

2025-04-27 - The Reality of the Resurrection – John 19:40 – 20:29

Pastor Matt Johnson

Well, good morning. It's good to see you all. If you've got your Bibles, I want to invite you to open to John Chapter 20.

This morning, we are a week after Easter, and in our sermon today, we're going to start on Easter evening. By the end of the day, we'll be a week after the resurrection. As we dig into John Chapter 20, verses 19 through 29, we are going to look at one of the most important things we could ever say.

Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”?

It is absolutely the most important thing we could ever say: **Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”?**

Have you said of Jesus that he is your Lord and your God? That is what Thomas declares today, and we will see. It is what I hope that you have said. I pray you have said those words, and if you've never said those words, I pray that by the end of today, you are saying them and believing them in the way that we see in the Gospel of John.

To that end, I'm going to pray, and then we will jump in.

Father in heaven, we thank you for this day. God, we thank you that you so loved the world that you sent your one and only Son, that whosoever believes in him will not perish but will have eternal life.

We thank you that your mission, your Son's mission, was completed on the cross. He died for the forgiveness of sins. He rose again. He ascended to heaven, where he reigns. We thank you, Lord, that you sent your Holy Spirit, and we thank you, Lord, that through your Spirit, we can come to know you and believe.

We pray right now that your Spirit would be working in our midst, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what your word has to say. And Lord, I pray that these would be your words and not mine. I pray, Lord, that you would speak to me and speak through me.

We thank you, Lord, for your word. We thank you for the sending of your Son. We thank you that in the name of Jesus, we can have eternal life. It is in his name we pray. Amen.

Our question today is: **Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”?**

Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”?

*He gives true life to all who **believe** (20:19-23)*

The first point we're going to see today, as Jesus starts to interact with his disciples, is that **he gives true life to all who believe.**

¹⁹When it was evening on that first day of the week, the disciples were gathered together with **the doors locked** because **they feared the Jews**. Jesus came, stood among them,

and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰Having said this, he showed them his hands and his side. So the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

John 20:19-20 CSB

In John Chapter 20, verse 19, we begin: ***When it was evening of that first day of the week, the disciples were gathered together with the doors locked because they feared the Jews.*** Now, before we go any further, the doors are locked because they feared the Jews, and it is the day of the resurrection. It's still the first day of the week.

On that same day in the morning, as we talked last week, Mary goes to the tomb that is in the center of a garden. Mary and some other women see the tombstone rolled aside. She runs back to get the disciples, and Peter and John race to the tomb. They see that it is empty. They see the linen cloth lying there. *They start to believe, but we see that they don't quite believe yet—they are beginning to have belief in John.* Then they go back with the other disciples.

Last week, we looked at how Mary Magdalene was back at the tomb after the disciples left, and she was weeping. First, she sees two angels—one at the head and one at the foot of where the body of Jesus would have lain. Then, as she is talking with them, Jesus comes behind her. But at first, she does not notice him.

We talked last week about all of the Garden of Eden imagery at the resurrection—how she supposes him to be a gardener, and it's an appropriate assumption. Like Adam, we have a new gardener, a better Adam in Jesus. When we come to the resurrection, we are seeing the restoration of all things.

Jesus, in that conversation with her, asks, "Who are you seeking?" She says, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where he is." She is worried about what to do with his body. She still thinks he is dead. And then he says her name. He says, "Mary."

At that moment, the Good Shepherd knows his sheep, and they know his voice. He says, "Mary," and she recognizes him. She says, "Rabboni"—she acknowledges him as her teacher. She knows who he is.

After he reveals himself to her, he sends her on a mission. He says, "Go to my brothers." The disciples—go to my brothers. This language of go "my brothers," is new in the Gospel of John. The disciples have always been his followers or just "the disciples," but now he calls them "my brothers" because the promise in the Gospel of John is that all who believe are children of God.

You are not a child of God if you do not believe. But if you believe, you are a child of God. At the resurrection, we see that come to pass with the disciples, and we will see it come to pass in the future as we keep reading.

