

# Resurrection Life

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz emphasizes the necessity of believing in the resurrection of Jesus as the foundation of salvation and the call to live a life transformed by that belief.*

**Duration:** 52:31

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:32, Matthew 16:24, Romans 8:2, Romans 10:9, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Philippians 3:10, 2 Timothy 2:12

**Topics:** "Resurrection Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not engaging in futile arguments with those who oppose the faith. He encourages believers to rely on the life of Christ, His wisdom, and power to navigate the complexities of the last days. The speaker shares a powerful testimony of a man who was tired of the ups and downs of his own efforts and eagerly asked how he could join the kingdom of God. The sermon also addresses the issue of striving in the flesh versus submitting to the cross and dying to self. The speaker concludes by highlighting the difficulty some believers have in fully embracing the resurrection of Christ and emphasizes the need for personal belief in order to experience salvation.

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## Transcript

We ask you to breathe upon us, Lord, the spirit of life. We love the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, mighty God, and no other. Just ask you to enfold us, precious God, in that life and to bring forth out of your own heart this morning the things that are choice and pertinent and intended, Lord, for this hour and for this people.

Bless this speaking and richly anoint it, mighty God. Anoint also our ears to hear it and to receive it. Give us the courage, mighty God, to enter into it and to live it.

We thank you and praise you, Lord, for this precious way and your answer now in Jesus' holy name. Amen. I wonder if I need to remind you of the one verse that constitutes salvation in all the scripture.

I've quoted it to Jews time and time again. And I've seen many pass from death to life into believing in that one verse and the acting on it. It says, if you'll believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord, what's the rest of that, and that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Just for curiosity's sake, how many people have never heard that verse before? Raise your hand. Come on. Just one? How many people have heard it but dimly, somewhere it's just, there's a faint, okay.

Isn't it interesting that of all of the doctrines of God, the Lord only insists upon one to constitute salvation, that you believe that Jesus is Lord and that God hath raised him from the dead. Has someone ever said to you when you've had a religious discussion, well, have you seen anyone who's come back? Is there anything more offensive to human sensibility than resurrection from the dead? It's the most patent and calculated offense to human reason and logic and understanding. I think it's for that reason that God has delighted above all in selecting it as the key to salvation.

If you've not been able to leap over that one, then you are yet dead in your sin. The belief in the resurrection of Jesus is the key to salvation. And it's more than just a doctrinal thing that I'm speaking about, which I hope will be more clear as I go on.

I want you to turn in the book of 1 Corinthians to the 15th chapter. The whole chapter is devoted to the theme of resurrection. We'll just step right into the middle of the stream.

The 17th verse of Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, you are yet in your sins. Isn't it interesting the countless tens upon tens of thousands who believe that Jesus was a good man and a moral example, and somehow if we screw up our courage and purse our lips and grit our teeth and try to walk in the model that he established, that is all that religion could require of us? I don't know what name you would call that, but I know that it's practiced by millions of religionists and it is a heinous abomination. Do you know that? To take something that is holy and sacred and that is intended by God to enter us into the glories of his kingdom, to emasculate that and to dilute that and only to bring forth out of that some kind of limp moral figure whom we should emulate on the basis of our own puny strength has got to be one of the unholy concoctions of which human ingenuity can conceive.

And the pity is that that is what is called Christianity by untold thousands in the earth who are probably right now attending the country club and others like it all over the earth. Dear children, anybody insulted yet by being called that? Okay, dear children, but you are dear, but you're children, if our faith is anything, it is a resurrection faith. And if you'll not believe that God hath raised Jesus from the dead, how then shall you believe that he can raise you also? Because God intends for us to be a resurrection people as those brought back from the dead.

I want to remind you of something that the Lord has reminded me somewhere between last night and the early morning hours at the conclusion of the book of Job. Do you remember that book? In the very first verses, God describes Job as a perfect and an upright man. And as a matter of fact, as the description goes on, we find that he is exemplary, a saint as to be found anywhere in the annals of religion.

He is impeccable. He is a moral giant. We would fall on our faces and dissolve in tears if we had, oh, but that model to emulate.

But do you know what the end of the book is? That same one described by the Lord as perfect and upright. He says, I've heard of you by the hearing of my ear, but now my eyes seeth, and I abhor myself, and I repent in dust and ashes. I want to make a flat statement.

