

March 27, 2016 - Easter

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 March 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] And when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

At that moment, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split.

When the centurion and those guarding Jesus saw the earthquake, they were terrified and exclaimed, surely he was the son of God.

After the Sabbath, as dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went with some other women to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and going to the tomb rolled back the stone.

The angel's appearance was like lightning and the clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of the angel that they shook and became like dead men. Upon seeing that the tomb was empty, the women were frightened, wondering where Jesus' body might be.

[1 : 30] The angel exclaimed, do not be afraid, for I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen, just as he said.

Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, he is risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him. Now I have told you.

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid, yet filled with joy, and ran to tell the disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. Greetings, he said.

They came to him, clasped his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me. Christ is risen.

Christ is risen. He is risen to me. The seer of Galilee.

[2 : 45] As amends his andarn of your soul. There he is. When he doth. Goodose you The End
The End

The End The End The End

The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End
The End Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father? I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Do you believe in Jesus Christ? I believe in Jesus Christ, the Holy Son of Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Virgin Mary, suffered under a conscious pilot, was crucified, died, and was buried. He ascended to the death. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven. He is seated at the right hand of the Father.

I believe in the Father, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and was buried in the Father. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

[6 : 44] The Holy Spirit, the kielms of ministry. Amen.

and to the holy heart. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end.

Amen. Amen. The Lord be with you. Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of God's spirit.

Welcome to Pendleton Center Church. This is part of our Saturday night congregation, and I'd like to remind you to please fill out your friendship card and get on our mailing list, sign up for activities, list any joys and concerns, or leave a note for the staff.

And if you're new to our church, we have a gift for you in the back of the sanctuary. Happy Easter! Good morning, guys.

[8 : 17] You guys found a lot of eggs? No eggs in my house. No eggs in your house? The buddy just didn't do any eggs? You got baskets.

Well, baskets are cool, too, aren't they? How many of you got chocolate? Jelly beans? Peeps? Peeps? Peeps? You got a mouse? What'd you get?

Sour patch catch. Boy, this is strange Easter stuff, I gotta tell you. I got a duck. See my duck? Does it look like it's alive? No, it looks pretty messed up, doesn't it?

Yeah. But, if I give it a little bit of help, now he looks pretty much like he's alive, doesn't he?

Well, because it's Easter. Do you guys know that? There's a couple women out there that know that. On Easter, you're wearing a hat to church. We're dressed upon it, with all the frills upon it.

[9 : 25] That's very old. Very few of you remember that. Now, isn't that cool? Yeah, that's my duck. But he's only alive if I make him alive. Otherwise, he's nothing. You see?

And that's the same with us. If we have God in us, we're alive. But you know what happens? Sometimes we get all kind of twisted up. And then we're sort of alive, but we're sort of messed up, and we can't work right, you see?

So what we gotta do is ask God to come into our hearts and untwist us and make us whole again. All right? That's what Easter's all about. Is God coming to be with us? To fix us and make us whole and alive.

All right? What do you guys think before? You want to share something? Raise your hand. My dog and my mom and dad and everyone in my family.

My mom and dad and my family. Friends and family. Family. Family. That Jesus Christ rose from the cross.

[10 : 23] Jesus and God. My family. My family. Friends and family. My family. My mama and dad.

My sister. Thank you. All right. Let's pray, shall we? Dear Lord, we do thank you for the blessings you give to us.

We thank you for Easter. For you rising from the grave. Giving us parents. Great blessings and joy. Be with us and bless us today and always. In Jesus' holy name.

Amen. The children eight and below are allowed to go out to church school. Now the children who are eight and under. They have a program for them during the service. They will be back during communion. So be watching for them if you can.

Amen. Amen.

[11 : 27] Amen. Isn't it a blessing to be here on this gorgeous, glorious Easter Sunday morning? Amen? Amen. Our God is here. Our God has risen. Our God has done everything that we need.

To bring us to salvation and to eternal life. There's nothing we could have done. And so, with all the blessings God has given us, we rejoice and we return back to him.

A small portion of what God has so richly blessed us with as an act of worship. Let's bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings. Amen. Amen.

Amen. The Passover of gladness, the Passover of God, Come into life eternal, come earth unto the sky, Our Christ has won the storm with gifts of victory.

Our hearts be pure from evil, let me make see a rise.