And so, Jesus says, "Go to my brothers." It's this wonderful moment where we see a new reality. Mary goes and tells them, "I have seen the Lord," and she says all that he told her to say.

Then it was evening of that first day of the week. They were gathered together with the doors locked because they feared the Jews—the Jewish leaders of that day, the same ones responsible for Jesus being nailed to the cross. They were worried about what was going to happen, because they weren't the only ones who knew that the tomb lies empty now.

And so, there was fear. But with the doors locked, **Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."** He appeared in their midst. "Peace be with you." **Having said this, he showed them his hands and his side.** His hands—it's down here where they would have nailed his arms or his hands to the cross. It would have been at the wrist to support his weight. He showed them his hands and his side, where they dug the spear in, and water and blood flowed freely out.

And the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. In that moment, they rejoiced, because what Mary had told them, and what they had seen with the empty tomb—it turns out it was all true.

The rejoicing language here ties back to the Last Supper when Jesus told them, "For a while, you will have tears, but they will turn to rejoicing." Jesus, in this moment, reveals himself to them, and they rejoice because all that he has said is true.

²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you." ²² After saying this, he **breathed** on them and said, ^[a] "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

John 20:21-23 CSB

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you."

These words—"As the Father sent me, I also send you"—connect back to John 17 when Jesus was praying for the disciples. In his prayer, he tells them, "As the Father sent me, I am going to send you. I am not of this world, and you who follow me are not of this world either."

Now, Jesus, on the other side of the resurrection, is telling them, "I am sending you on the mission." He is affirming what he had already told them would come to pass.

After saying this, he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

Genesis 2:7 CSB

Now, before we go any further, that “breathed” language should take us right back to the Garden of Eden as well. In Genesis 2, we are told that **God formed man out of the dust and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils.**

Jesus breathing and saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit” here takes us back to that moment. But this breath is new life. This breath and the receiving of the Holy Spirit—it is what Jesus spoke of to Nicodemus: “You must be born of water and the Holy Spirit. You must be born again to be saved.”

This moment is when they are fully being brought in.

Now, some of you may be thinking, “Hold on, Pastor Matt, I know the book of Acts—the Holy Spirit comes in Acts.” That’s a great question! When I first studied this passage, I was confused by this, because the Holy Spirit comes in Acts.

But that’s not what’s happening here. This is not the same imagery. What is happening now is similar to what happens in the Gospel of Luke when Jesus begins to appear to his followers, unless he reveals that he has risen, we see various moments where the Spirit is mentioned in connection with revealing knowledge.

For example, in Luke, the disciples on the road to Emmaus, while walking with Jesus, have their minds opened to the Scriptures. Similarly, when Jesus meets with the disciples, he does the same.

This moment in John is not the receiving of the Holy Spirit in power that we see in Acts 2. Instead, this is the beginning of receiving the Holy Spirit—what Jesus had promised during the Last Supper. He had said that they would receive the Spirit, that he would not leave them as orphans, and that they would follow after him.

After Jesus says, “Receive the Holy Spirit,” he continues: **“If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”**

A wrong reading of this passage would suggest that believers get to decide who is judged and who is not. However, if you read the entire Gospel of John, you see that this passage points to the authority of Jesus. He is the one who has the authority to give life to others. He is the one with the authority to judge. He is the one seated on the throne.

The imagery here—“As the Father has sent me, I send you”—along with the other language in this passage, reminds the disciples that Jesus is in charge, and they are going forth on his behalf. He is the one with the authority to forgive.

No one listening that day would have understood this passage to mean, “Great, now I get to be Jesus.” Instead, they would have understood, “I am joining in the mission that Jesus was on.”

That is the call of this passage: as we receive the Holy Spirit, we go out and join in the mission—to point others to the forgiveness of sins. We are not the ones who choose who is pick and not pick.

Now, one more point: when we see the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Gospel of John, the clearest definition of the Holy Spirit comes during the Last Supper. When we come to this moment, we should reflect on all the promises unfolding from John 14 through 16.

