

Why Are You Weeping

by David Wilkerson

The sermon emphasizes the power of resurrection and the importance of understanding that Jesus is always with us, even in times of trial and failure.

Duration: 52:58

Scripture: Psalm 16:10, John 20:1-17

Topics: "Victorious Faith", "Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher encourages the congregation to raise their hands and thank Jesus for his love. He emphasizes the need for repentance and opening one's heart to receive God's protection and love. The preacher prays for strength and victory in the battles ahead and urges the congregation to bless the Lord. The sermon concludes with a message about the importance of living in victory and having a smiling, victorious faith.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. My message this morning, why are you weeping? Why are you weeping? Please go to John 20, if you will, please. The 20th chapter of John.

Beginning to read the first verse, I'm going to read the first 17 verses. Follow me closely, please. John 20, first 17 verses.

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeing the stone taken away from the sepulchre, then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, being John, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together, and the other disciple did outrun Peter and came first to the sepulchre.

And he stooped down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed, and as yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead.

Then the disciples went away again unto their own home, but Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping, and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, taken away, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Her boni, which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, please teach us by your Holy Spirit this morning about the power of your resurrection. Lord Jesus, don't let us miss what you're trying to say in this wonderful passage. I come, Lord, unto your anointing and unction, and ask you to sanctify my vessel.

Let me be a vessel of honor and praise to your name as I utter the precious living word of God. What a responsibility and what a joy to share your heart. And I pray, Lord, that everyone in this building will hear what you have to say.

No one is here by accident. You placed everyone in the seat in which they're sitting on purpose. And, Lord, you prepared this message.

You prepared it all this week. It wasn't done just suddenly. It was before we would know anyone that would be sitting here today.

You prepared a word. Now, Lord, let us receive it. I pray for healing of those who need to be healed in spirit, mind, and body, and soul.

Restore in this service today. Let there be great restoration through the power of your word and spirit, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Why are you weeping? It's resurrection morning. And it's still dark, the scripture says. And peering through the darkness, you see a few women walking toward the tomb.

And one of them is from a town named Magdala. And they call her Mary the Magdalene, the Magdala. And she can't wait, so she hurries before the others.

And she sees the stone rolled away from the tomb. And she peers in, and there's nobody there. And she sees the napkins or the clothing there.

And she sees the head wrappings in another position and is gone in despair. I'm sure she screamed. I'm sure she began to cry and weep.

And she turned from the women and ran right to Peter and John. And in this broken, sorrowful, pitiful, unconsolable mood, she says, Peter, John, the tomb is empty. They've taken our master's body.

Someone has stolen him. Somebody has taken him. They've laid him somewhere else.

I can't find him. Please come quickly. John runs first, and he goes and peers into the tomb.

And he sees it empty, and he stands back aghast. He's trying to take it all in. Peter, as impetuous as he is, he runs right into the tomb.

He looks around, and the Bible says John then followed him and seeing, believed. John and Peter, I don't know what they were thinking. I don't know what went through their mind.

It says they believed, but future events prove that they believed only partially, because Peter went fishing. He said, I'll go fishing. Went home.

Mary didn't leave. I don't know if the other women had gone. Apparently they had, and she's left alone.

And she gathers her courage, and she goes back again to the mouth of the tomb, and she looks in, and this time there are two angels sitting on the slab, one on the top and one on the bottom of the slab, on either ends of the slab. And she's looking, and they see her, and she is weeping uncontrollably, just absolutely weeping. For as yet they knew not, the Scripture says, they didn't understand the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead.

Now Mary and all these disciples had been taught by Jesus clearly that he was going to be killed, crucified, and raised the third day. He went over and over it. He had taught them, especially from Psalm 16:10, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

In fact, Paul the Apostle used that very verse to convince the Jews of the resurrection. This was the key verse that was used all through the New Testament church to prove to all unbelievers that Jesus was resurrecting. He said, it's right in your Scripture.