[13 : 34] The Lord be amazed eternal, our resurrection shall come. And listening to His absence, may He hear some come and play, He is on a hill and weary, may praise the victor's name.

The Passover of gladness, may He is on a hill and a hill, Let us all begin.

The world rezoned in trial, and all that is there in. Let all things see that not see, there comes our blessed land.

For Christ the Lord has risen, our joy that has joined.

The Passover of gladness, may He have been on the hill and a hill, Amen, alleluia, Amen.

[15 : 19] Amen.

The Passover of gladness, may He have been on the hill and a hill.

Amen. The Passover of gladness, may He have been on the hill. The Passover of gladness, may He have been on the hill, Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day, for the opportunity to gather and worship you, and to offer all of our gifts before you. We do offer them before you, Lord, and ask that you would bless them and give us wisdom, that we would know how best to use them to serve you for the furtherance of your kingdom, that many would come to know the risen Christ.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. Along with the joy of this Easter morning, we have to announce that Ian and Angela Ryman are the proud parents of a new baby boy, and Ian is Naomi Lasky's grandson, for those of you who don't know.

I know a lot of you know Naomi, but may not realize that Ian's her grandson. So, yes, Naomi's a great grandma, a beautiful new baby boy. We are celebrating that Karen Mahalsky and Elizabeth Geary are recovering at home after surgery. They're doing well, and we do need to keep them in our prayers for continued recovery, but they're home.

[17 : 29] And we have Todd Spedding, who is at Buffalo General Hospital. He is recovering from surgery as well, and it's going to be a little bit before he's back to 100%. So, we want to keep him and his family in our prayers as well. We know that you have many prayers on your heart as well. The Lord hears and answers all of our prayers. So, let's turn to the Lord in prayer.

Our gracious Heavenly Father, what a blessing it is to come before you on this wonderful Easter morning.

Lord God, we are so grateful for the opportunity to gather together that we have a place where we, as your faithful disciples, can come before you and worship your holy name and celebrate all those blessings you pour out into our lives.

Lord God, we lift up before you now all of those folks who are sick and in need of healing. Whatever it is, Lord, we ask that you would touch them in their spirits, in their souls, in their bodies, wherever it is that healing is needed. We pray that you would touch them, anoint them with your healing power.

Lord God, we pray for those who care for them, Lord, that you would give them wisdom and compassion. Patience. Take care of them.

[19 : 18] We pray for those, Lord God, who are elderly and shut in, or shut in because of a physical infirmity of some kind. We pray for those who care for them.

We pray that you are with them this morning and that they know that they are loved, that they know that they are being prayed for.

We pray in Jesus' name for those who are troubled right now as they are grieving the losses of loved ones. This is such a joyous time as we celebrate your resurrection.

Today, Lord God, our missing loved ones, we just ask in Jesus' name that you comfort them by your Holy Spirit. Be with them and help them to remember those things that are joyful and to remember the hope they have for eternal life with you.

We pray, Lord God, for our community and for our world. There are so many troubles. We turn on the news, we look in the paper, we go online, and we see those things, those terrible things that people are capable of doing to each other.

[20 : 45] We pray for peace in our world, Lord. We pray for peace to overcome the chaos of this present life here.

We pray, Lord God, that you would work in us and through us as your church to bring peace wherever we go, to be vessels carrying your mercy and grace wherever we go.

We pray that you give us words and actions that draw people to you. We pray that you pour out your blessings on them.

We pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are in places where it is dangerous to even claim Jesus is risen. Jesus is Lord.

We ask that you would strengthen their faith. Give them good courage. now, Lord, we pray for those who don't know you.

[22 : 02] We ask that they would run into somebody, Lord, someone who can share the good message, the good news that Jesus has come to save that which was lost.

we pray that they too will come to salvation and the hope of eternal life. Be with us now as we hear your word.

Let it be a blessing to us, Lord God. Anoint Pastor Tom to deliver the message you've given to him. Let it be a blessing to him and to us. And Lord God, all of our worship this morning, may it all be a blessing to you.

That is why we came. To bless you, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord?

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[23 : 10] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. This morning's scripture is from Acts chapter 1, verses 3 through 11.

After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of 40 days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command. Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Then they gathered around him and asked him, Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?

He said to them, it is not for you to know the time or date the father has set by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witness in Jerusalem.