You can write it down in your notebook. The most fundamental error that's at the heart of why the whole world is grievously askew is this, the failure to understand God as he is. God says in the scriptures, my people perish for the want of knowledge.

And he's not just talking about doctrine. He's talking about the knowledge of him. My people perish for the want of knowledge.

And the great lament against Israel was this, that they learn of me by precept, that their condition is so pathetic and so fallen that the only faint way that they proceed is by precept and by the teachings of men, rather than by the awesome knowledge of God that comes by intimate joining with him. The basic error of men is the failure to perceive God truly. And the other error, which is twin with it, is the failure, therefore, to perceive ourselves.

The human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? Do you believe that? Or are you enjoying, rather, some inflated and subjective notion of yourself, which you have languished in all your life long, and no one has ever had occasion to contradict, and it has served you well, and it gives you a sense of assurance when you lay down at night, surely God can have no controversy with me. I've not committed adultery, or if I have, there's been outstanding justification.

It really wasn't adultery, it was love, or art, or poetry. And if you need more reasons, I can give them to you. I've used them.

I think that what we most desperately need is what both Job and Isaiah and Daniel and every great man of God experienced, including the Apostle Paul, who was so blinded by the effulgence of the glory of God that he was in darkness for three days and had to be led away from the encounter on Damascus Road as a child by the hand, and languished in darkness and would not eat for three days. So astounding was the revelation of the magnitude and the glory of God when it came. Job, who was the perfect and upright man, who would make our Mr. Presbyterian, or man of the year, look sick, when he saw God in something of the magnitude of his glory, cried out, I abhor myself, and I repent in dust and ashes.

You know what God said about that statement? God turned to his three theological comforters and said, My wrath is kindled against you, because you have not spoken as my servant Job has spoken. And if I can presume upon God this morning, you know what I would tell you? That there's only one fit statement from mortal lips that God is pleased to hear. Ever and always, and that is, I abhor myself and I repent in dust and ashes.

Every other statement is an offense in his holy healing. When the prince of the prophets and the chiefest oracle of God, to whom was committed the greatest treasure of revelation of the Messiah to come, glimpsed that same glory, he cried out, Woe is me, oy vey, I'm undone, I'm a man of unclean lips, and I live in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Dear children, can you deduce something from that? That if the chief oracle of God cries out that he's undone and he's a man of unclean lips, what then shall we say? And I'll tell you this also.

Every single one of us in this room, and at the country club country club, and the places like it all over the earth, shall have a head-on encounter with the God of glory, and shall have occasion to smite our breasts eternally, except we first say in this life, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. How far are we from that recognition, so smugly self-satisfied in our religious, moral, ethical Jewish lives, not at all understanding a holy God and what is his requirement? Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect, and holy as I am holy. And if you think that he's a whooping, or he's just playing with words, or he's just setting a vague standard toward which we should generally aspire, you have simply not understood.

That phrase is so archaic, I abhor myself and I repent in dust and ashes, that we smile in a kind of wry way. What does that mean? Well, men literally put on sackcloth. They took something that would chafe their skin.

Why, that very picture is so inimical to the spirit of this age, that I don't even know how to describe it. The spirit of this whole age is smooth and flesh-exalting. We've learned supremely how to powder ourselves and pimp ourselves and adorn ourselves deliciously in every kind of garment and array.

For us to put on sackcloth would really be a radical turnabout. I abhor myself and I repent in dust and ashes. Men actually took their hands and stuck it in filth and sprinkled it on their heads.

You know what that is a picture of? Nothing less than burial. You know why God said that his anger was kindled against Job's comforters? Because they had not spoken as my servant Job had spoken? Because in God's sight there's only one place for us in the light of his glory, and that's unto death. There's not a righteous man upon the earth who'll do us good and sin us not.

And the wages of sin is death. But the glory of God is, that though the wages of sin is death, the gift of God in Christ Jesus is eternal life. I want to underline that little two-letter word, in Christ Jesus.

Not about him. In him is life eternal. If you have acknowledged your condition as God sees it and have received the remedy that God has provided, and that is by an act of faith entering into the death which Jesus performed in your stead, and then sinking with him into burial, because anything that's dead, any cadaver that is mortal has got to be corrupt, and go into burial, you'll also be joined with him into resurrection, unto newness of life.

