

“Believe” | John 20:1–29 (ESV) | Easter Sunday

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Preacher: Pastor Patrick Dailey

[0:00] Well, good morning, church. Happy Easter, everyone. He is risen. Indeed, he is risen. It's great to be here with you on this Easter Sunday, this Resurrection Sunday. Such a wonderful time for us to gather to today here at church as we are celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It is part, it is essential to the gospel story. When we think of the simple gospel, it is the death, the burial, and the resurrection. There wouldn't be a gospel if there wasn't the resurrection. Amen? It's so important for us to recognize and to realize the significance that God has the final say. That God is sovereign, he is supreme, he is in control, and death does not have the final word. It is God that does.

Can I get an amen on that one, right? It's important for us to realize that. And so today, I've titled today's sermon, Believe the Resurrection, and it's going to be based off of John chapter 20, verses 1 through 29.

And I'd like to go ahead and we will open with a word of prayer and we'll go ahead and get started on this wonderful Sunday. Father God, we thank you for this time and this opportunity for us to gather today here on this Easter Sunday, this Resurrection Sunday.

[1:20] The resurrection, it shows us the significance of Jesus Christ, believing in him. And today, I just pray that everyone who is here in person, everyone who is tuning in online, wherever they are, I pray, Father, that every single person will recognize who you are.

That you love the world so much that you sent your son, Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. That whosoever believes shall not perish but have eternal life.

What a wonderful time for us to gather today, for us to celebrate the day, and for us to remember the day, this significant Sunday.

We just pray that this message will be heard and that it will be understood. We pray that lives will be transformed, whether that is making a decision for Christ or whether that means returning.

Maybe there are people here today, Father, that feel distant or feel kind of this sense of maybe the Spirit is working in their life in such a capacity.

[2:28] We pray that your will will be done. That your message will be clear. We pray that every single one of us will be moved to grow in the faith and be moved to live it out.

To live and love like your son, Jesus Christ. It is in the name of Jesus that we pray, the cornerstone of our faith. And we all say together, Amen, church? Amen.

All right. So, the resurrection shows us the importance of believing in Christ, even when we do not fully understand.

It is so important for us to recognize that God works in our lives in such amazing and incredible capacities. Very often, more often than not, there are times where God is moving in our life and we don't recognize exactly what's going on.

How many of us have had a moment like that before? And then the event happens. It might be a week. It might be a month. It might even be a few years where you recognize that the movement of God was working in such a capacity that you think for a moment, Oh, you were working through this person.

[3:39] You were working through this situation. It happens more often than not. And like they say, that famous saying that hindsight is what? 2020, right?

And it's so important for us that when events happen in our lives, we may not understand. But there's still an importance of having faith and believing in Christ, even when we don't understand the full picture, the full scope of what is going on.

And so we're going to recognize today, we're going to go to this next slide here, that in the Gospel of John, when we were going over Palm Sunday, it's a Sunday where people are celebrating. People are waving their palms. If you were here last week, the kiddos all got their palms, or maybe you as an adult got one too, right? A great time of celebration, of victory, where people were saying Hosanna.

And it's interesting how in this verse, in John chapter 12, verse 16, that the disciples did not recognize what was going on until after the fact.

[4:47] And I think that's so important for us when we consider the Easter story. When Jesus was glorified, then they remembered. Then they understood what was going on.

And that helps us to understand what is going on here in Easter Sunday, right? We will see. If you want to be ahead, go ahead and turn to the Gospel of John chapter 20.

But there's a section in there that these are written, right? The account of the resurrection, so that you may believe in Jesus. Amen? Amen? It's the Gospel story for us to recognize, to have the change of mind, the softening of the heart, and the renewal of the Spirit.

This transformation that happens in our life. That God works in and through our lives every single day in such incredible capacities. These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

That is the whole reason why John wrote the Gospel in the first place, right? So that we, people here today in 2026, thousands of years later, may come to believe in the resurrected Son, Jesus Christ.

[6:01] And so, let's turn our Bibles. It's going to be on page 1077, 1078 in your ESV Bible. Or you can use your mobile device or your Bible of choice here.

And what we're going to do, we're going to read right now, Gospel of John, chapter 20, verses 1 through 18. And of course, there's other things that are going on towards the end here.

But the most important part is for us to kind of see what's going on in the scene from these first verses, these first 18 verses. And church, as you turn there, feel free to follow along, read it aloud together.