[24 : 39] And in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. Men of Galilee, they said, why do you stand here looking into the sky?

The same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Thank you, Elizabeth. This morning, we're actually starting a new sermon series looking at the book of Acts.

It might seem a little strange that we're reading this passage about Jesus' ascension on the day that we're also talking about his resurrection, and that we started out with a reading of the crucifixion. But to understand the whole drama of Jesus, we need to understand all that happened.

[25 : 43] He was crucified. On Holy Saturday, the disciples are angry. They're frustrated. They're disappointed, confused. They're hurt. What has happened?

Looked like failure. Looked like Jesus lost. It looked like God had lost. The mission of God was over. And then some women come into their midst and say, Amazing!

He's risen! And they're like, Really? You're messing with us, right? Jesus is alive. And it says that he was alive and actually walked the earth for 40 days.

You may not have recognized that. A lot of people think he just sort of was here for a day and gone. 40 days! He visited with them. He spent time teaching them and working with them.

And then he leaves again. He leaves again. They're staring up into heaven. What's that supposed to mean? It's like taking the pot off a boiling kettle and putting it back on again.

[26 : 53] It's like going to an amusement park. So you feel better for a day and then you've got to go back to regular life. You feel good for a little bit, but it didn't change anything. Now what? What are we supposed to be doing?

Hello? Hello? I think a lot of us feel that way. Like we're looking up to God saying, I don't understand it.

What are we supposed to do with this mess we're in? Everybody's angry, it seems, lately. Frustrated. Even little babies are born angry.

Seriously, why would little babies look like this? The trouble is the babies' expressions that they wear out of some little frustrations we wear every day.

Terrorists. Leaders who are fighting and trying to figure out how to destroy each other all the more. treating people in this world like tools.

[28 : 09] As if they're disposable when we don't need them. Life doesn't seem fair at all. The disciples said to Jesus, Is it at this time you're going to reestablish your kingdom?

You're going to bring in your angel army and smash all the bad guys? Because that's what we want. God, get down here and take them out. Right? It just feels like we should be doing this.

When I was a teenager, I was angry. I was real angry. I can't even tell you today why I was angry, but I was angry. I didn't have a bad home.

I didn't have a bad life. I just felt frustrated. There was an anger that would well up inside of me. And I'd lash out at the world. I was telling somebody the other day that we used to go out after Boy Scouts and create trouble.

One of our favorite things was to take a cat and put it between the screen door and the inside door of a house with a dog in it and ring the doorbell. It's funny, isn't it?

[29 : 23] But not if you're the cat. And not if you're the person who's sitting in your house watching TV with the dog sitting on the floor and all of a sudden all chaos breaks loose and some punk kid is out on the sidewalk laughing at you.

That's what we were. That's what we were. We were punks. Angry. Resentful. And if we got punished, we saw that as a badge of honor.

Eventually they kicked us out of Boy Scouts. I don't know if I should say that now because I signed up for the leaders to be Boy Scouts in this year. They kicked us out. They said, you guys are not representing Scouts right.

That's the way we talk about it. It didn't help when we got punished, when we got grounded, when we got yelled at.

It was almost like that just fed the anger. The problem in our culture is we're looking for all the answers in the wrong places.

[30 : 27] The definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over again thinking we're going to get different results. If we just start another war, if we just yell a little louder, if we just put some laws in place, or walls in place for that matter, if we just rip down the people who are hurting us, we'll fix it.

The problem is it's broken, and we're frustrated, and life feels terribly unfair. And we feel it from the beginning of our life.

Like this. Now, I'm sure you've been to get the problem. Yes, sir! Would you get the problem? Like this thing? Like this brain? Like this brain? Like that brain?

Like this brain? Like this brain? Like this brain? Like this brain? Like this brain brain?

Like this brain kann? And now there's some Afghan reaction. Like this brain can look at what we see in the face of it. E-Wiling Thank you.

[32 : 41] Thank you.

Nowadays it's in fashion to have holes in your pants, by the way. But back in the day, my parents made me wear plain pockets jeans from pennies.

Anybody remember those awful things? All the other kids had Levi's. I had these plain pockets jeans. They were awful. Oh, why is it like this?

It's not fair. God has a plan. God has a mission to reshape, refocus the world into a new creation.