You know what God is about, children? God is wanting to establish a kingdom on the earth. He's wanting to show a dying world an alternative. And that alternative is the alternative of men risen from death who can say, death where is thy sting? Fearless! No more necessity for underarm deodorants and sprays.

No more tremblings and tremors of encounters and fitful commitments which you feel unable to meet, which you are. But the resurrected Christ in you, the hope of glory, able to meet every situation however demanding, and you entering into a new rest in him, a kingdom of such people who don't sweat, who don't strive, who know the peace of God that passes understanding, who move by his life, who are not eating from that corrupt tree that brings death, but from the tree of life continually, who can say with Paul, for me to live as Christ, in him I move and live and have my being. I want to say, children, this is utterly supernatural.

It's not at all religious. You don't attain to it by the study of doctrine or by systematic attendance at church or Sunday school or any such thing, but by a radical act of faith by which you lay aside your life and let it sink into death and are raised up to newness of life with him. It was right here in Kansas City, seven or eight years ago, among the experiences that God gave us then as a new believer, that a woman came to our house and prayer village one day more dead than alive.

She was so harried by Satan that she couldn't remember when she had a night of undisturbed sleep. She found herself blaspheming God, a mouth filled with filth, things that were uncontrollable happening in her life. She was wretched, and she had been to many who she thought might help her or would cast out demon spirits or take her by the ankles and shake them out, but I had the impression that that was not the need.

It was not a demon problem. It was just a good old-fashioned flesh problem, and I think that there's a reason why demonology has become particularly popular because it's a lot more convenient to shake it out or cast it out than to submit to a cross unto death. If we can only have our life and keep it.

Isn't that what Abraham said when the Lord said that in Isaac and his seed will the covenant be established? And Abraham said, but Moses said, can't Ishmael live forever? Can't he use something from the flesh? That desire is in us all. So I said to this woman, how would you like to die once rather than 10,000 times daily? She said, what do you mean? I said, if there were a coffin in this living room ready to receive you, would you be willing to enter it once and for all with the faith that if you join the Lord in his death, you'll be raised with him to newness of life? No more to be plagued by the kinds of things that have been continually harassing your life? All of the things that impinge upon the flesh, those hordes of Egyptians who are in pursuit of Israel and will not let it go? And the only answer is that they need to be swallowed up in the waters of death, that we can see the flotsam and jetsam on the opposite shore. I knew that I was reaching her because she started to get pale.

And if you've not gotten pale at the prospect of joining Jesus in his death, then for you it has remained only thus far a point of doctrine. There must be a God up there who is wringing his hands and crying, oy, they have made doctrine of my foods. They think that if they speak about them and are able to quote them, that somehow they have entered into the magnificent realities which they speak.

Children, resurrection is more than a doctrine. It's an experience, and not just once and for all only. But Paul says, I die daily.

Well, she said she was willing. And by an act of faith and prayer, she committed her life unto death. I'm not just talking about her defects.

I'm not talking about her temper, or her other grievous aspects of her personality that she wants to commit to the cross. All. Because God's judgment is on all flesh.

And in the spiritual sense, that lid came down on that coffin, on that life. And that woman who was willing, I said, you know, you'll not leave this room. I've said this to people time and time again who have come forward at church invitations.

You'll not leave this altar. You'll not get up off your knees. If there is no resurrection, if Jesus not be raised from the dead, you're finished.

I remember the church in Sweden at a youth meeting. Precious, beautiful, young Swedish believers, screaming forth out of their seats at one of these late midnight services, and this call to join Jesus in death and resurrection. And I was taunting them and provoking them as they came, and telling them that they're too young to die.

And they just brushed me aside, and went right on past, and laid down their lives at the altar. The man who was my interpreter in those days said, Artie, I need to speak with you. We made an appointment the next day to take a walk in the streets of Oslo.

And as we walked, he rehearsed his pitiful condition. Spirit filled, tongue speaking, gift endowed, holy given, life to God in service. But he said, Art, something is missing.

Why should he talk to me? He sent something. And I don't know why I did this. I said, dear brother, you're a precious young man, and I know that your life is dedicated, and you want to serve the Lord.