Promises Concerning the Holy Spirit at the Last Supper

- The Holy Spirit is called Counselor and the Spirit of truth (14:16-17)
- The world is unable to receive the Holy Spirit (14:17)
- The Holy Spirit remains with and in all believers (14:17)
- The Holy Spirit teaches believers all things and reminds believers of what Christ has said (14:26)
- The Holy Spirit testifies about Christ (15:26)
- Jesus ascending and the Holy Spirit coming is for the benefit of believers (16:7)
- The Holy Spirit will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment (16:8)
- There were things the disciples could not bear without the Holy Spirit (16:12-13)
- The Spirit continues the completed mission of Christ (16:13-15)

Jesus says that the Holy Spirit is called “Counselor” and “Spirit of Truth” (John 14:16–17). He also says that the world is unable to receive the Holy Spirit. This was true for everyone—including the disciples in front of him before his death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit was not able to be given to anyone in truth until after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit remains with and in all believers (John 14:17). The promise here is that for the disciples, once you have the Spirit, it will remain with you and in you for all time. This is a wonderful promise—not just for those disciples, but for all who believe today. If you believe, you have the Holy Spirit with and in you.

We’re told the Holy Spirit teaches believers all things and reminds believers of what Christ has said. As we seek to follow, the Holy Spirit guides us.

The Holy Spirit testifies about Christ (John 15:26), and this is very important. I’ve had experiences in the past with people who put an overemphasis on the Holy Spirit, making it seem like the Spirit has its own mission separate from Christ. They elevate the Holy Spirit as the biggest point of the Trinity, focusing on power in the Spirit, on what they can do, and what they can choose. But that’s not what the Spirit does.

When people overemphasize the Spirit, they miss that the Spirit continues the work of the Father and the Son. God—three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are united in their work. The Holy Spirit testifies about Christ. It is not a separate, unique entity. The Father, Son, and Spirit are the three persons of the Trinity, and they are lockstep in their mission.

Jesus ascending and the Holy Spirit coming is for the benefit of believers. When Jesus leaves, he tells his disciples, “I’m going to ascend to heaven, and it’s good for you because you will receive the Holy Spirit.” And I don’t know about you, but had I been at that table almost 2,000 years ago, I would have said, “I don’t believe that—I’d rather have you stay with me, Jesus, God in the flesh.” And yet, the mission of Jesus is better completed through the work of the Holy Spirit after Jesus ascends.

The Holy Spirit will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). And here’s something wonderful: If you are a believer today, this means that this is true for you. The Holy Spirit has convicted you of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Jesus also tells the disciples that there were things they could not bear without the Holy Spirit. Before his resurrection, there were things they were not ready for and could not bear until they received the Holy Spirit.

Lastly, the Spirit continues the completed mission of Christ. God the Father sent God the Son. God the Son died on the cross for our sins. He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven. And he sent the Holy Spirit—God in three persons. God is one, and yet God is three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is continuing the work of Christ, and that’s what we see starting in this passage:

“As the Father has sent me, I also send you. Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”? He gives true life to all who believe (20:19-23)

Do you know Jesus as my Lord and my God?

The first point we see here is that **he gives true life to all who believe**. He gives the Holy Spirit to all who believe—that we would have life and have it to the full. He gives true life to all who believe.

Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”? He gives true life to all who believe (20:19-23) He gives true sight to all who believe (20:24-28)

Which brings us to the second point we see in this passage: **He gives true sight to all who believe**.

And it’s here that we begin talking about Thomas.

But Thomas (called “Twin”), one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples were telling him, “We’ve seen the Lord!”

John 20:24 CSB

But Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the twelve disciples, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples were telling him, “We’ve seen the Lord.”

We need to set the stage for this moment.

We have seen in the Gospel of John very clearly that Jesus is all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere. He knew the story of the woman at the well before he ever met her. He knew the moment Lazarus died—even though he was 60 or 80 miles away. He knows everything.

When he appeared to ten of the twelve disciples, he didn’t show up and say, “Is Thomas here? Oh, I missed him.” No, Jesus intentionally came at that moment, knowing Thomas was not there. And that is important, because in this, we get to see the distinction between those with the Spirit and those without.