It's right in Isaiah. It's right in Psalms. The Jews believed the Psalms, and there it was.

Jesus used Jonah for a type before he died. He taught his disciples. He taught Mary.

For as Jonas was in three days and three nights in the well's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. And then he will rise just as Jonas came out of the belly of the well. I will come out of the tomb.

I want to prove to you conclusively that Mary and these disciples had been taught and taught and taught about the resurrection and didn't comprehend it. The word did not was not mixed with faith. They did not hear and understand a word of the resurrection message.

It didn't register three times just before he died. Jesus, like Matthew 17:22, Jesus said unto them, the Son of Man should be betrayed into the hands of men and they shall kill him. And the third day he will rise again.

In Matthew 20, 18, going to Jerusalem with the disciples, and evidently Mary is with them because later when he's crucified, she's there in Jerusalem. And Jesus said, behold, as we go to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priest and to the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death. They will crucify him, speaking of himself.

And on the third day he shall rise again. He's speaking in the third person. They're going to kill me.

We're going to my death. The scribes and the Pharisees are going to lay hold of me. I'm going to be killed.

I'm going to be crucified. But gentlemen, on the third day, Mary, on the third day, I'm going to rise again. His favorite place was Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

This woman, Jesus had cast seven devils out of her, the Bible said. And you know, that gave him, he became her kinsman, it gave him, she saw him having the full rights to her body, soul, and spirit because she'd been healed, and this woman was totally devoted to Jesus Christ, Lord God and Savior. Healed mind, body, soul, and spirit.

She was a miracle. Absolutely, totally devoted. But she missed the power of the resurrection.

She missed the truth of it. And this is so very, very vital to understanding victory in our lives today. Jesus taught them that he would only be raised from the dead on the third day, but he said the same power that raised me from the dead is going to raise you from the dead.

And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone that seeth the sun and believeth on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. Brother, there's no power of death. There's no grave anywhere.

I don't care how deep they bury you. There is nothing that's going to keep you from getting your new body and resurrected on the last day. Hallelujah.

Now, Mary's the focus of my message this morning. And I've tried to set out to prove to you that Mary all along and all the disciples had given a full and complete teaching on the resurrection. But it did not register.

It didn't. They just passed it off. They loved to sit at his feet.

They loved to hear the word, but it didn't touch their heart. It was not applied to their everyday life. They missed it.

No doubt Jesus spent so many hours telling Mary personally. She sat at his feet. Mary, they're going to crucify me.

I'm going to go to Jerusalem to the scribes and the Pharisees. He went through it in detail. But Mary, you're going to have a time of sorrow, but the sorrow is going to turn to joy.

Jesus told her that in John 16, 20. Your sorrow is going to turn to joy. You're going to have a very sorrowful time.

It's going to turn to joy if you'll just allow the truth to register. Now, Mary goes back to the mouth of the tomb and she looks in once more. And this woman is shaking, I'm sure, with grief.

Totally unconsolable. Grief stricken. Scripture said that Mary stood without at the sepulcher, weeping.

And as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulcher and seen two angels in white sitting. The one at the head, the other at the feet. Where the body of Jesus had lain.

And they say unto her, woman, why are you weeping? They were dumbfounded. I'm sure they had been sitting there waiting for all the disciples to come and gather and start rejoicing. Where are all the disciples? Peter and John were here and they've gone.

There's no great rejoicing. Where are the disciples? He told them the third day. This is the third day.

This is the new day. However, get hell in the grave. Where are the rejoicing believers? And suddenly Mary shows up and she's weeping.

And they are dumbfounded. They're aghast. They're saying, why are you weeping? Their thinking says, where's the joy, where's the victory? Where are those who are taking this word and applying it to their hearts? This is the third day.

He's raised. But you know why they're dumbfounded? Mary is weeping and they're looking right in the face of Jesus. Because he's standing right behind her.