But supposing I had a death warranty with your name on it. Would you be willing to sign it? And before I could speak further, this man ripped the pen out of my hand, grabbed me by the scruff of the neck, and threw me up against the wall of a building. And as the tears rolled down his face and bounced off the sidewalk, he said, Where do I sign? He was sick to the teeth of being up one day and down the next.

Have you experienced that? Those momentary risings and fallings that are so characteristic of the people of God. Screwing up their courage, cursing their lips, trying to do good things for God, only to find themselves defeated even that same day. God never intended that the glories of the kingdom were going to be built or obtained by all fleshly striving.

He signed on the dotted line and left his life on the sidewalk of Oslo. And I've met this brother over the years since, and the Lord has used his life for a glory. But it's no longer a bright young man trying to do for God.

It's a resurrected Christ who has the possession of a life that was yielded unto death, who is performing his own glories. There's a difference, children. The resurrection is real.

If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain. You are yet in your sins, or yet in yourself. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

And here's the punchline. The 22nd verse, 1 Corinthians 15. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ, in I Am, shall all be made alive.

In Adam all die. That doesn't refer only to that ancient act that took place in Genesis. It refers to every Adamic act since.

If what you're speaking, I don't care how religious it is, or what you're witnessing, or what you're performing, is Adamic in its origin, if it is only cerebral, or moral, or born out of your own volition and will and energies and abilities, it is Adamic and it is death. In Adam all die. Now, if we're going to get anywhere together, and with Him, we've got to believe the Word of God.

This isn't some superior kind of gamesmanship. This is life and death in every syllable. And we're enjoined by God to live by every syllable that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

And God tells us flat out that every Adamic act is tainted by death, however well-meaning and well-intending. We saw that last week, when a hotshot apostle sought to detain his lord from an encounter in Jerusalem where he would have to suffer. Isn't suffering inimical to the human mind? Isn't it equally as offensive as resurrection? Isn't there something about the nature of flesh that shrinks from any variety of suffering, whether it's psychic, emotional, physical? Isn't there something that panders toward comfort and to being placated and tampering? The flesh does not understand the necessity for suffering.

Isn't that why Jesus had to tell His disciples, O fools and slow apart, not to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not the Messiah to have suffered and died before He ascended to His glory? They only wanted the glory. They didn't want the suffering that must precede the glory. Dear children, for every showing forth of the glory of God, I believe that there has to be an equal measure of suffering and death.

And death does not mean the obliteration of consciousness. That's a lie. Else there would not be an eternal gnashing of teeth and wailing of which Jesus spoke.

Death means suffering. Suffering is another name for death. And there's something about our nature that shrinks from it, and something about the kingdom of God that requires it.

There's a crown of thorns before there's a crown of glory. And I would to God could preach you another gospel, but I'd be doing you and God a disservice. And I can tell you flat out that right here in River City, before this age shall have come to its conclusion, we're going to find men and women again being martyred for Christ.

Would you believe that? I know it boggles your imagination. You can hardly perceive that in the kind of civilization that we have, which seems to be so supportive of religion, and indeed it is, but antagonistic to His life, that there shall again be martyrs for Christ's sake. There are going to be casualties as we come further to the conclusion of the age, because there are two kingdoms in collision.

And the sparks are going to fly, and the anger and the conflict is going to ensue. I can't think of anything that's more imperative for those who are determined in their hearts to follow on after God than to know, to learn, to enter in to the resurrection truth of God. I think that the great plumb line that shall separate the sheep from the goats at the end of the age are those who have held resurrection as doctrine only, and those who have known it, or will come to know it, as actuality and as experience.

Death is not the cessation of consciousness. It's the mortification, the humiliation, the anguish of soul, the pain of being suspended, waiting for the resurrection life to break forth out of your humanity. And I want to demonstrate that today, and I'll not be able to finish it, but hopefully conclude it at the final session next Sunday.

But I think that it is a profound word for this age, and that the Lord has not been pleased at least to reveal it to me until recently, because it was not yet time. I want you to turn to that main text in the 11th chapter of John, the episode of the death of Lazarus, which I've never understood, but I'm beginning to understand now. If you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord, and that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Because if you have believed that God hath raised him from the dead, then that same quality and integrity of faith will enable you to be saved from death by the same power and glory of God. It's not a salvation once and for all, although it is that eternally, but it's a salvation daily in the death to which God will bring you for the bringing forth of his glory. And such a death was it that the Lord allowed a friend by the name of Lazarus to suffer.