That's what the resurrection represents. The mission of God is to bring the kingdom of God that he talks about in this passage on earth as it is in heaven. That's why we put a little heavenly scene.

[34 : 00] We're going to have a little heavenly scene each week. The early gates. The heavenly world. The throne room. The book of life. Easter is central to Christianity. It's the answer for a broken world.

The cross looked like the end. It's all over. God loses. But resurrection overcame evil and brought victory.

In 1 Corinthians, it says to us, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old is gone. The new is here. We are a new creation in Christ.

Death, hate, brokenness, anger, fear, frustration. They lose. And God wins. That's the message of the resurrection.

That even in the midst of brokenness and what feels like complete defeat, God wins. We're looking for the answers in all the wrong places.

[35 : 04] We live in a broken world and we keep trying to fix things with the same solutions that haven't been working. The disciples turn to Jesus and say, is this the time you're going to reestablish the kingdom?

Are you going to bring in the armies and put us in charge of all the nations of the world and fix everything? The word they use for that is chronos, which in Greek is that chronological day-to-day time.

Is this the normal time that you're going to use, Jesus? The normal ways to fix things. And Jesus answers, it's not for you to know the special times of God when he's going to break in and do something.

Amazing, the kairos moments of God. We don't overcome hate and anger and frustration and fear and brokenness and sin by using the same things.

We overcome them with grace. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 says, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ.

[36 : 13] Not counting people's sins against them. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. God took the sins of the world onto himself.

He took the brokenness of you and me and brought them into his reality. God went from being a perfect God to being a God filled with sin for you and I.

That's what happened on the cross. That's the death of God to his righteousness. And then God overcame that with his love and takes our sins away.

For those who believe in Jesus Christ, it says we'll stand before that throne someday, stand before the judge of God. They will open up books, and you may not like this.

They're going to read everything you ever did to everybody you ever knew. What do you think of that? They're going to read these books, it says, that tell everything you ever did, all the stuff you thought you've been keeping secret all these years.

[37 : 18] They're going to share it with everybody. You know how long that's going to take? You know how miserable that's going to be with grandma and grandpa and moms and dads and everybody there listening? Ouch.

But it says there'll be another book, the book of life, and Jesus will look in the book of life, and if our name is written in that book, we will go through the pearly gates into glory.

And I think, I may be wrong, I can't prove this from the Bible. Jesus will say, you don't have to read that story, God. Dad, he's okay. You don't have to tell everybody what he did wrong because we're just going to wipe that away.

That's what I'm looking for. I don't know what you think, but that's grace. That's grace. The mission of God is to change the world.

But not just to change the world to come, but to change the world we live in, starting with us. God is on a mission.

[38 : 24] God is on a mission.

God is on a mission.

has it so good. Life is so unfair, and it's us that are broken and have so many troubles. I would guarantee that most of you sitting out there have something in your life that if you could take one thing out of your life and fix it, you would give up most all the blessings you have.

Most of us have something in our lives that we just wrestle with and trouble with, go to bed at night in tears. Feeling like, Lord, if you could take this burden from me and make me like that other one.

But all we would be doing is exchanging one problem for another. The mission of God is not to change one problem for another, but change our resentment into gratitude, change our anger into love, our frustration into hope, and our hate into joy.

[40 : 24] God changes us from the inside out through the power of the Holy Spirit that comes upon us and transforms us. It says, John baptized with water, which is a good thing.

We do that in the church. We baptized people with water to symbolize the changing and the transformation of God. But the real power of God is when the Holy Spirit comes within us and changes us from the inside out.

The water won't mean a thing if people don't have the power of God within them to transform their lives, to transform their children's lives, to transform the world.

We're on a mission from God, and it's a mission that is possible. It may seem impossible, but it's possible. I can tell you it's possible because God did it for me.

I have no idea what would have happened if God had not changed, not transformed my heart. If I never experienced the Holy Spirit power of God, I probably would be in prison.

[41 : 32] I wouldn't be a pastor, that's for sure. I never saw that one on the radar screen ever. Most people in my high school don't even believe it now.

I was headed for brokenness, for anger. I associated with other people angry like me. All I wanted to do was to tear down the world, and then God got in my heart and changed my actions.

changed my attitudes. And it wasn't me. It was the power of God who opened up my eyes to see things in a way I had not seen before, and I still have God opening my eyes today.

