challenged their assumptions. But he did so after he first walked with them and listened to them.

And let me encourage you in the coming weeks as more and more-- right now the death toll some 20,000 in our country alone. More and more of us are going to have people in our lives who have lost someone. And we must not belittle this time.

And maybe for you it's like, yeah, this is a great quarantine. I love it. It's finally some time not traveling and not having to work so much. I'm getting more time around the house. But for people who we're going to be around, this is the loss of a loved one. This is absolute devastation from a financial perspective.

People are afraid of losing homes. We saw in the video that many are going to become homeless in this time. So we must not treat it as though it's some trivial thing. And Jesus actually models for us how to minister to someone

who's grieving. He walked with them and listened to them before he even spoke to them.

It almost seems as though-- and the text says it was a seven-mile journey-- a seven-mile distance they had to travel. Who knows how long he had been just walking silently with them-- just listening? The text says he observed and listened and watched. They had no idea who he was.

Which I guess it's another lesson in this that we never know what's inside the people that we walk around-- the people that we bump into every day, the people that we see from six feet away in the grocery store, the people that we interact with in a chat in an online service. We have no idea who we're actually dealing with. Doesn't Hebrews say that when we show kindness to a stranger, you might have no clue that you're actually speaking to an angel unaware?

Talk about an angel on the inside. You mustn't judge a book by the cover. They just saw this random guy. In fact, one of the two actually goes, are you-- you're clearly not from around here. You have no idea. Ha ha ha.

You have no idea what you're talking-- you haven't heard the news. How uninformed you are. Do you not have access to CNN? Jesus goes, what news? The news about Jesus.

And he's like, who's he? [SNICKERS] Right? So we must never assume that just talking to someone or seeing someone-- what actually is happening on the inside. But Jesus-- after he walks with them, after he listens to them, then he finally speaks to them. And when he does, he challenges their assumptions.

The conclusion they drew was that this whole thing was the end of the line. Why were they headed to Emmaus? Because party was over in Jerusalem. The party was over. They actually three different times said that they had hoped-- verse 21. "We had hoped he was the one who was going to redeem Israel."

And then notice in verse 19, "he was a prophet." "He was a prophet." "We had hoped." "He was going." What do we see? Past tense.

The past tense comes up three different times. They thought their best days were behind them. They really thought Jesus had a lot of potential. Some of those miracles were great. His baklava was delicious. Mwah! There was en-- he was amazing. Too bad he died.

Now, Jesus didn't tell them Jesus hadn't died. He didn't tell them that what they had experienced wasn't brutal. It was. No doubt some PTSD to see someone just wrenched from their lives and taken so viciously-- suffocated publicly in front of them. And yet what he was saying is that the conclusions you've come to as a result of this is what's incorrect.

The same information about the women-- the woman had reported that Jesus wasn't there anymore. They heard that. And what conclusion they came to is that the body must have been stolen. It seemed to them as an idle tale that the women had seen angels. So same information, different conclusion.

He didn't say that the circumstances were hard. He just said, you've come to the wrong conclusion about it. Now listen, what you're dealing with is difficult. It is painful. This is bad. But what conclusion are you coming to?

These two were suffering under the weight of a story that wasn't true. Jesus had died. But here's the question this Easter. Who told you to use the past tense? That's what Jesus was saying. I know you're saying I was, but newsflash. I still am.

I'm still standing. I did die but now I'm alive. Come on. I'm preaching too good for you not to throw some hands up-- some woo-woo hands up in that chat. Let me see. How do we feel?

I'm telling you, right now I wonder if there's not somebody and you've been using the past tense. Oh, that business was. My dream was. I was living in the best time. I can't believe this happened. And Jesus says, I've got more in front of you than there is behind you.

Your best days are still to come. Come on. There's great things on the horizon. Dawn is coming. He's about to do something. Let's come to different conclusions about the same circumstances. And once their assumptions were challenged, once they began to think correctly-- because listen.

Wrong thinking will always lead to wrong living. And inaccurate information will lead to unnecessary fear. And once they began to see things correctly, they were opened up to a life of hope. It's so important you realize the power you have in taking the same information but coming to a different conclusion.

Charles Swindoll once put it this way. "Life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it." You can't control what happens. You can't, if you're Job, control that your business was lost and you had loved ones die. And even your health was taken from you.

