

"Because He lives you will live also!"

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Date: 05 April 2026

Preacher: John Winter

[0:00] John chapter 14 and verses 15 to 21. If you love me, says Jesus, you will obey what I command.

! And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him.

But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me.

Because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

[1:05] Now, it's really important to understand what John is saying there in the context of John chapter 14, but also in the context of the themes that John is drawing out in his gospel.

There are two ways of seeing, as I said before communion. There is seeing with the physical eyes, and all of the world could see Jesus.

But then there is seeing with the spiritual eyes, and that is reserved only for those who believe. In a little while, Jesus said, the world will see me no longer, but you will see me.

They will see his resurrected body. They will see him for 40 days post-resurrection, up until the time of ascension. But they still see him with the eyes of faith, even after he has ascended into heaven. For Peter says, Peter, one of those to whom Jesus spoke here, Peter says, even though we do not see him now, we believe in him. Even though we do not see him now, we believe in him.

[2:15] And he says that to people who never, ever saw the physical body of Jesus. And even though you don't see him now, you love him, and you're filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

Why? Because you see with the eyes of faith. When the apostle Paul, who called himself the last one to see the resurrected Christ, one abnormally born, he described himself.

When he was converted, scales fell off his eyes. You ever thought, why was he blinded? Well, in one sense he was blinded because he saw a vision of the glory of Jesus, and it was so overwhelming that it brought him into temporary blindness.

But when he heard the voice of God, when Ananias came and prayed for him, when he received Jesus and was baptized, scales fell off his eyes. He began to see in a way that he'd never seen before.

This eureka moment from the Greek word *heurisko* means I can see. I can really see. Or as they used to kind of say, I've seen the light.

[3:24] He's seen the light. Almost as a slur. But we see with the eyes of faith. And Jesus says, when you see, you will realize you have a great and a glorious and inexpressible hope because of the resurrection.

You will realize that because I live, you will live also. And that will fundamentally alter how you see, how you view life, how you view death, how you view dying.

It isn't a tragedy. For as D.L. Moody said, one day you will read in the newspaper that D.L. Moody has died. Don't you believe it, he says, for D.L. Moody will then on that day be more alive than he has ever been before.

That is resurrection life. Because he lives, I can face tomorrow. Because he lives, all fear is gone. Because I know he heals the future.

And life is worth the living just because he lives. That is resurrection hope. That is why when we say on Easter Sunday, he is risen. We are expressing a glorious hope that because he is risen, then one day I will rise as well.

[4:49] Now I want to ask you, do you have that kind of faith? Do you see with the eyes of faith? Do you see him? He is the guarantor of eternal life.

And it is, as it is in John's gospel, not merely life in the future. That's not what John means by eternal life. For he says that if we believe in Jesus and receive Jesus, we have, not will have, we have eternal life.

Eternal life begins to operate in the hearts and minds of believers long before they die. For it is our hope. We live a new life.

A life in God. A life of hope. We have eternal life now. The principle of God's life lives in us. So when we face that awful moment of our dying, we know it is just the beginning.

Of even greater things that we cannot conceive of, but we know in our hearts that it's true. Jesus gives us eternal life.

[6:09] And that life, the Bible says, is in Jesus, in the Son. He who has the Son has this life. He who rejects the Son will not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him.

And it's important that we see those both aspects. The world that does not see him, the believer who sees him always with the eyes of faith.

I remember reading this story. I have shared it about 10 years ago, so most of you will have forgotten, because some of us forget what we heard 10 minutes ago, never mind 10 years ago. But a true story.

George Herbert Bush, so a father, not the younger son, both were presidents. George H.W. as opposed to George W. George H.W. Bush was invited to attend the funeral of Leonid Brezhnev. Now, this will be somebody who most of you have not heard of, but if you were a child of the 60s and 50s and so on, you will know Brezhnev. He was the long-time ruler of the Soviet Union.

[7:16] And when Brezhnev died, Bush went to his funeral, and he remarked this, quite remarkable. Remember, the Soviet system was an atheist system, so officially they didn't believe in God.