The other disciples were telling Thomas, “We’ve seen the Lord.”

They were saying, “When he said he could lay down his life and take it up again—it turns out it’s true. He said he’d die and rise again—it’s true.”

They were telling him all of these things.

And you have to remember: Thomas had seen Jesus do a lot of things.

Jesus turned water into wine. Then he healed a royal official’s son from 20 miles away. A man who had been lame for 38 years—Jesus said, “Pick up your mat and walk.” And he did.

He fed 5,000.

He walked on water.

He gave a man blind from birth his sight.

And he even brought someone back from the dead.

Thomas saw all of this.

Thomas was also present when Jesus was arrested—when Jesus asked, “Who are you seeking?” and they said, “Jesus of Nazareth,” and he said, “I AM,” and they all fell over.

Thomas was present when Jesus said, “Let them go. I’ll go with you.”

Thomas was present for all of that.

And now, the other disciples were telling him, “We’ve seen the Lord.”

And Thomas wasn't having any of it.

But he said to them, "If I don't see the mark of the nails in his hands, put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will never believe."

John 20:25 CSB

"If I don't see the mark of the nails in his hands, put my fingers in the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will never believe."

Those are the words of Thomas—to ten men he had spent the better part of the last three years with. They had seen all these incredible things together. They had seen Jesus together. He knew the tomb was empty. And yet, he was unwilling—or unable—to believe.

He was blind.

"I'll never believe."

And in case you think Thomas is just listing out all the things necessary for him to believe, Thomas seems like a sarcastic guy.

In John 11, when Lazarus dies, the disciples are trying to convince Jesus that they don't need to go back down there—because the Jewish leaders are trying to kill him. They've already picked up stones to kill him a couple of times.

And Thomas, during that conversation, when Jesus says, "No, we're going back," says something along the lines of: "Well, let's go and die with him." And you could read that as, "Let's go die with our Lord." But the "him" could also mean, "Let's go die with Lazarus. He's already dead. Let's go be dead too."

And I think it's the second one. I think there's sarcasm in Thomas, and this is important because we're seeing a skeptic—a cynic. We're seeing someone who is saying, "I'll never believe unless I do these things." He's not really listing conditions for belief; he's saying, "This isn't true."

A week later his disciples were indoors again, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

John 20:26 CSB

A week later, his disciples were indoors again, and Thomas was with them.

Now, I always wonder when I read this—what was that week like?

Ten men, along with the women who had seen Jesus, were all probably talking about what this means for the future. What it means for them. They've received the Holy Spirit—at least a little—and they're rejoicing.

And Thomas? Maybe he's thinking, "You guys are wasting your time." I don't know what he was saying. I don't know why he stayed with them. But he did.

And they're together. **And the doors are locked.** Our best understanding is that they still fear what the Jewish leaders might do.

But as the doors were locked, Jesus came again, stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you."

It's the same pattern we saw earlier.

A week later his disciples were indoors again, and Thomas was with them. Even though **the doors were locked**, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Don't be faithless, but believe."

John 20:26-27 CSB

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Don't be faithless, but believe."

Now, I don't think Jesus is really telling Thomas, "You need to do this now so you will believe." Instead, he's showing Thomas: "I know what you said. And here I am, so you can believe."

Don't be faithless, but **believe.**"

Now, when he says, "Don't be faithless, but believe," we need to take a brief detour into Greek grammar.

I know grammar isn't everyone's favorite, but this moment in the Gospel of John is incredibly important.

ΠΙΣΤΌΣ

Don't be faithless, but believe.

ΆΠΙΣΤΌΣ

The word "faithless" here is *apistos*, and the word "believe" is *pistos*—both from the same Greek root used for belief. If you've been following along in the Gospel of John, you know that belief is a key word.

It's even on the screen—"that you may believe."

Belief is the driving theme of the Gospel of John. John is written so that you might believe, and that by believing, you may have life in his name.