God will tell me, you can't do that. Why are you acting that way? You're going to hurt someone. And I thank God when He shows me what's wrong with me instead of causing me to worry about what's wrong with everyone else.

God changes us, and then we become part of the mission, part of the plan of God. We become blessed by God to be a blessing to this world around us.

[42 : 53] I talk to teenagers from time to time, and I know what that feels like. That was about the time that I needed God to take my life and really switch it around.

When we're young, everything keeps changing. We kind of go back to being little kids and play, but they make us be grownups, and we don't know how to do it, and we do it wrong. And there's all these chemicals surging through our bodies and changes going on, and we're going, where did I get this from?

Very frustrating. Somewhere along the line, they say we're adults. And we're like, really? Don't feel like an adult. Don't get treated like an adult.

But somehow, I've got to work through this world. And in our early years, we struggled just to try and somehow not look like we've totally messed up until finally, they say we're in charge.

Oh, that's a blessing, isn't it? When they put us in charge, and all of a sudden, we feel responsible for everything. And all we want to do is become those little children again.

[44 : 03] Life is difficult, but God blesses us in every step of the journey to transform us into what God wants to make out of us, something special, something blessed.

If we'll let God do it, and I've seen God do it through a long part of my life. It may have started when I was young, but it's still happening now.

God has a plan. He gives us. He gives us abilities. He gives us opportunities to bring heaven to earth. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And how does that happen? If the people of God live like the people of God. God has a plan for all of history.

He's already outlined it. You'll receive power from the Holy Spirit when it comes on you, and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

[45 : 08] The power of God, the Holy Spirit, is more powerful than any force on the face of the earth. It's transformed more people, more nations, more of history than anything that's ever happened.

Because God's power doesn't happen by force or by something that's put upon us. It's something that comes right out of us. Corinthians chapter 5 continues to say, He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We're therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making us appeal through us. So we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. Open up your heart to God, and God will make you the agent of change.

You will be my witnesses. citizens. Most of us are not even close to holding up to remember the Depression.

Back in the previous century, I'm not talking about these recessions. They talk about where you drive down the road and there's still thousands of people out at restaurants. I'm talking the Depression, where people were trying to figure out how they were going to feed their families.

[46 : 23] Where 30 or 40 percent of the population was without work and couldn't find it. where the farms of the western part of our nation turned to dust and the world turned to despair.

It came in the 1930s. What you may not be aware of is we fought a war against Germany about 15 years before that or so.

And what we did when Germany lost the war is we made them pay for the war. I don't know how many of you know that. So while our nation was in the midst of a depression where our people were desperate and at the point that they'd be willing to do anything to feed their family, we were asking Germany in the middle of that same depression to send us money.

We were making them send us money. And they were as bad off or worse than we were. And we pushed them down some more. We'll teach them.

We'll teach them so that they'll never try to take us on again. And what would they do? We know what happened. They turned to a madman to be their leader.

[47 : 33] Because when you're totally desperate and all you can see is your children are going to die, you'll follow anyone that gives you any kind of hope. Germany conquered Europe pretty much.

Lashed out at the world in their anger and their frustration. Created deaths by tens of millions. We can't even comprehend that kind of death in a war.

Tens of millions of people dying because of hate and hurt. And one particular group of people they started to really crush down on were the people who were Jewish.

Because if you can find somebody else to blame it just makes life a little simpler for you. You know? So they crushed them down as hard as they had killed many of them. Tortured millions of them.

And so the Jewish people fled to a place in the Middle East that we call Palestine. And you know what they did to the people there? They destroyed their homes.

[48 : 39] They took their fields. They crushed them and pushed them aside and said this is our land now. Get out. We're strong enough to take it. And we've been picked on for all these years. It's not happening again.

You're out of this land. It's ours now. And these people had to leave their homes. Their fields. Their way of life that have been their life for a thousand years.

Because somebody else made somebody angry that caused them to make them hurt. hurt. And now the whole region is still in flames.

And we're seeing that as flames come our way, aren't we? All because somebody keeps increasing the cycle of hate, of hurt, of pain.

There's a fellow by the name of Father Shakur. He's the priest in Bethlehem, Palestine. And he decided he wasn't going to hate the Jewish people. He was going to embrace them in love.