They're looking at this weeping woman and she's on her feet, on her knees probably and sinking uncontrollably. There's the master. They're looking right at him.

That's where they're dumbfounded. Mary, why are you weeping? He who has all power and glory and victory over the tomb is right behind you. And now Mary, a devoted, loving disciple, stands there weeping.

Mary wept because she thought she had lost her Lord and her beloved. They have taken him away. They've taken away my Lord and I don't know where they have laid him.

She's looking for a dead Jesus. She's looking for a dead Jesus. She hasn't finished giving to him.

She has spices. Now he's already had the spices. He's already been cared for carefully.

And this is not a bit of confidence. Here she is. She's not finished in the flesh trying to minister to him rather than to comprehend.

She's doing for Jesus rather than allowing Jesus to do for her. And I don't think we hardly ever get out of that kind of condition where we're always striving in the flesh. Always, always trying to give something to him and never understanding what he's trying to do for us and what he has accomplished in the resurrection.

She's looking not for resurrected Jesus. She's looking for one who's still laid in the grave. If you tell me where you laid his body, I'll take him.

I don't know what she's going to do with it. She's going to cling to a dead Jesus. She's saying to herself, I've lost him who's delivered me.

He's left me alone. He's forever gone. Let me tell you something.

No power, nothing on earth or in hell can take your Jesus from you. Hallelujah. And they see under her woman.

Why do you weep? And when she said this, because evidently their eyes were not on her, but above her. And she's trying to see where the angels are looking and she turns, the Bible said. When she said this, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus.

I want to stop right here and freeze this picture. Here's Jesus standing over Mary and she turns around. There he is right before her.

And she doesn't recognize him in her grief. This proves that you can go through such trials and have such grief. There are times that you can't recognize him.

He can't recognize his presence. He can be right there and you can't acknowledge you can't see him. It's as though he has left you.

He is gone. You can't find him. And grief can do that.

Sorrow can do that. I want you to know something, folks. You and I have been given a revelation so great, so far beyond anything that Mary and the disciples have.

We not only have the Old Testament. We not only have Isaiah and the prophets and David and the psalmist and Moses and all who pointed to Christ, his death, his burial, his resurrection. We have the New Testament completed.

We have the historical testimony. We have the testimony of generations. We have a clear word that Jesus ascended to the Father, that he has taken authority and he's on the throne, that we do not serve a dead Christ.

He's risen. We have that testimony. It's been made very, very clear.

But then a crisis comes into our lives. For example, it can be a besetting sin that returns and you thought you had the victory. And you sit in the service this morning.

You say, Pastor, I failed the Lord. Somehow, even when I thought I had the victory, I fell back into an old pet sin. Something came over me and I went back and I feel so dirty, so unworthy, so unclean.

And I can't seem to get back to the Lord. I can't seem to find his presence. God has every right, Jesus has every right to drop me.

And sometimes you can feel abandoned. You feel dirty and unclean and filthy. And that's fine.

You go through the guilt. You go through the condemnation and all of that. But here's the problem.

In that state of mind so often, we end up weeping and crying and say, Oh God, I'll never make it. I keep failing you. You have every right to leave me.

And you still don't understand that he's still behind you. He's still there. He's not forsaken you.

He said, I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. I'll go with you to the end.

I don't serve a good time, Jesus. I serve a Jesus who's there when I fail, when I'm blessed, when I'm happy, when I'm sad. Christians are the worst tormentors.

Nobody torments themselves like Christians do. And no sinner on the face of the earth that torments himself like Christians do. Fail God and say, He's gone.

I can't find him. Where did he go? Where'd he go? He's right behind you, standing right there, never leaving. I'm with you to the end.

And by the way, he's not standing back there only. He's right here inside the heart, living and abiding. Oh, but he's gone.

I can't feel his presence. Folks, I don't trust my good feelings, let alone my bad feelings. I told you once and I'll tell you again, I'm never surprised at my flesh.