We're okay with that. Are we all there? So, Gospel of John, chapter 20, we're going to start in verse 1. Now, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. Do you know who that is, by the way? John, right? The one whom Jesus loved and said to them, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

[7:14] So Peter went with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter, right?

And reached the tomb first. You gotta admit, God's got a funny sense of humor, right? When we're reading this in the text, right? Yeah, Peter ran, but I outran him kind of thing in here. So, verse 5. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but what?

They were folded up in a place by itself. Verse 8. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw, and what? He believed.

For as yet, they did not understand the scripture, right? They didn't understand it at the time, that he must rise from the dead. Verse 10. Then the disciples went back to their homes.

[8:20] Verse 11. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. And as she wept, she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

They said to her, what did they say? Woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.

Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing. But did she know? No, she didn't know that it was Jesus, right? Verse 15. Jesus said to her, woman, why are you weeping?

Whom are you seeking? Supposing him to be what? A gardener, right? And so that's crazy. She said to him, sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus said to her, Mary. She turned and said to him in Aramaic, Rabboni, which means teacher. And Jesus said to her, do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

[9:29] But go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God. And Mary Magdalene, did she just go home?

No. What did she do? She went and announced to the disciples what she say. I have seen the Lord. And that he had said these things to her. So we're going to stop there for a second here, right?

So it's very important as we're looking at this, as we are observing the text. So here at Ontario Community Church, we utilize what's called the OIA method, observation.

We read the text, right? We got to read the Bible, right? That's very important for us. We observe the text. We interpret it, right? What are the underlying lessons that we can learn from the text? And then finally, the A, which is application.

What do we do about this? So as we are observing, right, the first thing is the empty tomb, right? We have this scene that is going on. And you noticed I didn't go into verses 19 through 29.

[10:29] That's intentional. We'll get to there in a moment, right? So first day of the week, Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb, right? And notice how it says that while it is still dark, right?

You have this sense where there is darkness that's happening on Good Friday, right? Where it appears that the darkness is ruling and reigning, but the light is penetrating through the dark, right? While it's still dark, the light is about to come. So that's something that's very significant for us to take to heart. She saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb, right? Friday ended in darkness and it continued until Sunday, right?

While it was still dark, the light had not come, but it was about to. And so Peter and that other disciple, I always think it's very interesting how, you know, Peter and that other guy named John, right?

I always just thought God has a funny sense of humor. John ran to the tomb and he outran Peter. And John looked in, but he did not enter. Peter went in. And it's interesting also you see that there's these linen cloths.

[11:29] It's also important to note that they were folded, right? Isn't that kind of interesting? You would think that the body had disappeared, right? The cloths would just be lying there, you know, kind of in a mess, right? But to be intentionally folded is something that was done with such intentionality, right?

So the cloths were not stolen, right? They weren't scattered around. They were folded. They were deliberately placed. That's a very important note to notice. In verse 8, right, the other disciple went in and he saw and believed.

And I would say it's so important for us to understand, as I was saying in the beginning, when we go through life, a lot of things just happen that we may not fully understand at the time, right?

And after the fact, the Lord reveals why something happened. And we see this within the text where it's saying the disciples didn't know what was going on, right?

They didn't understand, right? As it says in verse 9, yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead. So it's kind of this interesting sense where you would think they would know better, but where are we?

[12:37] We're ahead of the event that had happened. So we can look back at the event, but in the moment, they did not understand. And it was eventually revealed to them, right? And so in verse 10, also notice in that final verse, it doesn't say that they ran off and told everybody.

You notice that. What did they do? It says in verse 10, they just went to their homes, right? It's kind of interesting that you have the difference between what the disciples were doing and what Mary was doing, right?

Very, very different outcome, right? Same event, but different response. That's something to note with that. The second thing we can observe is Mary at the tomb, which is from verses 11 to 18. And so Mary stood weeping outside of the tomb. Everyone else had left, right? You have the two angels that are talking with Mary. Why are you weeping? And then she's turning and seeing Jesus there.

And how interesting to be in this moment where you are seeing Jesus and you don't recognize him. Like, isn't that peculiar? Isn't that very interesting that she didn't recognize it until essentially Jesus was saying it's the proper time.

[13:56] So in the same way that understanding a past event happens, right? Hindsight being 20-20. It's also important to note in scenes like this that at the proper time we come to see who Jesus is.

It's as though the eyes were being opened. It's as though there was this sense of understanding that happened. Okay? So she didn't recognize Jesus. But at the proper time, it was the time for her to recognize Jesus.

