

# One Hope

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Today we're going to be meeting together and thinking about what we see when we look at Jesus.

Can you put the first slide on, Richard? And the next one. Excellent. So over the last few weeks, we've been journeying with Jesus.

In this church, we've been looking at the journey that Jesus took to the cross and then to the grave and then back to life.

And today we're going to finish that journey with a last... Can I have the next slide, please? I was hoping it was going to work from the front. We're going to think about one last story, and it's a strange story.

It's about two disciples who were walking away from where Jesus is. And Jesus joins them, but they don't see him.

[ 1 : 0 2 ]     They can't recognize him. They have lost all of their hope. And Jesus gives them a new hope. And today we're going to think about how the risen Jesus is our one hope.

So let's just pray and ask God to help us see him this morning. Father, thank you that you stepped into our world to give us new hope.

Thank you that you can bring us new life. We pray you will be with us this morning and help us to see you.

Because we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. So, first of all, let's stand and we're going to sing three songs of worship to Jesus.

So, it's Sunday morning. And the story that we're going to look at, if you're interested, is found in Luke chapter 24, about halfway through.

[ 2 : 0 8 ]     So, the women who love Jesus have gone to anoint his body with spices. But when they get there, the tomb is open and empty.

Angels told them that Jesus had risen from the dead. The disciples, well, they didn't necessarily believe the women. And so, a couple of them ran to see what was going on.

And they couldn't find the body afterwards. And it says that Peter stood and wondered, but did not understand. And so, we're going to watch a video of our story.

It starts with the two disciples walking away from Jerusalem that same day. What a story. I've often read that story and never really thought about that phrase.

They were kept from seeing him. I'd always sort of assumed that maybe like, you know, Jesus wore a hoodie. You know, like we saw there.

[ 3 : 1 5 ]     Or maybe some sort of elaborate disguise. Maybe he had one of those voice boxes that made him sound different. But the more I think about it, I don't think he was physically hidden from them.

I think they just couldn't see him. I think they misunderstood some things. They misunderstood some things about themselves. And they certainly misunderstood some things about Jesus.

Who he was. What he'd come to do. And how he'd really do it. And so, Jesus, like any good teacher, much to the irritation of my children, doesn't jump right to the end and give them the answer.

He doesn't go, ta-da! It's me. He teaches them. And he shows them he's working out.

And he takes them through Moses, the law, and the prophets. And that's what we're going to do today.

[ 4 : 26 ] We might miss a few pages. Otherwise, your lamb may be a bit more burnt than you were hoping for when you get home. But we're going to think about what the law of Moses, what the prophets tell us about Jesus' mission.

Downstairs, when we teach the children, we often use... Can you go to the next slide, Richard? We often use a Bible called the Jesus Storybook Bible. And I'd recommend this book for adults, actually.

It says this. It says, every story whispers his name. And we're going to think about how every story whispers his name.

First of all, let's think about Moses. Let's think about the law. Now, this might seem weird, thinking about this on Easter Sunday. But I promise you it's really important.

We don't know which bit out of the first five books of the Bible, the law, the books of Moses, Jesus spoke about. Maybe he started right at the beginning with Adam and Eve.

[ 5 : 35 ] Because you can see pictures and shadows of Jesus through all these stories in the Bible. Maybe he spoke about how when Adam and Eve had disobeyed God, God provided clothes to cover up their shame.

He helped them with their shame. Maybe he told the story about when they were leaving the Garden of Eden. And it says that the seed of Adam will crush the devil's head.

But he will bruise the son's heel. Meaning that God was going to get rid of all the evil in the world. But it would hurt him to do it. Maybe he talked about the story of Joseph.

You can see it up there. A young man who was sold by his brothers for pieces of silver. Suffered, was accused wrongly and condemned.

But he forgave his brothers. And he saved the nation. Maybe he spoke about Exodus, the wonderful story. We remember the Passover.