I'm never surprised when it rises up because the Bible said flesh is going to be flesh. Flesh in itself cannot be redeemed. Flesh has to pass away and be crucified.

But it will never change. That's why I need Jesus with me at all times and a sense of his presence and his abiding with me. Hallelujah.

Glory be to his precious name. You can have a dream and it's smashed. Your hope suddenly goes, a promise unfulfilled.

Maybe you heard a voice telling you something good was about to happen. Instead, you're greatly disappointed. And then we cry the cry of Mary.

Where is he? Where is he? We're talking now about a dead Jesus. We're talking as though he's dead. He's buried.

He's gone. Has no power. He's not been resurrected.

Do you understand what this scripture is trying to say to us? What about that Mary's problem you're having or trouble in your home or with your children or relationships? You've reached a point in which you say, I can't go on much longer. I don't know how I can handle it. I've tried.

Lord, I feel like I've come to the very end of my rope. And in that time, if you prayed and cried and wept and you don't see the answer coming yet. And you say, where is he? Where is he? Where did he go? I've lost him.

He hasn't heard me. In times like these, all you can see is the death. You cry a lot.

You weep a lot. It seems like you've lost him, like he had every right to leave you. You can't understand why the Lord is taking you through this kind of trial.

Why did he leave me? That's what Mary is thinking. She's thinking of her own hurt. She's thinking of her own loss.

Mary had come to the tomb, the Bible said, with spices that they might come and anoint him. She came with other women to anoint him. And now looking at that picture, here she is weeping.

She's got the spices ready to anoint his body. She wants to caress that body with these spices and this minister and love him and speak over his dead body. Jesus, oh, how I loved you.

I devoted to you. And it looks like a very religious devoted scene. And it was.

She was totally devoted. Don't get me wrong. This woman was totally devoted to Jesus.

But see, Mary is focused on the grave. She's focused on the death. And she's not focused on the resurrection.

She wanted to anoint the dead and not to seek the word of resurrection power. She wasn't thinking of life or victory over death. She was thinking of her loss.

And I have lost him. She's focused on what she could do for Jesus, even though dead and totally ignoring or not comprehending what the Lord had just done for her in supplying and providing for her everything she needed to have victory, everything she needed to live victoriously and be redeemed. And she has missed it.

But you can appear to be so devoted to Jesus. I've seen people who cry all the time. There's nothing wrong with weeping.

I weep in his presence at times. I weep. I weep over sin.

I weep over weakness. I weep over the condition of the world. I weep over sinners.

But that weeping just endures for a season. But I'm not. That's a different kind of weeping.

That's the weeping of the heart of God. But this is a different kind of weeping. This is a weeping of ignorance.

This is a weeping of self-concern, of my hurt and my pain, as if the Lord has left me. Some of you here this morning, you feel that now. You've been feeling like the Lord has kind of just backed away and left you on your own.

And it seems like, it looks like a very devoted picture here. Here's a woman at the tomb and weeping and crying and reaching out, where's my Lord? It seems very, very religious. But there's something wrong with the picture.

Because there, standing beside her, is a resurrected Christ that she doesn't recognize. With all that she needs. And she's weeping and Jesus himself is aghast.

He's not playing games with Mary. He's not teasing her. He said, woman, why are you crying? Look at me.

Why are you crying? I told you I would be raised from the dead. I've come out of the tomb. I've conquered death.

I've put my heel on the serpent's head. I've crushed him. You should be rejoicing.

You should be weeping with hope. Why are you crying? I ask you now, why have you spent so many days and maybe weeks or even months, why have you spent so much time mourning and weeping? As though Jesus were still dead. And all along, all you have to do is appropriate his word.

I am the resurrection and the life. If you believe that I came out of the grave, and you can talk about the cross, you can preach sermons about the cross, you can say, I'm going to stay focused on the cross. If you stay focused only on the cross and don't see the victory of the cross and the resurrection, you're going to mourn the rest of your life and grieve the Holy Ghost and grieve Christ himself.