There was going to be no religious funeral. And this is how Bush describes what happens. At the funeral of Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, things were run in military procession.

A coldness and hollowness pervaded the ceremony. Marching soldiers, steel helmets, Marxist rhetoric, but no prayers, no comforting hymns, no mention of God.

The Soviet leaders took their place on the Kremlin wall as the Brezhnev family silently escorted the casket around to its final resting place. I happened to be in just the right spot to see Mrs. Brezhnev. She walked up and took one last look at her husband, and there in the cold, gray center of that totalitarian state, she traced the sign of the cross over her husband's chest.

[8:24] I was stunned. In that simple act, God had broken through the core of the communist system, and it became clear to me decades, even centuries of harsh secular rule can never destroy the intuitive faith that is in us all.

And in that faith, I find hope for the future. Amazing. You see, we might pretend that we can live without faith in God.

We might believe that we can get through this life on our own, under our own steam, but the reality is we cannot die without hope, for it is futile.

If in this life, Paul says, if only in this life we have hope, we are of most, all men most miserable, or to be pitied. If this is all there is, three score years and ten, if you make it, and if you get a little stronger, you'll go beyond that, but you will die.

And the question is, on what will you place your hope? Jürgen Moltmann once said, totally without hope, one cannot live. To live without hope is to cease to live.

[9:46] Hell is hopelessness. It is no accident that above the entrance to Dante's hell is the inscription, leave behind all hope, you who enter here.

Leave behind all hope, you who enter here. Jesus says to us, because I live, you will live also.

And in the early part of John chapter 14, he said, do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you, I am going to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you may also be where I am. Wonderful. There is hope, he says, in the Father's house.

And it's a wonderful place to go. And the disciples said, Lord, we don't know where the Father's house is. We don't know how to get there. Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

[10:55] No one comes to the Father except through me. Believe in me. And you will have hope. Come with me.

Follow me. Listen to me. And you will go to the Father's house. Because I live, you will live also.

When the Apostle Paul described the Gospel, he said in 1 Corinthians 15, he says, For I received from the Lord, which I passed also on to you, of first importance.

So this is really the most important thing, he says, that I can say to you in all of my preaching. And what is it? That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

That he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. And that he appeared to Peter, and then to the twelve. This is really important for you to grasp. Get hold of the cross.

[11:52] Get hold of the fact that when Jesus died upon the cross, he died as your substitute. He died in your place. He died for your sin to make you right with God.

For you could not do it on your own. There is no other good enough to pay the price of sin. He only could unlock the gates of heaven and let us in.

And then get hold of this great fact. that on the third day he rose again. Don't let anyone tell you that that's just a myth and it's not important.

For Paul will not have that. If Christ did not rise again, he said, your faith is futile and you are still in your sin. He physically and really rose from the dead.

And he did that because he had to conquer death. Because the wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life. And we believe in the physical, actual resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

[13:01] That the tomb really was empty and that he really physically came back to life. But it is not enough just to believe that. For you must see with the eyes of faith.

In a little while, the world will not see me. But you will see me. Though you have not seen him, you love him. And even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

You get the point. You see him with the eyes of faith. And there is our hope. In Jesus, without Jesus, there is no hope.

Without Jesus, there is no hope. There was a commerce survey in 2017. A poll carried out by BBC Local Radio of 2010 British adults.

It was all done by telephone between the 2nd and 12th of February. And they were preparing for Palm Sunday and for the Easter celebrations. And they wanted to know people's attitudes in Britain, Christian Britain, it once was called, to the idea of life after death.

[14:12] Well, here is the news. 46% of people said they believe in some form of life after death and 46% do not. I don't know what happened to the rest.

Of those 46% who did believe, 20% were non-religious. Wow. 20% non-religious. And two-thirds of those surveyed, 65%, said they thought their souls would go to another life, such as heaven or hell, while a third thought they would be reincarnated.

32%. Exactly half of all people surveyed did not believe in the resurrection at all. And amongst regular churchgoers, 5% said they did not believe in the resurrection of Jesus at all.