A certain man named Lazarus was ill. He was of Bethany, interesting that that means the house of affliction, the village where Mary and her sister Martha lived. This Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair.

It was her brother Lazarus who was now sick. So the sister sent him, saying, Lord, he whom you love so well is sick. When Jesus received the message, he said, This sickness is not to end in death, but on the contrary, it is to honor God and to promote his glory, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. They were his dear friends, and he held them in loving esteem. Therefore, even when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he still stayed two days longer in the same place where he was.

How do you like them apples? I love it because it so confounds human understanding. It so perfectly offends our Jewish and Presbyterian sensibilities. Let's say if one is sick and we profess to love them and he's a friend, we will be jolly on the spot to go and to provide the niceties and the amenities.

But because Jesus loved him, therefore, he still stayed two days longer where he was. That is such a beautiful picture of the kinds of situations that we are going to encounter in the end days. Things that shall not be able to be resolved and cannot be submitted and are not amenable to human reasoning.

I was just telling my brother Jim on the way down to the service this morning, who asked me, what was the result of the conference that you had in Minnesota with regard to the question of whether you're going to be allowed to remain in Kansas City or return to that remote location? I said, well, I went with full intention to persuade them that they were being myopic and selfish and insisting that we return. After all, our time could be more significantly redeemed in Kansas City and there's a Jewish community here of 30,000 and this is the hour we believe when God has again turned to his Jewish people. Evidently, he's begun to stir certain things and bring them into being.

And we were going to persuade them that though they fasted and prayed three days and had a unanimous witness that we would return, that they were wrong. And when we all assembled in one room and submitted the question before God in the name of Jesus and the Spirit of God began to move and his corporate wisdom be revealed through his people, I bowed my head together with two other Jewish brothers who had accompanied me there also with the same intent and said, yes, Lord, to a decision of God that contradicted my will on every point. And I'm not a babe in the Lord and I've had some experience in what is called being led by the Spirit and I had completely missed the mind of God because I had read only the natural circumstances.

I had seen only by the natural eye what seemed to me a promising and prominent beginning with the Jewish people. What I would think would be a more significant use of my time and energy. But that was not the will of the Lord at all.

His will is that we are returning to that remote location and we had to say, yes, Lord, though we did not understand it. Are you content to live on such a basis? Can you do the will of God without understanding? Does he have to give you explanation? Because we're going to see here a man who was sick unto death, who was comforted by his sisters, that the message has gone out that Jesus should know that he's sick unto death. And as he languished unto death, day by day, he could see in the faces of his sisters however brave show they made that the Lord was simply not coming.

And there was no explanation. How many of you have experienced that? You've cried out to God. You're in terrible distress.

Your marriage is teeter-tottering on the brink of annihilation or some other catastrophe of equal significance. Or you're suffering in your body or a great anguish of mind or soul or some great question that must be answered for you. And it seems that he's a million miles from you at the end.

I'll tell you that it's the same reason. Because he loves you, he's not rushing to placate you. Because he loves you, he's not going to baby you.

Because he loves you and knows that there just must live by faith, he's going to induct you into that school if it kills you. But he's not ignorant of your plight. He's slow in coming because this sickness is not unto death, but to promote the glory of God.

He can make nice, he can take away your temporary affliction, but there are deeper purposes of God that are being worked, which the human and religious mind cannot understand. And therefore, in the last analysis, as we said in the beginning, it always comes to what tree from which we shall choose to eat. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil? It wasn't evil only, it was good also.

But it's knowledge that we must have. Egotistical children who have to know, who can't trust without knowing, who must require explanation before they do. Yea, though he slay me, yet will I trust him.

The same Job said. Can you say that? Are you willing to be brought to that same place in faith? I believe that God is bringing us there. We went to bed that night with peace that God had given answer, and yet with another question left unanswered.

But Lord, what about what you've begun in Kansas City? What about the hope and the expectancy? What about the weekly Bible study now which has been begun without our seeking and striving? Where young Jewish believers in the Lord are being succored and helped and strengthened. Is all that to languish and to die? And the next day the Lord gave us the answer. Once a month, the first weekend of every month, we're to return to Kansas City and make the input that will keep this work alive.