πιστός

Do not continue in your unbelief, but **believe**.

ἄπιστος

A more precise translation of this passage would be: “Do not continue in your unbelief, but **believe**.” Saying “faithless” conveys the same general idea, but the word is nearly identical—like the difference between “moral” and “immoral.”

And there’s something else: pistos in this passage is a noun, not a verb.

The Greek word for belief (πιστευω) is used 100 times in the Gospel of John

Every other instance is a verb πιστος <NOUN

Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe
NOUN>ἄπιστος

Almost every time belief is mentioned in John—98 times—it is a verb.

Greek doesn’t require belief to always be a verb, but after 20 chapters of hearing it used this way, a noun form suddenly appearing creates a dramatic shift.

Imagine singing Amazing Grace and reaching the verse, “When we’ve been there ten thousand years,” where the key suddenly changes—lifting the moment.

That’s what happens here in Greek.

There’s a pattern, a pattern, a pattern—then break. The audience listening would have suddenly thought, “Why does this sound different?” And I think they would have all paused.

“Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe.” Jesus is speaking to Thomas. But could it be... that he’s also speaking to me?

Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe.

This phrase, so evident in Greek, remains powerful in English.

When you read this, it’s as if Jesus is hammering home the command: Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe. I hope you believe

And after Jesus says this, Thomas doesn’t get up and touch Jesus’ hands and side.

Thomas responded to him, “My Lord and my God!”

John 20:28 CSB

Instead, **Thomas responded to him, “My Lord and my God!”** “My Lord and my God!”

This is the climactic sentence in the Gospel of John. “My Lord and my God!” Because in these words, Thomas is declaring everything that the Gospel of John has been revealing.

“My Lord and my God!”

Jesus is my Lord. He is the Messiah. He is the one the entire Old Testament pointed to—the promised one God declared would crush the serpent’s work.

God made that promise from the very beginning. And Jesus has fulfilled it.

He is the Messiah—but he is not merely a man who did good things.

He is fully God. “My Lord and my God!”

The language leaves no room for doubt. Thomas is declaring that Jesus is Lord and God—fully God and fully man.

He is one of the three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Thomas saying, “My Lord and my God!” is the most important thing he could say in response to seeing the risen King. And it is the most important thing we could say to him as well.

Do you believe? Do you believe that Jesus is my Lord and my God?

“My Lord and my God!”

Thomas could not have said these words from the message of the other ten disciples without revelation from God.

And there’s something crucial here about Thomas saying these words.

Thomas is often called “Doubting Thomas.” People say, “Oh, you’re a doubter, like Thomas.” But that label isn’t really fair to him. Because what was missing from Thomas is revelation from God—something that can only come through God and the Holy Spirit.

Thomas could not have said these words based solely on the testimony of the other ten disciples without revelation from God.

He could not have made this declaration from what they had said without God revealing it to him in the first place.

No one can say, “My Lord and my God!” unless they are born again—which is a work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Thomas could not have said these words at all, and this may sound like a little thing, but when we say, “Wow, what a doubter,” what we instead should think is, “Wow, even

someone who saw it all up close and personal, without the work of the Holy Spirit, cannot understand."

"My Lord and my God!"

Thomas could not have said these words from the message of the other ten disciples without revelation from God.

No one can say these words without revelation from God

No one can say these words without revelation from God.

So if you've said these words, if you've declared Jesus as your Lord and your God, it means the Holy Spirit has opened your eyes to that truth.

"My Lord and my God!"

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who **believe** in his name, who were born, **not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man**, but of God.

John 1:11-13 CSB

This is what it says in John 1:11–13 when it says, ***"Jesus came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God—to those who believe in his name, who were born not of natural descent or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God."***

That natural descent, will of the flesh, or will of man—there's no way you can earn the ability to say, "My Lord and my God." You cannot be a good enough person to someday be able to say, "Now that I've done all these things, I declare in my own strength, My Lord and my God." You could pour over the Scriptures your whole life in your own strength, and unless the Lord reveals it to you, you could never truly say, "My Lord and my God."