[49 : 41] He said, somebody's got to do it a different way. I understand that there's some people you have to lock up. I'm not against law enforcement.

I'm a supporter of the military. My wife is in the military. I'm not against the necessary steps we need to take when people get so angry.

We have nothing else we can do but to use force to stop them. But we can't be the people of anger. We can't be the people of hate. We can't be the people who keep trying to smash somebody else.

If we could steal their shoes and take their place, we'd be so much better off, right? Until we realize all we've done is crippled ourselves. and broken our world.

Somebody needs to put a stop to that. We don't need to have hunger in our world. We don't need to have pain and anger and hurt and disrespect and fear.

[50 : 43] If we show the world how to love, we can change the world to the ends of the world by starting where we are. And I know some of you would say, oh, we can't change the world.

Do you know they didn't even think this place that we live in existed back then? This is not the ends of the world. This is past the ends of the world to them. And what those few people did so long ago in that same region of the world we're just talking about has transformed the hearts and souls of billions of people because they said, we're going to do it differently.

you will be my witness. You will be my witness, God says, in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, to the ends of the earth.

When God returns, what will he find you doing? What will he find us doing? If we start to change our lives, we can change those around us.

you know, they've said for years you can't change someone else. All you can do is change yourself. But when you change yourself, you change other people.

[51 : 58] The people around you. The book of life. How many want your name written in the book of life? We all do. Well, I hope we all do.

All right? Someday I'll tell you about the other place. You don't want to go there. All right? How many of you know someone, you want their name written in the book of life?

You're given a piece of paper when you came in, or at least that was out there. If you want one, you can raise your hand and somebody will bring it around to you if you don't have one. What's that piece of paper for?

It's very simple. We want to pray for the people you're concerned about. That may even be you. I don't want anybody to put a last name on any piece of paper.

And for that matter, I don't even care if you just put an X or a T or a Z or something because you're concerned that somebody will somehow understand who you're talking about. This isn't about let's identify who we can go get.

[52 : 57] That's not the point. Please don't give us names and addresses of folks you think we ought to go after as a church. I'm not doing that. We're not all going to go down Ridgeview Heights and stand around somebody's poor house and say you're all doing that.

We're not doing that. We're going to pray for them. And I want you to pray for them. And I want you to be mindful of them. We're going to stick them in our own books of life.

We've got some books up here. When you come up to the table of the Lord this morning, I'm going to invite you to just drop your piece of paper in there. And we'll pray for them. We'll pray for them and we'll keep them mindful in our hearts and in our souls.

And you're the one who really has to change them by keeping them in your mind and your heart because that's what will make things happen. Timing is so important. Is this the time, they said to Jesus.

Is this the time? Timing is essential. I've got to tell you, yesterday we had a group who had bad timing. They made the most wonderful little pastries and cookies and all kinds of stuff that they were going to sell at the Easter egg hunt to pay for the Easter egg hunt stuff that they were giving away.

[54 : 08] What they didn't think about was that we were giving away cookies and candies and all sorts of stuff for free so nobody had any reason to go out and buy their stuff. You found it beautiful stuff but nobody bought it because the timing was wrong.

Timing is essential. In fact, I gave them permission, just so you're aware why this is there because this doesn't happen on Easter in our church. I gave them permission to put their stuff on the front lawn so you can go take a look at it if you want to.

Whatever you want to do. You can go a different direction. I don't care. I'm not trying to push something. I'm saying we've got to get the timing right. We get the timing wrong, it's all messed up.

Is this the time? Jesus said to them, you know, you might need to wait a little while. Wait until you get the Holy Spirit. And sometimes we need to wait. We need to get prepared.

Maybe you need to spend a little time in prayer. Maybe you need to spend a little time with God. Maybe you need to study God or learn a little bit more about God. That's a good thing. They spent 40 days preparing.

[55 : 06] Then they spent 50 days, more, 90 days, three months. That's not a bad training time frame. But don't go so long. They were standing there on the hilltop looking up in the heaven.

And the angel came down to him and said, dude, get your head out of the clouds. Get to work. Go do something. Standing here watching for Jesus is not the idea.

You will be my witnesses. What kind of witnesses will you be? What will God find you doing? Edmund Burke said, all that's essential for triumph to evil in our world is for good people to do nothing.