[ 6 : 49 ] That actually a lamb had to die. And the people were saved. Or maybe about the actual Exodus. That God provided a way. He lit the way.

And took them from captivity and bondage into freedom. Or maybe he mentioned a bit in Numbers. Where the children of Israel had rebelled against God.

And God told Moses to make a bronze snake. And hold it up. And can anyone remember what it was that the people had to do in order to be saved?

Yeah? Ibn, shout. Anyone remember what the people had to do to be saved? Was it complicated? Look at it. Look and believe.

That's all they had to do. And they were saved. So we don't know which bits he looked at. But I think he started with the law.

[ 7 : 55 ] Because he wanted the disciples to realize that all of us, like Adam and Eve. All of us, like the children of Israel. All of us, like the story of the people of Israel.

All through the Bible. Have made choices. God gave us a perfect world. And we have made some bad decisions. Now, does anyone know what I do for a job?

My children don't, actually. I work in the laboratory. And I like doing science. And one of the things with experiments is that sometimes they work.

And sometimes they don't. So will you pray? And younger people, if you'd like to come a little bit closer. This one's quite safe. Okay?

Okay? In the Bible, it says that God created this perfect world. It was like a golden world. It was absolutely perfect. But he also said to Adam and Eve, there are some things.

[ 9 : 01 ] This is biohazardous. It will hurt you. It will damage you. It will separate you from God. It looks a bit like, I made that with London tap water, I'd like to say.

That's why it probably came from the Thames, didn't it? No comments there. But God told Adam and Eve not to take the fruit, not to do what he said they shouldn't.

But they didn't believe him. And when they did, there was darkness. And they were separated from God. I put that there.

What's the chance? The chances of none of these spilling during the day are almost zero. And all of us, the Bible said, have done that.

All of us have sinned and chosen the wrong things. But how we react to that can be quite different. We recently just had our kitchen redecorated.

[ 10 : 00 ] And my favorite thing to do is to go and choose paint colors. I don't know whether you've ever been to a paint shop and seen this, but there isn't just one black, is there?

Richard, can you? There's witchcraft, a curious, cool, stormy black. There's leopard back, a dark, cool, serious black.

Or I like the starless sky, darker than dark, bat black. Not easy to say without your false teeth coming out. And I think there's a real temptation where we think about sin, which is what the Bible describes our choices to go against God's best way.

It's really easy to compare ourselves to other people. But the bottom line is, it's black. We have all sinned.

Next slide, Richard. Now, I'm just going to pop this one down here. And for this, I need three volunteers. And as this also involves some biohazards, and I don't really want to be sued, I'm going to ask three members of my family to come and help me with this.

[ 11 : 18 ] So, the other thing I think is that it's really easy. Right. Alison, why don't you have those two? Joseph, why don't you have those two?

And Elijah, you can have those two. Now, all you need to do is do what I did. Okay. I'll give you a... We've got just about enough glasses.

No, no, no, no. Don't... It's biohazard. What do they teach you at school? Now, all you need to do, tops off, is pour them in.

Wait for it, though. So, you need to pour it in so they mix quite nicely. Okay. Otherwise, you might get away with it.

Okay. So, yeah. You ready? Just on. Wait. On. One, two, three. Go. Oh.

[ 12 : 18 ] Nothing. What? Let's just... No? Nothing? Nothing? Oh. They say science doesn't always work, don't they? But I was really expecting something.

Oh. You see, the strange thing about sin is that the Bible says it grows. And its effects might not be obvious at the beginning.

In James, it says, temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. And these desires give birth to sinful actions.

When sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. It's a bit colder in here than I was anticipating.

Okay. Oh. Joseph. But, Elijah, it looks like you've got away with it. Maybe you go and sit down. Can you keep an eye on it?

[ 13 : 26 ] Because the Bible describes it this way as well. It says in Romans that the wages of sin is death.