"My Lord and my God!"

Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "How can anyone be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked him. "Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly I tell you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

John 3:3-5 CSB

This is what Jesus talks about in John 3 with Nicodemus. Nicodemus, who is a Pharisee, who knows the Word of God well, who's trying to figure out who Jesus is. And ***Jesus says to him, "Truly I tell you, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."*** ***Nicodemus says, "How can anyone be born when he is old? Can he enter his mother's womb a***

second time and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, I tell you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."

The language here is that we would be born again, which is a work of the Father, Son, and especially the Holy Spirit opening our eyes to the truth of the Gospel. We do not save ourselves. We do not bear ourselves. Ephesians 2 says, "We were dead in our sins, children of wrath, unable to change our reality. But God, being rich in mercy, brought us to life. Through grace, we have been saved." It is a work of Christ.

"My Lord and my God!"

Thomas could not have said these words from the message of the other ten disciples without revelation from God.

No one can say these words without revelation from God

No one can say these words without revelation from God. You cannot say them. I could not say them. If you say, "My Lord and my God," if you believe, it is a work of the Holy Spirit.

Do you know Jesus as "My Lord and My God"?

He gives true life to all who believe (20:19-23)

He gives true sight to all who believe (20:24-28)

He gives true peace to all who believe (20:29)

Do you know Jesus as my Lord and my God?

He is the one who gives true life to all who believe, and he gives true sight to all who believe. Thomas comes to believe because Jesus reveals to him the truth.

And lastly, he gives true peace to all who believe.

Thomas responded to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said, "Because you have seen me, you have believe." believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

John 20:28-29 CSB

In the final verses of this passage, **after Thomas responded to him, "My Lord and my God," Jesus said, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."**

If you're here today and you're a believer, blessed are you. Because we don't see the risen King the same way, but through the work of the Holy Spirit, through the testimony of those who believe, we come to know the Lord. We are given life through that. We are invited to believe through the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not what we do, but blessed are all who have not seen and yet believe.

Do you know Jesus as "My Lord and My God"?

He gives true life to all who believe (20:19-23)

He gives true sight to all who believe (20:24-28)

He gives true peace to all who believe (20:29)

Do you know Jesus as my Lord and my God?

He gives true life to all who believe. He gives us the Holy Spirit that we would know we have life.

And he gives true sight to all who believe. Again, the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to the truth of the Gospel.

And he gives true peace to all who believe, because if we believe, we know we are children of God. We know we are blessed because of what he has done for us.

Do you know Jesus as my Lord and my God?

Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”?

He gives true life to all who believe (20:19-23)

If you have true life, rejoice!

He gives true sight to all who believe (20:24-28)

He gives true peace to all who believe (20:29)

I hope your answer to this is yes. And if your answer to this is yes, if you have true life, rejoice! Every time we read about the resurrection as believers, we should be rejoicing, because we deserve death for our sins. But Christ died on the cross in our place, taking on the wrath of God, that we could have life in his name.

It is such a wonderful thing, and we do not deserve it. We could never earn it, and yet he has freely given it to all who believe. And so if you have true life, rejoice. Rejoice because of what Christ has done.

Rejoice that when he sent his disciples, giving them the Holy Spirit, they did their work well through the Holy Spirit. Because 11 men and those others who believed in Acts became 3,000, and it kept spreading. And today, half a world away, we still come to believe because of the work of Christ in the world through the Holy Spirit.

If you have true life, rejoice!

Do you know Jesus as “My Lord and My God”?

He gives true life to all who believe (20:19-23)

If you have true life, rejoice!

He gives true sight to all who believe (20:24-28)

If you realize you are blind, repent!

He gives true peace to all who believe (20:29)

And he gives true sight to all who believe.

And so if you're here today, and as you're listening to this, you're wondering where you stand before God, or if you're realizing you're blind, if you're realizing, "I've never said, 'My Lord and my God,'" repent! Cry out to him. Say, "Jesus, you are my Lord and my God. Help me to see the truth."