Nothing. The Church of Germany did nothing. It was one of the greatest and most powerful and faithful churches on the face of this world in the 1930s, and they did nothing.

They watched as Hitler rose from power with hate and evil and nastiness. They did nothing. They did nothing.

[56 : 10] Nothing. Until it was too late. The pastor by the name of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, he started to speak up.

They threw him in prison. Somehow he got out and was able to be part of a plot to assassinate Hitler. He decided, as much as it seemed wrong, as a pastor, he had to end this man.

But they made their plot in 1944, and they should have made it in 1934. The time to act had passed.

It was too late. I don't think we have a Hitler in our country right now. I hope you're not hearing some coded messages here that I'm giving to all of you.

That's not the point. We don't have anybody of that level. Study Hitler, and you'll find out. We don't have that, but we have that going on in the world. And it won't be long if we allow that it'll happen here.

[57 : 11] But I'm too young. But I'm too old. But I'm too busy. I'll just go to the church and hide until they come beating down the doors.

You may not have noticed, but God is gone from our culture. God isn't even a second thought. I opened up the newspaper this morning, the Buffalo Evening News. Now, for years and years and years, I mean for over a century, the banners this morning would say, Happy Easter.

You know, it barely, in one caption of a photograph, it mentioned Easter Day. That's it. They had a huge article about Dingus Day, by the way. But Easter?

No. Because God is impotent. God is useless. God's people won't do anything. God's people are going to sit on the sidelines.

Kairos time. It's time for Easter people to declare the resurrection. Amen? It's time for the people who are God's people to not sit on the sidelines, but be part of the conversation, part of the discussion, part of what needs to happen, transforming the lives around us with the new creation of God, changing the world.

[58 : 26] world. By starting in our own world. Write down a name. It could be your own name. Let's put it in the book.

This isn't for publication. This is just for edification. Think about where you can start. And let's start changing the world.

You and me. And I'll tell you, from my perspective, I'm San Martin. In the streets of every village, every city's soaring town, empty people live in darkness every day and every hour.

Hear the cry of desperation from a billion broken hearts. Will it be so great when we even start?

Let it start with me. Open up my eyes. Fill my heart with your compassion.

[59 : 48] Bring my mind from all this passion. Fill my hands. Set the darkness free. Move my feet to follow after you.

Oh, change the world and let it start with me. You have given us the orders.

There's a place for everyone. I don't want to miss my mission. It's a plan that you've begun. You have promised to go with me.

To the edges of it all. And change everything that keeps me from your call. Let it start with me.

Open up my eyes. Fill my heart with your compassion. Free my mind from all this passion.

[61 : 00] Use my hands. Set the darkness free. Move my feet to follow after you.

Oh, change the world and let it start with me. Take my mind. Open up my own.

Everything I am. Everything I am. You know it's alone. Let it start with me.

Open up my eyes. Fill my heart with your compassion. Free my mind from all this passion.

Use my hands. Use my hands. Set the darkness free. Use my hands. Move my feet to follow after you. Oh, change the world and let it start with me.

[62 : 04] Open up my eyes. Fill my heart with your compassion. Free my mind from all this passion. Use my hands.

Open up my eyes. Clean up my heart. Clean up my eyes. Fill my hands. Move my feet to follow after you. Open up my eyes. Open up my eyes. Change the world and let it start with me.

Change the world and let it start with me. Open up my eyes. Open up my eyes. V.I. Open up my eyes. Open up my eyes. There's a day coming when God will fill our hearts with wonder and amazement.

The day we stand before Him in glory, what a day that will be. Jesus came born to be born of a virgin, dwelt among them, my example is He.

The world became flesh and the light shined among us, the glory revealed. Living in the faith, dying He saved me, carrying He carried, my sins are away.

[64 : 15] Rising He justified, free forever, one day He's coming, O glory of sin, O glory of sin.

One day they led Him on Galilee's mountain, one day they failed Him to die on a tree.

Suffering anguish, despised and rejected, bearing of sins, my Redeemer is He.

And His nations, set down on a tree and took bears for me. Living in the faith, dying He saved me, carrying He carried, my sins are away.

Rising He justified, freely forever, one day He's coming, O glory of sin.

[65 : 37] O glory of sin. O glory of sin. One day the grave could conceal Him no longer.

One day the storm roared away from the door. Then He arose over deadly and darken.