It's as sure as getting... All right. Even more sure than getting paid at the end of the month. And sometimes it takes time.

But it says, be sure your sin will catch up with you. So why am I talking about this on Easter Sunday?

Aren't we meant to be celebrating? Well, the thing is, you can't really truly celebrate the resurrection until we see that without God, we're dead in our sin.

In order to see who he is and recognize him, we need to see who we really are. Without you seeing your sin, you'll never realize.

[ 14 : 29 ] Even Elijah. No. Even Elijah. So we've thought about the law and what that might tell us about Jesus.

So let's think about the prophets. You know, scholars think that there were over 300 prophecies written about Jesus in the Old Testament, all of which came true.

There were 28 prophecies that they've identified that came true just on Good Friday. And a lot of the people that followed Jesus would have read those scrolls, those prophecies, over and over again.

But it's amazing, isn't it, how you can read the same thing or hear the same thing and completely misunderstand it. I love this example which I was taught at school.

Do you know this? Panda. It eats, shoots and leaves. Kind of depends how you say it.

[ 15 : 43 ] Apparently it depends how you punctuate it, but that was way beyond my capability at English. And Jesus was called the Messiah, which means the one who will save.

And lots of his followers, I think, thought that he was going to go about it in a really different way. If you read in that passage in Luke, it said, we thought he was the one to redeem us.

We thought he was going to be the one who would save us. And they thought he was going to do it via military might. Rambo Jesus. Getting rid of Rome. Installing a government.

Strong. Someone who was going to be strong, aggressive, probably vengeful. What they got was something quite different.

It said about him in Isaiah, it said, he will bring justice to the nations, but he will not shout or cry out or raise his voice in the streets.

[ 17 : 00 ] He wasn't going to be that kind of Messiah. It said, a bruised reed he won't break and a wick that's still just smouldering he won't snuff out.

The prophets described someone who was very different. Strong, yes, but strong against injustice. Strong against hypocrisy.

Strong against suffering. And also strong against death. And he shows lots of these miracles.

Lots of his strength he shows in miracles. He said, I have come to bring good news to the poor.

When he was sort of launching his ministry in Galilee, he quotes from Isaiah and he says, the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he's appointed me to preach good news to the poor.

[ 18 : 04 ] He sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty people who are oppressed.

And he performed numerous miracles. And over sort of some of the weeks between Christmas and, sorry, in the new year, we actually looked at some stories of Jesus.

And we didn't do this one, but actually my favorite story, my favorite miracle of Jesus, and read into this what you will, is when he turned water into wine.

Now this just sounds like a frivolous, sounds like a frivolous thing, but actually it was so important.

He did it to save the bride and the groom from shame. He did it to provide, even though it wasn't his time. And he performed amazing, annoying these bottles, aren't they?

[ 19 : 14 ] Now they have. I will recycle it. He turned water into wine. Mmm. Wish I could do that at home.

Now I have to be careful which one of these I drink for the next. So he was a servant. He came not to be served, but to serve, to save us from shame, to provide for us.

And not just to provide, you know, sort of little, poor things. He said, I have come that you might have life, and life in all of its fullness.

And as a picture of that, the wine that he made, wasn't the wine you normally serve at the end, when everyone's had a few. It was the best wine.

So he came to serve us and bring us the best life. But in Isaiah, it also describes a different type of servant.

[ 20 : 15 ] Can we have the next? Yeah. The suffering servant. There's four big bits in Isaiah. In the prophets, where it describes how Jesus would suffer.

It says, He was pierced for our transgressions, the wrong things that we've done. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that has brought us wholeness or peace was on him.

And by his wounds, we are healed. And so it doesn't just represent wine, does it, this? It also represents blood.

Because Jesus said, and maybe these disciples had heard about what happened at the Last Supper, where Jesus said, I'm going to shed my blood.

And this will bring about a new agreement, a new covenant between God and man for the forgiveness of his sins. And that is what happened on Friday.