And how interesting is that? Where for many of us, how many of you remember before you were a Christian? You don't have to raise your hand on that one, right? But you might remember a time before you were a Christian.

Or maybe you're not a Christian right now, right? You might understand that there's this sense of hearing Jesus as a cool guy, right? You might think, okay, Jesus is this guy with long hair.

Does he go to like the beach and surf? Is he a guru? Is he just a great teacher, right? And you hear the same story. But eventually there comes a time where you come to understand who Jesus is.

[15:00] Even when he's right in front of you, right? So it's a very interesting thing to note when we're looking at that. And so Jesus is talking to her, woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking, right?

Thinking it's the gardener. And then when Jesus calls her name, Mary. Do we recognize and realize how significant that is when Jesus calls Mary's name?

And in the same way, how Jesus calls us by name to respond to the gospel, right? It's very important for us to recognize that.

And so go to my brothers and say to them, right? Verse 18, Mary Magdalene went out and announced to the disciples, right? So did she just go home?

No. There's this sense of excitement, of realization, right? I'm going to tell everybody. I have this sense of refreshingness, renewal.

[15:59] And I'm going to respond by telling everyone what's going on. Now, if you still have your Bibles open, I want you to look at verses 19 through 29, because this is actually very interesting, where you have this scene where Jesus appears to the disciples later that evening, right?

First day of the week, the door is being locked where the disciples were for the fear of the Jews, right? So they went home and they were afraid, right? They were scared in that moment.

Jesus stood among them and said to them, peace be with you. When he had done this, he had showed them his hands. The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, peace be with you as the father has sent me.

So I am sending you. When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them.

If you withhold forgiveness, it is withheld. It's also, you'll notice Jesus is appearing to his disciples when they're afraid. But it's also important to know the story of Jesus and Thomas, right?

[17:10] Thomas, one of the 12, called the twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other's disciples told him, we have seen the Lord. But he said to them, unless I see the hands, the mark in his nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will never believe.

Now think about that. Think about this follower of Christ, who is so close-minded, as it were.

This sense of, I'm hearing what's going on, but I don't believe it at all. Many of us may identify before we became, before we saw the Lord, before we came to Christ, right?

This sense of resistance, very important, right? When we find things like this in Scripture, even if we may think it's odd or strange, it's still important for us to recognize.

So it's going on. Eight days later, his disciples were inside again. Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you.

[18:26] And he said to Thomas, Put your finger here and see my hands. Put out your hand and place it on my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.

And Thomas answered him, saying, My Lord and my God. Jesus said to him, Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

I think this is a very overlooked story within Easter. Because you have someone who is doubting, this person who is resistant, and wants to see for himself.

And yet, in that, Jesus still meets him where he is at. And it's important for us to realize that even in times where we resist the Lord, the Lord is extending his hand in invitation for us to come and receive salvation, for us to respond to that invitation.

And so, how interesting. You have these different stories, the two disciples, Mary Magdalene and even doubting Thomas. They all respond differently, and yet Jesus meets them where they are at.

[19:43] How interesting is that? Three stories, right? Three different occurrences, and yet Jesus goes to all of them. So Jesus appears and Thomas believes.

We praise God for that. So that is in the observation. And these verses, they speak to us even today. So what does it all mean then?

Belief comes before understanding. Now, this is a very interesting one. The two disciples, right? They believed they didn't understand fully what was going on in Scripture.

It's important for us to realize that, Do we have to know all of the ins and outs of the Bible in order to believe in the Lord? The answer is no. All we got to do is understand that Jesus died, he was buried, and he rose again.

That is the beginning. That is the gospel story that we have to respond to. And as time goes on, the Lord will reveal more of his word, more insight, and more wisdom.

[20:47] We've got to be open to that. Right? So we have to respond to the gospel message first and foremost. You don't have to have all of the proper doctrine and all the understandings and intricacies of Scripture.

You just have to have faith. And that is something that is so important for all of us. No matter who you are, no matter where you come from, no matter what you are going through, what you have been through, what you will go through, it's belief in Christ.

And we thank God for that. Right? There's so many people who think, I have to understand everything about the Trinity. I got to understand everything about Revelation.

I got to understand everything about the Lord. You got to understand the gospel. Let that be the beginning of your new life in Christ.

Let that be the foundation. And as you receive salvation, may you be on a path of growing and knowing who the Lord is. And how amazing is it?

[21:52] As you believe in the Lord, as you grow, there is more insight. There is more wisdom. There is more discernment. There is so much that comes from the benefits of knowing the Lord.