That's 10%, though. 90% is that I'm going to kneel down and say, God gives and God takes away but blessed be the name of the Lord. And so in our situation, we can still choose to respond in faith and respond in worship. And when he helped them to see the same situation differently-- once their eyes were opened, they had potential that was unlocked by perspective.

So what do I mean? I mean this. They previously viewed walking any further as a futile endeavor. When Jesus indicated he still was going-- they were, we're going to Emmaus. This is our off ramp. He goes, oh, I'm going to-- I may just walk a little further.

They said, are you kidding me? It's too late. You can't be walking. They didn't have street lights in those days. They didn't have flashlights on their iPhones. So once illumination was gone, you really shouldn't be out walking.

The moon was going to be getting smaller and smaller and smaller. So there was some moonlight, but it would've been hard and tricky and perhaps even dangerous. So they said, no, no, no. You can't walk further. Why don't you come in and stay with us? And you could set on your journey tomorrow.

So they viewed travel as no longer possible when they were uninformed. Once they were informed as to actually what was going on and they were given hope, they saw things differently, didn't they? They left that very hour and traveled the seven miles back to Jerusalem. In the dark? Yeah.

After eating a meal, the sun had gone down even further. And what am I trying to say? I'm trying to say hope gives you wings. I'm trying to say they did have a light now-- a light on the inside, knowing that Jesus was alive. And so what previously would have been an inconvenience and an impossibility was now no big impediment at all.

They were ready to rush back to Jerusalem, never mind how dark it was, to let other people know. Hope will give you power to embrace what you previously wanted to escape. They wanted to be anywhere but Jerusalem, because it was just full of reminders-- triggers about the pain that they experienced.

Oh, there's the cross where Jesus died. Oh, there's the place where our dreams crushed. There's where we once were. I choose to write a different story, though.

When I see the cemetery where my daughter was buried, I choose to say that's the place where she's going to rise from. When I see the funeral home where we had to go through the unimaginable hardship of the visitation and the viewing, I choose to say, there was the last time I saw her face but it's not the last time I ever will see her face. We can choose to have a different conclusion we draw based on the same circumstance that we faced.

Two people can watch their home burn. One person can say, God must not be good because my home has burned. Or the other person can say, because my home has burned and God is good, he must have something else for me, and so I can't wait to see what it is. It's all about perspective.

Don't suffer under the weight of a story that isn't true, don't put a period where God has put a comma, and don't use the past tense when God is a God who is not dead, who is alive, and has something in store for you. I came to encourage you this Easter. The second takeaway truth of four I see in this passage is that there is a wrong way to read the Bible.

There is a wrong way to read the Bible and it's the way that they had previously, clearly, been reading it. Because they said, we thought Jesus was going to redeem Israel. Too bad he died. We thought he was going to redeem



Israel and then he died, which is to say they ignored the fact that the entirety of the Old Testament pointed forward to a messiah who is going to redeem Israel by dying.

So the very same thing that they thought stopped Jesus from redeeming Israel was in fact the one thing that was necessary in order for Israel to be redeemed. But they thought that Jesus was on a political campaign. They thought that all the prophecies that are still future to us about Revelation and his return and the lion lying down with the lamb and all the beautiful things of his kingdom being established-- they thought those things were going to be established without him dying.

Friends, they wanted to see the crown but not the cross. They wanted the blessings of what it would look like without the broken messiah. They wanted to see him on the throne without him ever having to wear a crown of thorns. But these things are not possible because of the price of sin. He had to die to redeem us from our sin. He had to go to the cross in order for him to wear the crown as king and victor of a people who have been redeemed out of every tribe and tongue and nation and language.

That was what the Bible said he was going to do. But they read the Bible looking for things that would benefit their lives and how they could participate in it. There is a right and a wrong way to read the Bible. The right way to read the Bible is in every verse to look for what Jesus is going to do, what he promised he would do-- what he was able to do and alone able to do as the God-Man.

So as we read the Bible, we're not looking primarily for 10 ways to be a better husband or four ways to better manager of your money or principles on wisdom or for some parenting tips. We're not looking for new commandments to keep or things we have to do, because to look at the Bible that way will lead to failure and heartache. It'll lead to you being downcast because you can't keep up with all the things you hope to do.

But when you look to the Bible as God saying, here's what my son Jesus is going to do, here's what Jesus is going to do, here's what Jesus is going to do, now you realize it's not about what we can do. It's about what he has done. It's not about works we do that gets us righteousness. It's about the work Jesus did as he hung on the cross.