Because you have not seen the victory. You have not seen the resurrection. Yes, we're to be conformed to the cross.

We are crucified with Jesus. I praise God for the cross night and day. But I praise God that he didn't stay on the cross, he didn't stay in the tomb.

He's alive. Jesus said unto a woman, why weepest thou? She's supposing him to be the gardener. That's amazing.

Said unto her, sir, sir, if thou, she's talking to the living, resurrected Jesus. If you have taken him away, tell me where you leave him and I'll take him. Amazing.

I read that and I can't believe it. But you know, Jesus didn't condemn her for not recognizing his nearness. He didn't condemn her for being ignorant of the word of the resurrection.

He didn't condemn her at all. And in her despair and when he had every right to say, look, I'm dumbfounded. Why didn't you listen to me? I told you and told you and told you.

He didn't beat her down with any kind of correction. She's grieving. She's hurting.

So Jesus stops. He looks down. He says, Mary, in a tone of voice, she remembers.

I've been there. I've been in that place of grief and weeping and feeling that the Lord had every right to leave me. And I couldn't recognize him in my pain.

I couldn't recognize him in my trial. And I would. There comes a time when the tears are all gone.

There's no more tears left. And you can't pray. You can't even hear the words run together.

So you just close the book and say, Jesus, I don't know what to do in those moments. If you'll just wait, you'll hear your name. I've heard it.

David, I love you. I'm right here. I've never left you.

I'm right here. I'm right here. Oh, folks, that has consoled my soul time and time again.

I've heard. By the way, David means beloved of the Lord. And I. That that is everybody, everyone.

That's our name of the spirit, beloved of the Lord. I don't care what you did. I don't care what you had of your heart's repentance.

You're reaching out to Jesus. He is right there. He's here.

He's not gone. Will you quit looking for a dead Jesus? She knew him in the fellowship of his sufferings. And this is why Paul said that I may know him not only in the fellowship of his suffering, not only the pain.

I want to know him in the power of his resurrection. The church today often reckoned that we have devoted weeping Christians, you know, and have entered into the sufferings of Christ. But they've never entered into the power of the resurrection.

This is the end. Forgive me. I'm screaming.

Suffering makes the flesh feel good. But until you acknowledge his word, until you acknowledge he is raised from the dead and has all the power that you need, that he has been invested with everything you need to get victory over temptation, victory over your sin, to the power of his spirit, until you deal with that, I serve a God who's able to deliver me from anything. Nothing is impossible in my life because I am resurrected with Jesus Christ.

I am raised from the dead of sin, the death of sin. I am raised. Jesus said under her.

She turned and she tried to cling to Jesus. She tried to cling to him and Jesus said to her, Mary, touch me not. I'm not yet ascended to my father, but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascended to my father and your father and to my God and your God.

Now, some people say, well, he'd already gone to the father and came back. No, he said, I have not ascended. He's still not in glory.

And what he's saying to Mary, Mary, wait a minute. Our relationship has to change. You can't cling to me like you did when I was in the flesh.

I am the resurrected God of heaven and earth. Your relationship to me now has to be one of faith. This is not human kind of relationship anymore.

This is a faith relationship. You're not going to cling to me now except by faith. She's I'm going to leave and I won't be here.

And if you don't have faith, you're never going to ever. You will always be clinging to the grave. You'll be coming back to this true night and day.

And you'll be looking at you. You just have a memory. You will have a living word in your life.

You missed the word up to this point. Don't miss it now. Our relationship has to change.

It's my faith. Folks, the only victory over sin is the faith your way through it. You can't strive your way through sin.

You can't strive your way through your problem. You have to resign all of your thinking capacities. You have to resign all of your striving and say, Jesus, I believe what you said.

I will never leave you. I'll never forsake you. I'll go with you to the end.

I've got to believe what you said. You will present me faultless before your throne with exceeding great joy. I will rest on your word.