And another Jewish brother already in Kansas City, together with yet another, will see to the weekly Bible study. And by the provision of the Lord through His Word that He gave answer to every need. Though it contradicted every human need, we simply do not see as God sees, and our way is not His way.

And therefore the only answer is that He must be our life, our reason, our wisdom, our all. And that's why it says in 1 Corinthians that God in Christ is named unto us wisdom and redemption and sanctification. And there's one more attention to this.

Power, whatever, He's all in all. For me to live is Christ, Paul said. And if you think that Paul accomplished the things he did by virtue of Jewish intellect or natural attributes or unusual courage, you have simply not understood.

The glory of Paul is the glory of the resurrected Christ. How many of us, if our friend were sick, would remain longer in the same place where we were? How many of us, when a crisis comes, are moved by our own human sensibility and judgment, rather than wait for the action of the life of Christ in us to dictate what our response shall be? How many of us, if we had the opportunity to give answer to some bristling Jewish man who wants to argue and dispute with us and we're bright and filled with all kinds of scriptural knowledge and understanding, would turn on our heels and walk away and leave him flabbergasted with his jaw agape, not willing to enter into foolish debate? And by that act, by a silence, have a far more telling effect on his life than by our speaking. O children, we cannot play this game by the numbers.

This is a pretty little paint set and we put red for number 17 and blue for number 16 and we'll have a beautiful picture of the Last Supper when we're finished. These last days, we are in the last days, are not going to be walked and be fulfilled by any such patsy formula, but only by the very life of Christ, by his wisdom, by his power, moving through the complex pattern of the days and that only. How many would enroll in that kingdom? You say, what do I have to do to join? You have to lay aside your life, lose it, that you might find it.

You have to be willing to call finis, halt, to the manner of life which is now being conducted. You have to be willing to bring into the grave that life which is not necessarily evil, it's good and it has even been applauded by many and you thought was even satisfactory, but which God says is of the flesh and his judgment is on all flesh and the only thing that he is pleased to hear is one who abhors himself and repents in dust of nations, willing to sprinkle the dust of death on his head, a symbolic statement that he is willing to bring that whole natural life into burial, that it might be raised with him at the notice of the Lord. Now, I knew that today was going to be the most difficult of all the speakings.

I don't know why it is, but my experience has shown that there's nothing more difficult to persuade the people of God than the resurrection of Christ. And if you have not believed it unto salvation for yourself again and again and again, then you have not yet believed. In a sense, you've not yet been saved and maybe your faith needs to grow by hearing to the point that you're able to enter into this resurrection glory.

After that interval, he said to his disciples, let us go back again to Judea. And the disciples said to him, Rabbi, the Jews only recently were intending and trying to stone you and you're going back there again? I wonder when Jesus delayed two days longer where he was, how many of the disciples thought to themselves, hey, is our master chicken? His friend is languishing in sickness unto death and he remained two days longer where he is? He probably remembers that the last time he was in that neighborhood, he narrowly escaped with his life. And if he goes there now, it's curtains.

He's a coward. And you know what, children? Every act of yours that is an obedience unto death, and by the way, that's a definition for faith and there simply is no other, will always elicit from those around you misunderstanding and reproach. That's part of the dying.

Are you willing to suffer that? Being obedient to God unto death, in waiting for his life to move you where men would expect you to be, will bring from them a reproach that you'll not be able to answer. And I gave an illustration last week of how the Lord seemed to have departed from me at a critical confrontation at a city college in New York, 85% Jewish, for reasons that I could not understand and for reasons that were not given and the Lord allowed me to drink and to taste the cup of humiliation and that's dying. And that the deepest mortification of all was not the horrendous attacks of rabbis and Jews who had a fall guy who couldn't even answer for himself, but was to look in the faces of the Christians who had arranged the meeting and to see their pitiful disappointment.

Their faces spoke volumes. Hey cats, what's wrong with me? What's the matter? Couldn't you pray knowing that you were coming to this kind of encounter? Something wrong? A hidden sin in your life? Don't you know how to fast? And you cannot answer them in words. That disappointment is part of the dying and Jesus, I believe, had to experience that from his own disciples and so also must we walk who are called by his name.

We're happy to wear the crosses around our necks. We're happy to decorate our churches by them. We're happy to plant them on our dashboards with suction cups.