And when you see the scripture that way, these are they which testify to me, Jesus said. Moses and the prophets-- he's talking about Isaiah in Isaiah 53. He's talking about David in Psalms 22. He's talking about Moses in Genesis 3. He's talking about a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.

When you see all about Jesus, all about redemption, all about his blood, all about sacrifice, now we don't look to the Bible to go, all right. What do you want me to do today, God? I'm going to be the messiah. I'm going to tap into the things you've called me to do. You instead see it about Jesus and his fulfillment of prophecies that began in

the Garden of Eden.

And now you get to walk in the peace and the power of the gospel because it's not up to you to keep yourself saved. It's up to Jesus, who paid the price for you to be saved. And you don't then think if I behave, I'll get saved. You think, I believe and so I receive. And the works we do-- the being a better husband and being a better wife-- flows out of him having healed us. What am I trying to say?

I'm trying to say that Jesus didn't come to make your life better. He came to save your soul. Fortunately, life is a lot better with a saved soul. And when that power has worked on the inside, we then get to see it flow out on the outside.

They thought he was going to bring them a kingdom. But had he brought the kingdom without first dying on the cross, they would not have been able to participate in that kingdom. He wasn't the king we wanted. He was the king we needed.

The right way to read the Bible is to look for Jesus in it and what he's done and how that life can flow outside of us every single day. And when read properly, what we will realize is that his coming up out of the tomb has everyday implications for us as well. Just as he dying on the cross was paying the price for our sins, him rising from the dead was securing and giving us resurrection power that we're meant to tap into all the time.

Third takeaway truth-- Easter isn't a holiday, then. It's an identity. It's not a once-a-year event on the calendar. It is an everyday reality. Easter is who we are. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song. We are meant to not look back on Easter and go, that's so inspiring.

Thanks, Jesus. Wow. 2,000 years ago, he got up. That's great. No. We're meant to be living in the power of the resurrection today, preaching in the power of the resurrection, parenting in the power of the resurrection, dealing with a pandemic in the power of the resurrection-- you have the power of the risen God to homeschool your kids tomorrow, to resist the carbohydrates in your cupboard.

Come on, somebody. We have the power of the resurrection at our beck and call. We have been filled with the spirit that rose Christ Jesus from the dead. We are more than conquerors. Our best days are in front of us. It's always too soon to give up. Don't be leaving Jerusalem, heading to Emmaus going, well, that was great.

No, come on. This pandemic can't get in the way of God's plans. He is up to something. The story of the Bible begins with creation and ends with his rule and reign forever, so it all works out in the end.

Yes.

So since it hasn't worked out yet so far, that just means it's not the end. And we have his power in us to charge into our future filled with peace-- filled with hope that gives us power, that unlocks potential, that hopes for God's plan. We're not going to give up on Saturday, scarred by the trauma of Friday. We are going to stand on the power of the triumph of Resurrection Sunday and we're going to let that bleed into our Monday, spill into our Tuesday, cascade into our Wednesday, be a tidal wave on Thursday, give us phenomenal power on Friday. And on Saturday, we're going to rejoice in what he has done.

Yes!

Amen.

The problem is, we view Easter as an end and not a beginning. It's no fault of ours. We read Scripture and so we build tradition. We look at chronology, and it's human nature to form a countdown. The problem is, we have our countdown backwards.

Because depending on how you roll, Ash Wednesday or Palm Sunday springboards us into our Easter countdown. But whether it's 46 days or one holy week, we think, all right. Easter's coming. Easter's coming. Sunday's coming. Sunday's coming. Sunday's coming. We almost see this as 10, 9-- and we do it with our family.

On this day, Jesus prayed with his disciples. On this day, he rode a donkey. On this day, Judas betrayed him. Ooh, Judas, right? And then we-- what do we do now? We get to Easter and it's like all right. Well, OK. Well, that was great. Zero-- it's done.

We'll put the Easter egg kit away and the baskets away and the green grass away and it gets stored next to the Christmas box in the garage or the storage unit. And well, that was great. And we see Easter as the end of something instead of what it actually is-- the beginning of something. And that's why Easter occurred on day one.

On the first day of the week, Jesus rose. He could have risen on any day he wanted to. He intended-- he'd been planning this from before the foundation of the world. God intended for Jesus to rise from the dead on the beginning of a brand-new week. Why?