You got to make a decision first and foremost. Right? The second thing here is tears to testimony. Right? When we go into that, Mary was weeping.

And she didn't recognize Jesus being right in front of her. When he called her by name, she knew who he was. How beautiful is it that when the Lord calls our name, we recognize who he is?

How beautiful is it that the Lord calls each and every one of us by name? We've just got to respond and recognize who Jesus is. So ask yourself that question.

Have you listened to God calling your name? Or do you have headphones on all day? I know we all have that habit, right? We got music.

[22:57] We got TV. We got all the things. But what about taking time to take a moment to just listen? Quiet yourself. Or like I tell my kids, calm your body, right?

Calm your body and really listen to God speaking to you. You'd be amazed at what God is saying when he is speaking.

Let's be honest here. How often is it at an inconvenient time, right? But that's when you need it. When we're inconvenienced. More often than not, when it's like, God, I've got so much to do. I've got people to see. I've got places to go. What's going on? Yet God wants us to calm ourselves and listen to him, to what he has to say for our lives.

And that can be anything from just respond. Follow me, right? Trust and obey the Lord. There's so many different capacities with that.

[24:00] And isn't it interesting? You have in verse 13. If you still have your Bibles open, that's fine. If you don't, that's all right. All the way from verse 13 to verse 18, within five verses.

What a drastic change that happens to Mary Magdalene, right? She goes from, I put, she goes from tears to testimony, right?

Weeping about the Lord. And now she's going to go and tell everybody about Jesus. What an incredible transformation. What an incredible working of the Lord.

Essentially, that is what the resurrection does, though. It transforms us. It changes us. Believing in Christ and responding to his call for our lives.

That is transforming power. And it changes our lives forever. And it's also important to know that Mary was the first witness to the resurrection.

[25:02] It was a woman who was weeping. And yet God met her where she was at. And she responded accordingly.

And she responded accordingly. It's important for us to know that God meets us where we are at. And she said, do we all come from the same background?

The answer is no. Right? We all have different backstories, right? And some of them are crazy. Some of them are all right. You know, it doesn't matter what background you have.

What matters is you come to respond to Jesus. And so in this, we have finally the third one is that blessed are those who have not seen.

We have Thomas that was saying, unless I see, I will never believe. Right? Did Jesus rebuke him? No. No. This is interesting, right? Jesus did not rebuke him.

[26:03] In fact, he met him where he was at. And he showed him the wounds in his hands. The wound in his side. And what happens? Thomas confesses by saying, my Lord and my God.

And this is important that God meets us where we are at. That's so important for us. If you know someone, maybe you are someone who is like the doubting Thomas.

Waiting for a sign. Pray for them. I know many people who doubt the Lord. And I'm sure many of you do as well. Pray for openness, transformation, and the heart to be changed.

That God will meet them where they are at. And here's the beautiful thing. It wasn't saying, Thomas, you fool. No.

It was, come here. You see this? That's something that's very powerful. So it wasn't rebuke. It was meeting him where he was at.

[27:13] And so, blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed. It's why we have the word of God. That is why we hear testimonies of people, of lives that are transformed.

For many of us, we may even identify with the doubting Thomas who hasn't seen the Lord. And that's all right. May you respond to the Lord.

Even if you haven't seen. We are all called to respond to Christ. And it's also interesting that when we have this blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe, the implication is that believing without seeing does not make your faith invalid.

Isn't that interesting? It is a blessed faith. And notice, at the end of Gospel of John, chapter 20, verse 31, that verse that I put up on the slide earlier, these are written so that you may believe. Essentially written to people who have not seen what's going on. But they may have the word of God speak to them. Right?

[28:33] And think how powerful that is. Maybe you identify with that doubting Thomas, but just keep in mind one thing.

We were not in the room, but yet we're all called to believe in Christ. And yet we believe, and Jesus calls us blessed for that. Can we get an amen for that?

Isn't that powerful? And so in this, we now go to our application, right? What do we do about this? How do we respond with our very lives, right?

The first one in here is to believe, even when you don't fully understand. That's powerful. It's unlike a science textbook, right?

When you have to learn all of the elements and all the periodic tables or mathematics, you have to memorize all this kind of stuff, and you've got to have basically, ideally, 100% accuracy, right?

[29:34] Can you imagine not passing a chemistry or a mathematics class and not fully understanding it? It's called not getting a good grade, right? And I hope that's none of us here, right?