I will appropriate it. I will apply it. That's where the power is.

Hallelujah. Beloved, we're just like the disciples, those two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They've gone home.

They're going to Emmaus. And they're talking to one another, and they don't even recognize the presence of Jesus. This wonderful man is walking in their midst.

They say, we trusted, we thought or we had believed that this had been he which should have redeemed Israel. We really thought he was the Redeemer. And beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

You know what Jesus says? Oh, you fools. So slow of heart to believe all that the prophets and the scriptures have said. Folks, we are that foolish people.

How slow we are to believe what he has promised in this book. How slow we are. Folks, I want to tell you something.

All these years, I have learned that God helped me. If this is one thing that I've ever asked him to teach me, it's this. That no matter what I'm going through, no matter what I may consider myself as having failed in some way or another, I know I have a heart for Jesus.

I know I love him. I know I'm devoted to him. But I am not going to give in to the lies of the devil that Jesus has walked away from me.

Jesus didn't bring you this far just to dump you at the pearly gates. One of my favorite writers, a dear old Puritan, just before he died, someone asked him about, Are you ready? He said, God didn't take me all these years just to drop me at the last moment before I entered paradise. God didn't take me all these years just to let go of me.

He didn't take you through all your pain and suffering. He didn't take you through all of this that you've gone through. And then suddenly, because you have a problem, he just gets up and walks away.

No, I don't serve a God like a Christ like that, and neither do you. He's been there all the time, and he's there now, and you're going to have to lay hold of his promise. Lay hold of it and say, devil, I don't care what you tell me.

I don't care what I feel. I told somebody, I hardly ever feel safe before 11 o'clock in the morning. You know what I mean? I'm a night person.

In the morning, I'm very slow. So if I listen to the devil, I wouldn't feel like I've accomplished anything of that. I never doubt my salvation, but sometimes I don't feel like I've really reached him or done much until I have.

I've got to spend my hours in prayer. I've got to have so many scriptures read, and then I start feeling better. Now, does he love me just as much when I feel down as when I've read all these scriptures? Does God just love me a little more because I've been a little more diligent? No.

Hallelujah. He loved me when I was a sinner. He loved me.

He loved you when you were blind. He loved you when you were a blasphemer. He loved you then.

How much more does he love you now? Hallelujah. You can pray for hours a day. You can weep until there are no more tears left.

You can listen to the word. You can live on religious tapes and books. But if you don't appropriate the power of his resurrection, if you don't lay hold of his promises by faith, all you're going to hear from the Lord is, Why? Why? Why are you carrying this burden unnecessarily? Why all this unnecessary guilt? Why are you carrying all these burdens when I told you just cast them on me and I'd take them all? Why are you still carrying it? You know, there's a step of faith you can take right now, even while I'm preaching.

You can apply the word of God and say, Holy Ghost, I want to recognize that. I want to receive it right now. You can chase the lies of the devil.

You can put this all out of your mind, soul and body right now to a step of faith. Take that step of faith right now while I'm speaking to you. See, there's a form of godliness, the Bible said, that's going to deny the power.

Forms of worship, forms of piety and holiness, forms of weeping and legal servitude, and things that look so religious. They look so, so religious. I know people now that are so legalistic.

They're focused on the way they fix their hair. They're focused on whether their faces are painted or not painted, red or white. They are focused on danglings and clothes.

They're focused on all of these human things. But most of the time, I see no joy, I see no victory. I see a mourning, sad group of people who've never entered into the joy of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Oh, they'll talk about being crucified with Christ all the time, but their flesh has never been crucified because, like a lady told us, she said, I sent my kids to a very religious, legalistic school, and they had a parents' meeting, and all of these women were dressed so, you know, old-fashioned. Everything had to be right, and they looked, if you came in with pants, as a woman, or any kind of informal clothes, you know, you're a sinner. But she said, you know what they did for the whole two hours? They gossiped.