But how many of us are willing in fact and in daily life to experience this? Death is humiliation. Death is mortification. Death is God doing something without explanation.

Death is lying on a sweaty bed of sickness in terrible weakness and ineptitude looking at the distressed faces of your sister Mary and Martha to see that the Lord is not coming and he's not going to save you though he's given sight to the blind and he's healed others who are sick. He who loves you is going to leave you languished unto death and still trust him and still have peace because Jesus said of Lazarus when they did go Our friend Lazarus, he says in the 11th verse is at rest and sleeping but I am going there that I may waken him out of his sleep. One of the earmarks of the kingdom of God is the rest of God.

And one of the earmarks of the world's religions is sweaty striving. Isn't it interesting that the day of rest, Sabbath, Sunday is one of the sweatiest and most grisly days in Christendom. My, my, my.

The kingdom of God is rest. There's a rest which God has prepared for the people of God even without knowing. Our friend Lazarus is at rest but I'm going there to awaken him out of his sleep.

I won't say that I enjoyed that or I knew that rest when God allowed me to taste that mortification in that college encounter. And I told you that for three weeks I languished like a dog licking my wounds hardly able to lift my head with terrible haunting doubts that came sweeping in like a flood. Cats, you've blown it.

Cats, you've missed it. Whoever said that you were called to ministry. Whoever said you had a calling to the Jews.

You had a glorious opportunity. You thought that this was going to ignite sparks of gospel fire throughout New York City that would be taken into the Jewish communities and you failed. And three weeks later to get a phone call from a woman with a pathetically thin little voice and the end thereof was the salvation of one straggly nervous wreck of a Jewish woman who passed from death unto life.

Paul said, It's death which worketh in me and life in you. Children, there's a principle here so great, so deep, so profound that we cannot avoid it. It's real.

It's not a little biblical rhetoric. It's not a little flourish. It's not something to which we give acknowledgement and consent or assent.

It's something so utterly real, so radical, so graphic that God will give us the opportunity to taste of it even daily that out of that death might come a resurrection glory. We have all soon been fallen short of the glory of God. And I think in one of these sessions I described a very famous painting at Colmar, France, The Crucifixion of Jesus by the artist Gruenwald, a 15th century painter.

It had to be one of the most horrible paintings before which I have ever stood. The sisters of Mary of Dunstadt have celebrated this great work. And there's a wretched Jesus depicted on the cross that you could hardly wonder whether you're looking at a man or some kind of animalistic form.

So grotesquely descended, so misshapen, so gnarled, so pulled out of joint, the fingers just twisted and reaching to heaven with the spikes through. The lips white, the face full of beatings and bruises and blood and coagulation. White lips.

The paroxysms of pain being registered on that face in death. And the body a sickly gangrenous hue with pieces of wood and metal embedded in the flesh from the flagellation. You never saw a more pathetic,

wretched thing strapped on a cross.

And the contrast with the forms of his mother Mary and John the Baptist, which the artist has included, makes it all the more startling. They are in perfect symmetry and he is in the most ugly of distortions. We need to see that and to understand how that painting was inspired by the spirit of God and how wretched a thing sin is that God was required to suffer that.

But I don't want to leave you there because I walk this time around the other side of the painting and on the other side is the resurrection. One side the death, the other side the resurrection. And vocabulary fails me to describe the glory of that painting.

As wretched and as pitiful as was the death, that is how glorious is the resurrection. And that is always true. If our life is humdrum, average, mediocre, unexceptional, if we have not touched people for God's sake and we have not set forth the kingdom, it's because we have not been willing to suffer a proportion of humiliation and death that would have resulted in a like measure of glory.

This painting shows Jesus bursting forth out of death. And this Renaissance artist has captured and frozen a moment when you see not only is Jesus leaping up out of the tomb, but the Roman centurions pitching forward in that moment they were stunned, their helmets were toppling off their heads. And here's this glorious figure emerging out of death in beautiful and perfect symmetry that was deranged and distorted on the other side is now coming to perfect symmetry.

And where every wound was great beams of light and glory are pouring out. I can't describe the effulgence of glory that attends this figure as it comes forth out of death. This, children, is the faith.