But we've had bad grades before. But essentially for this, it's I'm going to believe in Christ even though I don't understand all of the Old Testament. What do we do with Leviticus?

Let's be honest here. The law? Whew, man. What do you mean Daniel is tied in with revelation? What is the significance of Ezekiel?

What do you mean the God wanted to work on the heart of Jonah despite the fact that Nineveh was saved? What do you mean by that?

And we can go on and on about all these different things. It's like insight that happens, things that we grow in. We don't have to understand all of it.

[30:36] What we've got to understand, Jesus, his death, his burial, and his resurrection. That is the simple gospel.

That is what we believe in. That is the foundation. It's so simple. Like, wait a minute. What about proper doctrine? What about proper theology?

What about the rapture? What about this? What about that? It goes on and on. But really, when we think of the core of it, it's believing in Christ. Can I get an amen on that? I mean, we've got to really think of what is the simple thing that God calls us to do, and that's to believe in him, to respond in faith.

And as we grow, we will begin to understand so many more things. I mean, I'm sure some of us can resoundedly raise our hands and say, yeah, I have understood so much more in Scripture, how God has worked in my life.

You'd be amazed what God will reveal to you, right? So believe even when you don't understand. The tomb was empty. The clothes were folded. The disciples believed even though they didn't understand.

[31:48] Do you get it? As we believe in the Lord, we are all a work in progress. We're all to be molded, to grow in our understanding, to become more like Christ.

What a powerful thing. To become more like Jesus when you think, I'm nothing like Jesus, but yet you're going to mold me to be more like you?

That's awesome. That's someone I want to be more like, and I hope that is the same for you. So many people, they look up to celebrities and idols and different personalities and whatnot, and it's kind of like, you really want to be like that?

You can name a few scandals, right? You can name a few people that are like, I don't know why children look up to so-and-so, and we can go on and on about that.

I don't want to be molded like a celebrity. I want to be molded like, into being more like Christ, and I hope that's the same for all of you. For the person who has never believed, the tomb is empty and Jesus is risen.

[33:01] Listen, you don't need to understand everything. You just need to understand the basics. If you need the simple gospel, it's 1 Corinthians 15, verses 1 through 4.

Believing in the death, burial, and resurrection. It's right in there. For the believer who is struggling, may you come to believe. May you come back to the Lord.

I always want people to know, man, people, are we perfect?

Man will fail you. Man will screw up. Right? I've screwed up before. We've all screwed up before. Everybody better raise your hand. Right? We've all screwed up before.

Right? We all make mistakes. Right? We all sin. We're all imperfect. But God will not fail you. And we've got to understand the difference.

[34:03] That we place our trust in the living God. Everlasting to everlasting. The one who remains constant. Here's the thing. People change. Culture changes.

Technology changes. But God remains the same. And I don't know about you. When culture is changing the way that it is. When technology is advancing at such a rapid pace. When there's so much confusion and uncertainty and political unrest.

Where do you turn to? Is it the radio? Better not be. Is it the television? Is it your phone? Is it a celebrity? It better be no to all of those.

Right? We turn to Christ. Right? Just like how it says in scripture. Where does my help? I look to the hills. Where does my help come from? We better know the answer to that.

My help comes from the Lord. Right? The maker of heaven and earth. That's who we turn to. Just understand. We live in an imperfect world.

[35:02] And us human beings, we're not perfect. But we believe in the God who is perfect. Who is transcendent of all. The second thing. Grow in understanding from belief.

I've kind of already been going into this. Right? The disciples, they went home after the tomb, but the story did not end there. Jesus appeared. He spoke to them. And again, he met them where they were at.

He showed his hands. Right? Their understanding grew. If you think about it, when we're going into here, it's saying, in verse 9, they didn't understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.

Well, if Jesus is going to appear and show you the wounds, kind of, hello, what's going on here?

Right? They do. They come to understand. Right? And so, we are all called to grow in our understanding.

And we will. We have to be open to it. We have to allow for the word to mold us. We have to allow for the spirit to work in us. We have to allow for us to grow, not just as individuals, but us collectively as a church.

[36:11] Encouraging one another. Being present for one another. Now, certainly, we're not perfect. We certainly carry out the mission of love.

The mission of truth. Right? Grace and truth. Right? It's this great balance between the two. And so, growth in Christ, it is not accidental.

It comes through the word of God. It comes through community. It comes through worshiping the Lord. How many of you have connected with the Lord by singing a song?