[ 21 : 24 ] Jesus shed his blood. Now I can hear you saying it, but it's Sunday. Why are we going on about sin and suffering? suffering. But because it's important how we look.

What do you look at when you look at the Lamb of God? Just a teacher? Just a good example of how to live? We need to see him as the suffering servant.

Because unless we really understand what it costs him, we can never really celebrate the resurrection victory fully.

So let's stand and sing again about this love which drew Jesus to go to the cross for us.

So, at last, finally, we come to the point. The disciples see. There's a great phrase, isn't there?

[ 22 : 26 ] It's called, the penny has dropped. Does anyone know? Well, I'm sort of giving you a hint there. I had to look up yesterday where this phrase comes from.

Apparently, it starts around 1890 to 1910 with these... Can anyone remember what they're called? Sorry?

Yeah. Well, you're right. Other versions are available. They were called like...

It's like sort of... It's not a colitis. Anyway, it was a moving picture machine. Let's call it that. And you went up to one, and you looked in it, and you could see nothing.

And you could turn the handle, and nothing would happen. And you had to drop a penny. It was a cent into it. And when it hit the bottom, then suddenly a light would come on, and you could see everything.

[ 23 : 30 ] And you could see things in color, and they were moving. And that's what happened to the disciples, isn't it? Suddenly, it says their eyes were opened.

Why were they open then? We don't know. Maybe they were told about the Last Supper. It said he took bread, gave thanks, and gave it to them.

Maybe they'd heard about him breaking the bread at the Last Supper. Maybe it was a familiar prayer, the way that he thanked the Father. Maybe they saw the scars in his hands.

Whatever it is, they get it, don't they? And it says their eyes were opened, and their hearts burned within them. And this morning, I need to ask you, have you seen it?

Have you got it? The wonder of the resurrection. Because Jesus shed his blood, and he did it because you and I have sinned, and that there was no answer to that whatsoever.

[ 24 : 47 ] Or was there? There's that phrase, isn't it? What happens when an immovable obstacle is met by an irresistible force? And in this case, sin was an almost immovable object.

But Jesus' blood was stronger. And it says that when he poured himself out for us, he took on the sin of the whole world, and it was gone.

Forever. One sacrifice. Forever. And it says in the Bible that he took on the sin of all the world.

But he also took it on just for you. It's not just, and I apologize, I'm not very good at art. So he took on the sin of the world, but he also took on your sin and my sin.

If you can't see it at the back, that's meant to be a little person. Okay? And so the Bible says that every one of us, as we said, is stained with sin.

[ 26 : 07 ] Darkness. But it's not just sin. We are also filled with hurt, just like Jesus was.

And him dying on the cross is of no benefit to us unless we decide to enter into it.

And if we will be baptized and go with him and accept him, then we will have our sins and our hurt completely, totally, and utterly removed.

And God dying for us is an personal thing for us. But I don't think it was ever meant to stay just with us.

Us sitting there in our wonderful world, in our forgiven state. Think of this as being like you with Jesus in the church.

[ 27 : 22 ] Because the world is also hurting. And the world is full of suffering.

And what he asks every one of us, as his followers to do, is to go out into the world and carry on his mission.

And this morning, I need to ask you, when you look at Jesus, what do you see? Do you see your sin laid upon him?

Do you see your need of him? And when you see what it cost him, how can you hold anything back from him?

Each one of us needs to make our own choice. And just like the children of Israel, just had to look and believe.

[ 28 : 27 ] All you need to do is to look and believe and ask him to forgive you. So as we close, a blessing. May you see your need of the Savior.

May you see Jesus, the servant king who gave his life for us, for you. And may you experience his forgiveness and new life, now and forevermore.

Amen. There'll be tea and coffee, I hope, downstairs. But if you'd like to stay and think or pray, then please stay upstairs and there'll be people here to chat or pray with any of you that would like to.

So now go in peace to love and serve the Lord.