They just go like this, I mean, chewing everybody up. But they looked good. That's not what God's looking for.

If you don't have faith in His resurrection power, if you don't believe that He's raised for you, the Bible said He was raised for you, He was raised for me. He wasn't raised on His own account. He was raised for us.

Boy, that hit me the other day. You did all this for me, Jesus. God, help me if I don't appropriate it, if I don't believe it.

And God has both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His own power. Beloved, we are not pawns of the devil. We have a man in glory who was crucified, but now He reigns in all power and authority.

And He's there as my high priest. He's there as my king. He's there as my God.

If I fail Him, I go to my high priest and I repent. And when the devil comes to accuse me before the Father, my Jesus is an advocate. My lawyer stands before the throne, and He says, My blood, my blood, my blood.

And I get my forgiveness, and I walk away with joy, and knowing that He's forgotten my sins, why should I not? And if the devil still harasses me, I can say I stand on an everlasting promise that God is going to see me through and deliver me from every snare of Satan. Hallelujah. Jesus Christ, our Lord, declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.

In Romans 6, 5, For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. If I have truly died by faith to sin, then God help me to enter into His promise that I can live in the likeness of Jesus Christ by faith through the undoing power of the Holy Ghost. Now let me tell you in closing what I believe.

I believe in the cross. I believe that Jesus died. I believe that He was raised in power.

I believe that He reigns now in power. I believe He has all power over every temptation, every demon onslaught, every lust, every power of hell that comes against me. And I believe He meant when He said, I will never leave you.

I will never forsake you. I'll go with you to the end. I believe that with all my heart.

Will you stand, please? When we sing He lives, Christ Jesus lives today, it's an Easter song. Folks, do you know why we celebrate, do you know why we have the Sabbath on the first day of the week rather than the seventh? Because Jesus was raised on the first day of the week. Five times He appeared before He died on the first day of the week.

I mean, after His resurrection, He appeared the first day of the week. So we celebrate, we practice the Sabbath on the first day. Now, Saturday is really the Old Testament Sabbath.

We celebrate it because of the resurrection. Hallelujah. But do you understand that every day is supposed to be Easter? Christian, every day is supposed to be the first day of the week.

It's supposed to be resurrection power. You're supposed to get up and face every lie. I don't care what you do, if you have to learn to practice it.

I went to, years ago, a very wealthy man, gave some money to Teen Challenge. And when he gave us the check, he said, the only thing I want you to do, Pastor, I want you to come up here somewhere in Manhattan and go to one of my motivational meetings. I want to motivate you.

And so, for \$100,000, I will be motivated. He said, if you're going to be a success, you get up every morning, you're going to feel downcast. And he gave us these words to report.

I will not give in to my despair. And everybody would say, I will not give in to my despair. I am a success.

If I think right, I can do right. I have the power. I have the ability.

And here we're about a thousand very intelligent people saying, I can do it. I can do it. I can do it.

Of course, they can't do it without the Holy Ghost. They can't do it without the power. And I'm standing back there in the back, thinking, and Christians get up in the morning, downcast, claiming in church, raising their hands, praising a resurrected, all-powerful Jesus, and get up in the morning as though he were dead.

Folks, get up in the morning and exercise in the Spirit. Remind the devil that you don't have to listen to anything he says. I don't care how downcast you feel.

Say, Jesus, I accept your word. I'm going to go through this day believing and knowing that you are with me. You will not leave me.

You're standing. I don't talk about visualizing, but I know, I know your hand is on me. Just let him speak your name all through the day.

Let him call to you. He's there. He'll speak your name.

He'll speak love to you. Hallelujah. All he's asking is an open, repentant heart.

Say, Jesus, I want to be devoted to you this day. And by faith, take authority over all of those lies. Take authority over those feelings of depression and fear and anxiety and guilt.

Say, Jesus, I cast all of this on you. And go your day rejoicing. The world needs to see a smiling, victorious faith.