He was explaining through that act that the original week of creation was done and something new was beginning. He created the world. In the Garden of Eden, we're told that whole Genesis account. On the first day of the week, he said let there be light. And then on the following days, there was land and water and planets and beavers and fish and all those things. And on day six, he made man.

And on the seventh day, he created rest. That was day seven. Rest was the final act of creation. He gave us rest to delight in what he had done on day seven. Now, that original week was spoiled by sin, which is why there is

COVID-19 in the world-- which is why there's disease and pain and cancer.

Because under the first Adam's headship, we who had control of this world took things in a very dark direction and chose to worship things as God instead of God and disobey God. And so we spoiled a perfect world. And that has been the state we were stuck in as mankind from the Garden on to Jesus.

When Jesus came, he came to do what the first Adam failed to do. And in rising from the dead, he proved that he is capable of leading this planet in a way that honors God. And that's why it was in the Garden he chose to not do his will, but to take up the cup and do what his father had called him to do.

And that's why when he died, he chose to die and come back to life from death on the first day of the week, showing there is a man at the helm of the universe who will honor his father and lead us into a new week. And so his action of rising was the beginning of a brand-new week that will have no end, that will never be spoiled, that eventually ultimately will consummate in a brand-new world recreated like this world, made from and fashioned from the bits and stuff and chemicals and-- I don't have a lot of more analogies I can use besides that.

But he's going to use this world, turning it into a big old seed and to bring out a brand-new world, just like his body came out of the grave the same. It was still him, but it was different. He could fly. He could ascend to heaven, just like a hot air balloon. He could walk through walls with doors that were locked-- just appear. Hey! He was very, very fast.

The two disciples on the road to Emmaus, once they realized it was him and he had vanished from their sight-- which is a great new trick, by the way-- the Invisible Man. They said, we've got to get back to Jerusalem. And so they fumbled their way through the dark-- seven miles, if you can imagine, by moonlight.

And they get back to Jerusalem and they're like, Jesus is alive. We saw him. They're like, yeah, we know. He was just here. He talked to Peter just a minute ago. And they're like, dang. He's very, very sneaky. Jesus said, I fear you are underestimating my sneakiness. And so you have this-- and he did like to wash feet, too.

So here's Je-- this is the Gospel according to Mr. Deeds. That's my next book. All right, so-- that's Hawaiian punch. (WITH ACCENT) Ah, he adored Hawaiian punch, sir. (NORMALLY) So here's what happens.

Come on in the chat. Are you with me still? Are we awake? Am I preaching good on Easter Sunday? So here is Jesus showing us that there's still days two, three, four, five, and six-- all the things that he will remake, including you.

The body of every single follower of Christ will be refashioned immortal, like this body but with new features unlocked. And so we still wait. We right now are in between day one of the new creation and all the following days.

We're living in what theologians call the already but not yet.

It's kind of like when Steve Jobs used to get on stage and be like, here's the iPhone. You're like, they still do that with Tim Cook. Yeah, we-- just no one cares as much. Steve Jobs would get up with his turtleneck on and his jeans on and his white, terrible shoes. He would just be like, this is the iPhone.

Now, you couldn't go to the Apple store and buy the iPhone. You couldn't go get your own yet, but you got to see it. And then eventually you got to hold it. We today live where there is a prototype. We have seen it. We saw the demonstration.

Jesus showed us what it's going to be like. So the same thing that happened to his body will happen to this world and will happen to your body. We just are awaiting the power of that. And you're like, why doesn't he do it sooner?

Well, I sure am glad he waited for me to get saved. And right now, he's seeking to build his bride and change the world and touch people all over the world so that they can participate in that moment. He holds back the judgment that will come so that as many can be saved as possible. He is long-suffering and not willing to any should perish but that all should come to everlasting life.

So in between day one and day two through six of his new creation week, and then seven will be all of the triumph of heaven forever-- all of the beauty of heaven on earth forever, the kingdom forever. And that's why, by the way, every single time you take one out of seven now and take a Sabbath day, you're getting just a taste of heaven. It's just this little moment of heaven.

It's this delight of what heaven on earth will be like, and we just get to taste and anticipate. We're not just looking backwards to what he did in the Garden when we Sabbath. We're looking forward to being with Jesus in perfection forever.

Easter is not a holiday. It's our identity. And when you really get that up in your soul-- when you really get that in your pipe and you smoke it, I am telling you something. The thing that you will watch released into the world is joy.