If you realize you are blind, don't leave today in that. If you're realizing you're blind in the first place, it's evidence the Holy Spirit is starting to open your eyes to the truth of the Gospel.

If you realize you are blind, repent. Cry out to him. Do not be like Thomas saying, "Well, if I had a time machine and I could go back to that day, I'd believe." No. If you realize you are blind, repent. Turn to the one who is the source of true life and cry out to him.

Do you know Jesus as "My Lord and My God"?

He gives true life to all who **believe** (20:19-23)

If you have true life, rejoice!

He gives true sight to all who **believe** (20:24-28)

If you realize you are blind, repent!

He gives true peace to all who **believe** (20:29)

As you are sent into the world, remember!

Lastly, he gives true peace to all who believe. As you are sent into the world as a believer, as you leave today, remember who is sending you out. And as you remember who is sending you out, I want to encourage you—All the imagery of the Holy Spirit, all that we learn about the Holy Spirit, is that he is in us, and he is with us.

We go out into a world that is blind to the gospel, a world that wanted him nailed to the cross and nailed him to the cross. We go out into a world that rejected the light of the world, and it is blind, and we need to remember that, trusting we have life, rejoicing in the life we have, and we need to pray for those we interact with, that the Lord would open their eyes.

When you interact with people who are not believers, I pray you remember this, and I pray that you pray for them. I pray that you look to them and think, "Lord, just open their eyes." I pray you point them to the truth of the gospel.

It's easy to be angry at people who are blind or people who seem ignorant, but what a wonderful thing when you look at them and say, "Lord, open their eyes," because he is still opening eyes. Because if you're here today and you're a believer, your eyes were opened. There was a moment before you could say, "My Lord and my God," and the Lord opened your eyes to the truth. That is true for anyone who believes.

So, as you are sent into the world, remember. Remember, because people need to know the truth. I meet with people sometimes with family members who aren't believers, and it is

heartbreaking. And the best thing you can do is pray for them. You can point them to the truth. You can show them with your life the way you live, through the Spirit working through you. You can show them the truth of the gospel, and that's all we can do for them, because we're not the ones who change them. It's a work of the Spirit, but he does work in us and through us.

Do you know Jesus is my Lord and my God?

I want to kind of close. I have a story from my life of a moment when I watched someone hit their "My Lord and my God" moment. And every time I read this passage, I think about French fries. I know that sounds weird, but I think about French fries because, a little less than 10 years ago, I was a youth pastor, and I was at a church, and a guy asked me if we could do lunch because he wanted to serve with our youth group. And he had just started coming to our church.

We sat down to lunch in a college cafeteria, and as we were talking, I thought we were having a conversation about membership and different things related to serving at our church. This was an old church, by the way. I've only been here two years.

So, I'm coming into this conversation one way, and one of the first things he says is, "I'm glad to be at this church because everyone here knows the truth. If you're a good person, you go to heaven."

He said something along those lines, and I just kind of went, "Well, that's a problem, because you can't be a good enough person. The wages of sin are death. We have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We cannot change that on our own. It is the gift of God that is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."

But as we started talking, he told me that he had been frustrated many times because Christians had treated him poorly, because he grew up Catholic. And he's like, "I'm not really Catholic, but they say we don't believe the same thing. But we've got the same book."

So this conversation went from, "Hey, here are the steps to get involved and get serving," to, "Hey, what is it you believe?"

And I thought we were going to meet for an hour, and it turned into a couple of hours.

Early in the meeting, I was praying about how to talk to him about this, because he had just told me, "I've had Christians judge me harshly. You tell me I'm headed to hell because I'm not a good enough person." And I was like, "That's true."

So I said, "Well, hey, how about you tell me what you believe?"

And he kind of walked me through his belief, which was basically: you live your whole life, good or bad, and every time you do a good thing, every time you do a bad thing...

And he finished, and then I walked him through my testimony.

And then I talked to him about Scripture: "The wages of sin is death. No one is good enough. We cannot stand in our sin. Our sins are like crimson—they stain everything. There is no way for us to be saved in our own strength."