If you believe that Jesus is Lord and God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved again and again and again. Death, Paul says, is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is thy sting? Grave, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you ever heard the Resurrected Christ speak out of your mouth? Have you ever heard him give witness through you? Have you ever seen his calm and his peace, his strength, his poise, his joy, his power in moments of your ineptitude, your weakness, your human frailty? Are you willing to switch off from you and switch on to God in moments of crisis and predicament where you're unable to be the loving mother, where you're unable to be the truly spiritually accommodating wife? In all of the places where your life fails and breaks down, are you willing to believe that if you're let go unto death, willing to suffer the humiliation of nothingness, that the Lord will bring forth an expression of the glory of his resurrection life? The just shall live by faith. That's what that scripture means. That your believing in moment by moment will bring forth the expression of his life.

Jesus told them plainly in the 14th verse that Lazarus is dead. And for your sake I'm glad that I was not there. It will help you to believe and to trust and rely on me.

Next week we'll continue and conclude with this remarkable episode because I think it is such a statement for the age. But I'll just leave you with this thought. Many of you who have marveled and have admired Martha and Mary and the one of the two which was more spiritual doubt on this, that both women greeted Jesus exactly in the same manner when he came.

Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. It was a reproach to Jesus. However spiritual, one thought herself to be over the other.

In the moment of crisis, both women had exactly the same understanding, the same beggarly notion of God, the same failure. Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. And Jesus had to answer her and answers us.

I am myself the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in and adheres to and trusts and relies on me, although he may die, yet shall he live. And whoever continues to live and believe, have faith and cleave to and relies on me, shall never actually die at all.

Do you believe this? Who do men say that I am? And not content with the general question, Jesus poked his fingers in the chest of his disciples and said, who do you say that I am? Children, this isn't just an episode out of antiquity. Do you believe this? That you'll never die if you cleave to and rely on him? That though you go into the grave and languish in sickness unto death and you stink and your body has corrupted and it's a fourth day that you've been in the tomb, that when it shall please the Lord by the beauty of his own speaking and his own perfect time to say, come forth, that you shall come forth unto glory. And you know what the thing is? More Jews believed on Jesus in the day when stinking Lazarus came out of death and corruption at the near call of the Lord than probably has ever been performed by the speaking and ministering and witnessing of men.

Without a word, without a deed, without any limit describing, by the seeing of this resurrection splendor, it said many believed on him in that day. You know what I believe with all my heart? God's waiting again for a Lazarus people come forth out of death that many Jews might believe upon him in that day. My Jewish people have seen your religious respectability.

It's nice. But not half as impressive as their own. But they've not seen the resurrection splendor.

They've not seen the glory that comes only out of death. You know what the name Lazarus means? Isn't it interesting? No accidents in the scripture? His name means helpless. And you'll be willing to put aside your pride, your self-sufficiencies, your ability, your religious expertise and be helpless, be humiliated.

Not draw from your own strength, your own ability, your own speaking, your own cleverness. Out of that death and humiliation and mortification shall come forth his glory out of your helplessness. And I'll tell you what, if you'll not do it willingly, the Lord is going to engineer the circumstances of our life in the last days by a bewilderment of such conditions that whatever our expertise and competence, we shall be rendered helpless without him.

That we must say, for me to live is Christ. Are you happy for that? Don't look so happy. I'm happy for that.

What a glory. All naked, travails and groans until now, waiting for the coming forth of such sons of God. Resurrection children.

Let's bow our heads. Ask the Lord to seal this word. Save it from being just another religious talk.

Make it utterly real and persuasive. Show us the futility of any other foundation for life and being than the resurrected Christ. And teach us how to enter in to that awesome reality by a willingness to suffer and measure something of His humiliation and death.

Precious God, in Jesus' name, Lord, if ever I have cried out unto you, Lord, for help, if ever I have felt myself like a Lazarus, Lord, if ever I have sensed the futility of mere words, it is now. And Lord, I ask for a demonstration of that resurrection glory, of that life from death, of that spirit of life in Christ Jesus to take

the words which are as pleasing to be spoken and to make them like a fire in the hearts of His people and like a hammer upon the rock, to break up, Lord God, every lesser thing, however religiously acceptable, and to make us divinely discontent with anything less than the glories of your kingdom, that we shall be willing, mighty God, truly to embrace your cross and to be joined with you in death and burial and newness of life. For Jesus' sake and for your kingdom's sake we pray.

Amen. Bless you.

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