Joy will be the result of you comprehending the resurrection not as a holiday, but as your identity. Not as a day on a calendar, but as an ever-present reality, for Jesus is the resurrection. He is the life. If you understand that, you will walk in joy. And I feel like if there is one word-- and we're going to talk about this more.

Come back next week. Cabin fever for two weeks. I really want to live in this idea of what does that joy look like when we walk in it? I feel stuck. No, no, no, no.

I'm sent into quarantine. I'm commissioned to be still working in a hospital or driving for UPS. We're going to talk

about that-- how to deal with the spirit of cabin fever that comes upon us.

Here's what that joy is. Joy is you actually getting the resurrection. We can know when the Resurrection is really something you're living in the power of when you walk in joy. This is, in fact, what Jesus predicted would happen in John 16.

If you look back at John 16 verse 22, Jesus-- this is before he ever went to the cross. He said to his disciples, you now have sorrow. He predicted sorrow. Why? They were going to watch him die.

Cleopas, I understand your sadness. You're going to have to watch me nailed to a cross. "But I will see you again."

Come on. How great is that? Jesus said, I'm going to die but you will see me again. And when you do, "your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you."

So Jesus said, the worst thing that could ever happen is me being taken from you. But when I'm given back to you in resurrection, and then to the whole body of Christ as my spirit comes, you will be able to walk in joy-- a joy that the world can't take, because the world didn't give it to you.

Take my home from me. Take my health for me. Take my money from me. Take my car from me. But guess what? You didn't give me my joy so you can't take my joy. My joy comes from Jesus. He was taken from me so I did sorrow, but now that he's come back and is inside of me and death will take me to him, my joy will never be taken from me.

And this prophecy, John 16:22-- I'm so excited to tell you about this. It came to pass in John 20:20. Come on, 2020. We had dreams for the year. We had hopes for the year. We had plans for the year.

And guess what? 2020 is the year of all of our eyes being opened to the fact that joy can't be taken from us because we have Jesus. And if we have Jesus, we have everything we need. We have heaven. We have life on this earth once again to look forward to.

And we have a plan right now to bring the world hope, to bring the world love, to bring the world the gospel-- John 20:20. John what? 20:20. Come on. Chat it if you see it-- 2020. This is our year-- a year of vision, a year of joy, a year of our eyes being opened, a year of our hearts burning, a year of God being near to us in our brokenness.

Why has God allowed this pandemic? Because he wants us to exhibit joy. He wants us to show the world what joy looks like-- joy that the world can't take because the world didn't give it.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

When did they walk in joy? Verse 20-- when "he showed them His hands and His side." Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." When they saw the holes in his hands and they realized it was him who had been taken away-- that he was now back. He was there as he was being given to them-- then they were glad. And then a joy was unleashed in their lives that every single one of them would carry for the rest of their lives.

Here's the reason I preached this to you. I believe my assignment this Easter-- the reason the Holy Spirit has sent me into your home right now is to tell you this, Church. Joy is not just a privilege. It's a responsibility.

A kind of joy unleashed on a life from being given something that can never be taken away-- resurrection power. That kind of a joy-- the joy that shines in a pandemic, the joy that sparkles in a cemetery, the joy that is exhibited in an emergency-- that joy is ours. And when they saw his wounds, they were glad.

That reminds me. When was it that Cleopas and his companion realized that it was Jesus? It was at the table when he broke the bread. That's verse 35. It was when he broke the bread. Why was it then?

Because as he walked, they couldn't see it. But when he was at the table breaking bread, they saw what they hadn't noticed before-- the holes in his hands. Blessing and brokenness go together. The bread was broken as he blessed it. He was broken to bless us.

Never assume that because your life is full of pain that God is there. For in His hands, suffering and glory always go together. And the greater the suffering, the greater the glory. The greater the pain, the bigger the power.

And when you can see the hole in his hands and see that though he was taken from you by death, he has been given back to you, you are opened up to live a life of joy-- joy that is the flag that flies high above the castle of my heart, because the king is in residence here. Our joy to the world-- joy in losing, joy in dying, in sickness and in health and in blessing and in cursing-- no matter what happens to us, should it be this situation that rocks our world or another-- no matter what's taken from our hands that we still have joy.

It's not just a privilege. It's a responsibility. Do you feel it? Is your joy not being given back to you? Are you not seeing that it was never based on circumstances? We can enjoy blessings, but we're not defined by them.