And he said, "Well, I don't see it the same way."

And then I took some French fries, and I did the Romans Road, using the fries to illustrate the chasm and separation. Then I used a really big French fry to be the bridge.

And he said, "Well, you spend your whole life walking across that Jesus Bridge, and if you get to the other side before you die, you get in."

And I said, "Well, no, that's not what it says. It says you're alive or dead."

And in my evangelism mindset, I said, "Let's go to Ephesians Chapter 2. You're dead or you're alive. Which are you?"

I started to go through the gospel with him, and I thought I nailed it perfectly.

And he was like, "Yeah, I guess. But I still think this."

And at this point, we had been talking for an hour and a half, and in my head, I was thinking, "So, he had a bunch of next steps he wanted to talk about. Like, he wants to serve, he wants to do this and that, but he can't do those things if he's not a believer. And if he was a believer, he needs discipleship before pouring out into others."

So I was trying to figure out how to wrap up this conversation.

And all of a sudden, he repeats back to me one of the things I'd said.

And he says, "Well, I guess there's nothing I could do, right?"

I was like, "Oh."

And all of a sudden, I started throwing back at him all of his objections. And over the course of about half an hour, he was preaching the gospel to me.

And there was a point where I said, "Well, hey, I want to know what you believe," and he took the French fries.

And I will never forget the moment, because he takes the French fries, he walks through all of it.

And I'm sitting there like, "Whoa, he's got this memorized."

And then he picks up the big French fry—the Jesus Bridge French fry we were using—

And his eyes just start watering. That was the “My Lord and My God” moment.

It was the moment the Holy Spirit opened his eyes. This is not simply an intellectual pursuit. It's not something you can earn or gain. When Christ was nailed to that cross, he died for your sins so that you could have life—not because you could earn it or deserve it, but because he has freely given it to all who believe.

That was his moment, and I will never forget that moment. It's one of those moments where I was like, "What are we doing? It's been two hours. It's weird. Like, the café workers are wondering." And the Lord worked. The Holy Spirit worked. It wasn't because of anything I said. It was because the Spirit worked and opened his eyes to the truth of the gospel.

I could have sat with him for hours in my own strength, and nothing would have changed. But the Spirit is alive and working in the world, and praise the Lord for that.

My daughter was in here most of the service, and she's out now. I pray for her—that someday she has this moment. She's five right now. I pray that someday, she says, "My Lord and my God."

I remember when I said it when I was ten, when I prayed to the Lord. My mom made me sit through a church service, and I sat there. And after the church, I said, "Mom, a lot of what he said—I want to know more about him." So that night, on a water bed with my mom, she walked me through the Romans Road and the gospel, and it was that day that I believed.

Do you know Jesus as “Your Lord and your God”?

And I pray that you know Jesus is your Lord and your God. I pray you know that that is who he is. I pray you believe that.

And if you believe that, it's because the Holy Spirit has opened your eyes to the truth—that God sent his Son to the world because he loved the world. And the world, which was deserving of death and darkness—we who did not deserve life at all—he died in our place, that we could have eternal life.

And through the work of the Father, Son, and Spirit, we can come to believe the truth of the gospel.

And praise the Lord for that.

Let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you that you sent your Son. We thank you, Lord, that through the work that your Son did—through his completed mission, when he finished the work on the cross—we can have life in your name, or in his name.

We praise you, Lord, for the work of the Spirit that continues the work of Christ to this day—that we can know you today, that we can believe today.

And Father, I pray you would be working in our midst.

I pray that if anyone here does not know you as Lord and God, I pray that, even now, the gospel would be made evident to them. You would open their eyes. Your Spirit would move. And they would come to know the truth of who you are.

And I praise you, Lord. I rejoice that I am a child of God and rejoice for all here who believe in your name—that we are children of God.

And we pray, Lord, as we go into this world that is blind to the truth of your gospel, we pray that your Spirit would work in us and through us—that many would come to know Jesus and that his mission would be completed. And Jesus, that you would return again soon.

We pray all of this in your holy and precious name. Amen.