Man, everywhere you look. I walked on Friday, I walked 70 blocks. That's right.

You say you're boasting. You bet I am. At my age, I'm boasting.

I don't think I saw two smiles the whole day. There was nothing but gridlock. I heard everybody blowing their horns and cursing and yelling and screaming and bustling and hustling.

This city and this world needs Christians who live in victory. They need smiling faces. Hallelujah.

So why are you weeping? Why aren't you smiling? Your God's not dead. Your Savior's not dead. He's alive.

He abides in your heart. He's loving you. He wants to love you out of your despair.

This morning, we just sing that while we sing that he lives. If you if you've been living in this, by the way, if you're not right with the Lord, you have strayed away from his love. I want you to get out of your seat and come here.

I've been living in despair. I've been living in defeat. And I need to walk out of this church totally revitalized by the Holy Ghost.

Up in the balcony, go to the stairs on either side and come. I'll pray for you. We'll believe Jesus right now.

Amen. We'll believe Jesus right now in this service. I want you to sing it with faith, though.

He lives. He lives. Christ Jesus lives today.

Where does he live? He lives right here in my heart. And ask the Lord by his spirit and power to deliver everyone who came forward and everyone in this building this morning who's been living under the influence or power of a lie from hell. Oh, how quickly God wants to dispel all of that.

Look at me, please. Do you believe the Lord really loves you? Do you believe he's near? He abides. He doesn't flip in and out of our lives.

He's the most stable thing in your life. He's the most constant thing in your life. I believe when we get to heaven, we're going to look back over.

There will be no grief. But how many unnecessary burdens. Oh, what needless cares we bore.

Needless. I want you to bring them all to him right now by faith. It's a step of faith.

It's believing his word. Hallelujah. This past week for just a few hours in the morning, when I get up, the enemy just tried to come in with a sense of.

You don't know where it comes from. It just comes, doesn't it? It just seems to come. And there it is.

It's that downcast thing. I said, no, Lord Jesus. You're right here.

Then just begin to love on him. Just begin to love him. Talk to him.

And then receive his love. Hallelujah. God's not mad at you.

God's not mad at you. I want you to lift up your hands to Jesus right now. Just lift up your hands.

And I want you to pray this prayer with me right now. Jesus. I'm tired of my burden.

My fears. And all the guilt. The feelings of unworthiness.

Despair. Forgive me, Jesus. For trying to carry this burden.

By myself. And help me now, Lord. To cast all of my cares.

All my burdens. Temptations. And lust.

I cast them away. I put everything at your feet. Stand with me now, Jesus.

My heart is repentant. I'm sorry, Lord. For every sin I've committed.

And now, Jesus. Look at my heart. You know I love you.

I'm devoted to you, Jesus. I desire you with all my heart. That's why I'm standing here.

So come now, Jesus. By your spirit. Comfort me.

And help me to see you. And recognize you. In my problem.

While your hands are raised, let me pray for you. Father, I pray that you open our eyes and our understanding. And we can recognize you right now in our troubles.

And in our sorrows. And on our burdens. And even on our failures.

We can recognize you. And we can say, Master. Master.

As you call our name. Remind us that you love us. God, you love your church.

You died for your church. You died for all mankind. Oh, Lord.

The great love you have for your body. For your church. It's your own body.

You said a man is to love his own body. And you love your own body. We are your body.

We are bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh. Now, I want everybody in this church that loves Jesus to raise their hands. And say, thank you for loving me.

And let him love you right now. Accept the love of Jesus. Lord, I've repented of my sins.

I open my heart to receive your protection. Your love. I cast my cares upon you.

Strengthen me, Lord. Strengthen this body for the battle ahead. Give strength to this people.

Give hope. Give faith. Bring victory.

Hallelujah. Oh, blessed be the name of the Lord. Bless him now.

Just bless the Lord. I bless you, Lord. I bless you, Lord.

This is the conclusion of the tape.

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