It's a privilege, yes, to have that joy. But it is a responsibility. And may God through His spirit give us the grace to suffer well with the joy flying as the flag over the castle of our hearts because the king is in residence here. The blessedness of being broken is that it gives a chance for the waiting, watching, worrying world to see what it looks like to suffer with a king in our hearts.

Aslan asks the children in the last Chronicle of Narnia, *The Last Battle*, when they finally had gotten through

redemption and the stone table had cracked and he had come back to life and began to breathe flowers and bring those who were stone back to life-- he had fixed the treacherous heart of Edmund. All that needed to be done had been done. All that could be done was done.

But the children were sorrowful still. And Aslan said to the boys and girls, You are not "so happy as I mean you to be." You are not-- is it possible, Church, that the great lion who died is a lamb but rose as lion is not saying to our hearts who are just as worried as the rest of the world watching CNN, refreshing our Charles Schwab account as though we were defined by the treasures of this world-- I've lost everything.

You've lost nothing. You've gained everything in Christ. May we not hear him saying to us, with holes in his hands, you are not yet so happy as I mean you to be. I paid it all. Now walk in joy. You are opened up to a life of joy.

Now, I can't end this message without giving an invitation, in case even one person has come on to YouTube. And maybe you're in Pittsburgh. Maybe you're in Nebraska. Maybe you're in Bozeman and you're watching this message and you've never yet said yes to Jesus.

Oh, you've tried to do good things and you've tried to be kind and nice and noble. And maybe you give to the poor. But you're reading the Bible as something you need to do as opposed to something that Jesus did for you.

And today is the day to invite him into your heart. And yes, you must invite him into your heart. Do you see it in the text? This is in verse 29.

When they urged him to come, stay with us, only then did he come in to stay with them. Translation? Jesus-- get this-- who could not be contained by a grave, who couldn't be stopped by a stone sealed by soldiers, who couldn't be held back by even death itself, waited to be welcomed into their home.

And today, he stands at the door of your heart, wishing you would welcome him in. And you would say to me, Levi, I would believe if I saw holes in his hands. Well, what you're actually missing out on is the blessing of believing without seeing.

Did not Jesus say to Thomas, who finally believed when he saw, it's really great that you do. You've seen me and you believe. But Jesus said-- this is in John chapter 20. He said, "Blessed are they who believe in me though they haven't seen me with their own eyes."

And you're like, I don't know. How can I believe if I don't get to see it? Well, how would you believe anything? How is anything established in a court of law? How much that has happened in history do you know for sure happened?



Was there ever a George Washington? Did Napoleon Bonaparte ever exist? How do you know anything? People saw and wrote it down. People saw and told others about it. Look into it.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has been called one of the greatest attested facts in all of history. There were eyewitness accounts who did see. No, we can't see and touch the print in his hands, but we can see the impact-- the imprint left on those who did get to see, and the joy they walked in for the rest of their lives.

Peter, who was willing to lie in order to not die, now fearlessly went to his death and was crucified upside down, willing to rejoice all the way to the grave. And when we believe, even though we haven't seen, what are we given? First Peter 1:8 tells us that we are given "an ecstatic joy, indescribably sublime and immersed in glory," when we believe in him who we did not see but we believe in him nonetheless.

So today, the invitation is to a life of joy. Not without pain, but that will thrive in the midst of your suffering. And if you invite Jesus into your heart, on the authority of God's Word, I can tell you that your sins will be forgiven. You will be given a new heart and a new life and an invitation to participate in all that is coming in days two through seven of this new creation week that began on Easter Sunday. Would you bow your head with me and pray?

Jesus, we thank you that as this stream goes into kitchens and living rooms, bedrooms, cars, backyards all over this world, we thank you that your spirit is helping us to do what those two did. The moment they saw you, they had to tell. The moment they experienced, they had to share.

It is our privilege to send this message of freedom for the captive, of healing for the sick, of sight for the blind, because of Jesus. And if you're listening to this and you've never said yes to him-- you've never turned your heart over to him-- this is your moment and now is your time. I'm going to say a prayer.

And if you're ready to turn from your sins and experience resurrection life, I want you to pray this prayer to God. Mean it in your heart. Say it with your lips.

Say, "Dear God, I know I'm a sinner and I can't fix myself. But I believe you can. Please come into my heart and make me new. I give myself to you in Jesus' name."