Could be a hymn. Great is thy faithfulness, amazing grace. It could be a brand new song. Right?

There's all kinds of songs that are out there. There's so many ways that we can connect with the Lord and grow in our understanding.

Essentially, may you be on a journey with the Lord. Right? Before we know the Lord, aren't we lost? It's kind of like just going to a new town or a new area and you have no idea where you're going.

[37:15] Right? You might end up in circles. How many of you have seen those movies? Right? They're running around. They're hiking or something and they're going around for an hour and they're like, wait, weren't we just here an hour ago?

I mean, that's for the movies, guys. I don't want you guys to get lost in a mountain, let alone get lost in life. Right? But to know that the Lord, that Jesus is going to journey with us.

Right? As we grow in our faith that Christ is beside us and we journey through life with him. Very powerful. And so, in this, even the road to Emmaus, right, the disciples, their eyes were opened when Jesus opened the scriptures to them.

So, it's this constant growing and revelation and understanding. Your understanding will grow. May you remain rooted in God and his word.

It's very significant. And finally, last but certainly not least, can we read this last one together? Go and tell the world that Jesus lives.

[38:22] Right? Believe, grow, and go. We go and we tell the world about Jesus. We tell, we speak of our testimony. We speak of how God has worked in our life.

We share in the gospel narrative, right? Death, burial, resurrection. How simple is that? We can remember that. We can share the significance of Christ.

You got to think about it that Mary went and proclaimed. And that is the response that we should have to the resurrection. That is the kind of response that we should have to the Easter narrative, right?

She did not just keep it and go home. No. She went out and she proclaimed. She announced, I have seen the Lord.

And the resurrection Easter is not information that we just keep to ourselves. It's not like it's just a news article that you read and you go, okay, that's cool. And you put it off and you go on with your life.

[39:19] Absolutely not. It is the kind of news, the good news that we share with other people. your testimony matters, what Christ has done in your life.

You'd be amazed at who needs to hear the gospel story and who needs to hear your testimony. Because I'm here to tell you who you can relate to, you'd be amazed at who you can talk to, at who you can share in the gospel story and who you can share.

This is how God has worked in my life. I know for me personally, when I tell people about how the Lord provided children after four years of waiting, that speaks to a certain kind of person.

But that may be different than your story and that's okay. Who you can relate to. Maybe it's poverty. Maybe it is drugs. Maybe it's alcoholism.

Maybe it's prostitution. Maybe it's all these things and how God pulled you up from out of the pit. And puts you onto solid ground. What your story is matters to people.

[40:26] Can you just think who can you speak to that you can share either your testimony or the gospel story?

And if you can always share in stories of the saints. Of people that you know. I know I always give the example of the atheist man.

who was married to a Christian woman. And over the course of five years the man I met in the first year was different than the man that I met in the fifth year.

There were two different people. Where did the first guy go? Where's the guy that was so angry towards Christians? Where did he go? Now he's going to Bible study and he got baptized.

What? That's amazing but it goes to show you things that go on. And so John wrote his gospel so that people would believe.

[41:24] Will you respond to the gospel? Will you grow in faith? And will you share in it? Let us be reminded of what Acts 4.20 says. We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.

Showing the excitement. Showing that I'm going to share in the gospel story. And so in closing here the tomb is empty.

The cloths are folded. Mary heard her name. Thomas saw the wounds. Right? There's a sense of transformation. All of these things happened so that we can believe in Jesus Christ.

Amen? That's important for us, right? That belief in Christ is faith and it is blessed. That is something that we can take to heart when we think of the Easter story, when we think of Resurrection Sunday.

And we certainly can proclaim that He is risen. Amen? So He is risen? He is risen indeed. Let's pray together. Father, we thank You for this special Sunday.

[42:34] This Easter Sunday. as we've gone over the Gospel of John, these three different accounts and how You met these people where they were at.

And You meet us where we are calling us to salvation, calling us to be transformed, and calling us to share in the Gospel story. May we recognize that Jesus is risen.

May we celebrate the day. May we be molded. May we be transformed. Your Son spoke the words, Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.

Certainly, we were not in the garden. We were not in the upper room. But yet, we believe. And how powerful is our faith, especially when You call it blessed. Christ.

And this Easter, may we fully, may we believe if we haven't before. May we return to the faith if we've been distant. And may we believe even when we may not fully understand.

[43:42] May we grow in our faith and share in the Gospel story. It is in the name of Jesus Christ that we pray and we all say together, Amen, church? Amen.

Amen.