Now He's ascended, my Lord evermore. Death could not hold Him, rain could not keep Him, One day the storm roared, one day he'd be.

I'm rising again, living He loved me, dying He saved me, Married in courage, my sins are away.

Rising He justified, freely forever, one day He's coming, O glory of sin.

[66 : 46] One day, O glory of sin. One day, a trumpet will sound, will be drowning. One day, a trumpet will sound, will be drowning. One day the stars through His glory will shine. One day, a trumpet will sound, will be drowning.

One day, a trumpet will sound, will be drowning. One day, a trumpet will sound, will be drowning. Let the skies in His glory still shine.

Wonderful name I've been out and hungry. My Savior Jesus is mine.

Living He loved me. Dying He saved me. Buried and carried my sins far away.

Rising He justifies freely forever. One day He's coming. Oh, glorious day.

[67 : 51] Oh, glorious day. Oh, glorious day. Oh, glorious day.

Amen.

promise you that if you turn your heart to God, if you start to live a life with love and respect and kindness and hope, that you'll never have problems.

If you live in a broken world, you will have problems. What I can promise you is if you live the anger and hate and hurt and meanness and vengeance, you will have a broken life.

Now, and for eternity. We need to give that up. It's not serving anyone well. It's certainly not serving our God well.

[69 : 07] Let's confess it and get rid of it and move on to glory. Dear God in heaven, I have sinned. I let my anger get hold of me.

I let my fears overcome me. I let my fears overcome me. Forgive me, Lord. Change my heart. Change my direction.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit. Bless me to be a blessing. Take away my sin. In Jesus' name.

Amen. God wants your life to be filled with an amazing mission. If you'll just let God have hold of your life, I can tell you that some young kid who was broken, it will transform you in ways you can't imagine.

In the name of Jesus Christ whose sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ whose sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. God sent His Son God sent His Son for prayer ■■■■■'s mercy to And to help you heal and forgive.

[70 : 51] He lived and died And I do find my father An empty grave is sent to prove My Savior lives Because he lives I can face tomorrow Because he lives All fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living Just because he lives And at one day

I'll cross the river I'll find my spot No fault with me And man has said Gives way to be free I'll see the light Of glory and the glory reigns Because he lives I can face tomorrow Because he lives Because he lives All fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living

Just because he lives Just because he lives Amen. He is alive. And he invites us.

God invites us to his table to celebrate and to receive all the fullness of grace that God has promised us. Everyone is welcome Everyone is welcome In the United Methodist Church the table is open That means if you love God Earnestly repent and seek to live in peace As a disciple of Jesus Christ you are welcome at the communion table this morning to join with your brothers and sisters in Christ even if it's the first time you ever walked in the door you are welcome at the table this morning.

So come. We take communion by intinction That means someone will give you a piece of the bread and you'll dip it in the cup and take the bread and the juice together.

[73 : 57] You are welcome this morning at the table. Come and receive all God has for you. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you Father Almighty creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity a covenant to be our sovereign God.

Brought us to a land flowing with milk and honey and set before us the way of life. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

[75 : 05] Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you. Blessed is your son Jesus Christ who came and lived with us died on a cross and was resurrected from the dead and gave us this meal that we might share with all the saints in glory who have ever shared this meal before together with our God.

He gathered with his disciples and he took the bread and gave thanks to God. He broke the bread and he gave it to them and said take and eat. This is my body which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sin.

Eat of this remembering me. When the supper was over he took the cup. He gave thanks to God and then he gave it to his disciples. He said drink from this all of you.

This is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin. Drink of this remembering me. So in remembrance of these mighty acts in Jesus Christ we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here and on these gifts of bread and wine make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood.

[76 : 36] By your Spirit make us one with Christ one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church all honor and glory is yours Almighty Father now and forever. Amen.

And now as confident children of God let us pray together as he taught us in saying Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever Amen.

Will those who are assisting with giving out communion comport at this time please. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[78 : 43] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Good morning. We do invite you to the table. We ask that you come by the center aisle or the outside aisles. Go to any station that's open.

You're welcome to receive communion wherever you'd like. There will be prayers offered for healing and anointing. You may light a candle if you wish. Come and join us at the table of the Lord.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[80 : 22] Yeah. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[82 : 53] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[85 : 23] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[87 : 53] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[90 : 23] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.