They need to go and golf or something or go walking instead of going to worship because what's the point? Astonishingly, 23% of people in the UK who regard themselves as Christians do not believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

Their Christianity is a waste of time. 31% of Christians believe word for word the Bible version about Jesus' resurrection, rising to 57% among active Christians, that is, those who go to church at least once a month.

[15:32] surprisingly, 9% of non-religious people believe in the resurrection. And 1% of them say they believe it literally.

Well, it's a mixed picture, isn't it? how far this nation has fallen. But the point is, without him, without Jesus, without the resurrection, there is no hope.

For we all must die, and then what will befall those 46% who believe in nothing at all? When the Apostle Paul talks about seeing Jesus with the eyes of faith in Ephesians chapter 2, he says, as for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

All of us who also lived among them at one time were gratifying the cravings of the flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.

So here is the problem for mankind. Mankind lives under the judgment of God because of their cravings and longings to satisfy the desires of the sinful nature.

[16:58] But Paul says, I've got good news for you. And the news is this. God makes those who believe in Jesus alive.

God, who is rich in mercy, saves us. And he says, he saves us by grace through faith. And we receive the gift of eternal life, of salvation in Jesus Christ.

And he says, it is by grace, through faith, as a gift of God so that none of you can boast and say, what a wonderful person I am. I'm fully deserving of this salvation. No, no. He says, you are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God has prepared for those who love him.

Amen. Without Jesus, there is no hope. But with Jesus, next slide, with Jesus, carry on, carry on, with Jesus, there is hope.

Because he lives, we will live also. He makes us alive. And Paul says, he makes us alive when the Spirit of God quickens us.

[18:15] When the Spirit of God comes into our heart and sets a spark of grace and faith in our lives, we become living beings with the hope of eternal life.

It's a work of God. And Jesus, in the context of John 14, is talking in that reading of the Holy Spirit who comes to us as a counselor, as a comforter, as a guide, who brings us into the knowledge of all the truth that Jesus had previously told us.

And he says, the Holy Spirit who is coming into you is not going to leave you anymore as an orphan. In other words, you're not going to be on your own. I'm going to go away and the world will look for me but will not find me.

But you will find me. You will see me because the Holy Spirit is at work in your life. You will see me with the eyes of fear. Because he lives, I can face tomorrow.

You remember the disciples on the Emmaus Road? And they were walking together and they were all upset because of the rest. They knew that Jesus had died and then they heard rumors but they couldn't make sense of what was meant by this.

[19:29] Some people claiming to see him and they said, we thought he would be the one to redeem Israel. And then it says that Jesus drew up alongside them. They didn't know who he was.

They were kept from recognizing him. And then as the day wore on and they got toward the night and he was made as if he would go on from there and they said, come in, come in and let's have some time together.

And they sat down for a meal. And then he broke bread with them. And when he broke bread, it says, their eyes were opened. But before their eyes were opened, their hearts were strangely warmed.

Why? Because they saw with the eyes of fear. Jesus was instantly gone. But they said, were not our hearts warmed within us as he spoke with us on the way?

The Holy Spirit, you see, whispering into their minds, their hearts, this is Jesus. This is the Son of God. This is the Savior of the world.

[20:38] Believe on him. Hope in him. This is your life. There are people in this room today who remembered what it was once to live in darkness.

darkness. But then, at some point, perhaps over time or in a single moment, it varies from person to person, the eyes of their heart, it's opened.

You can't explain it. They can hardly kind of make sense of it themselves. I once was like this. I once didn't care. The name Jesus didn't mean anything to me. It was a swear word.

It wasn't important to me. I never thought about reading the Bible. I never thought about my soul. I never thought about dying. I never worried about righteousness or goodness. I didn't think about doing God's will.

I lived entirely for myself. But then, the eyes of my heart were opened. And I believed. And Jesus became the most precious, most important person in my life.

[21:42] I've never seen him, but I love him. I do not see him now, but I believe in him. And I am filled with an inexpressible and a glorious joy.

Jesus, the name high over all. Jesus, lover of my soul. Jesus, all for Jesus, all I have and am and ever hope to be.

You can take anything from me, but not him. Not him. because he spoke to my soul and said, because I live, you will live also.

I was struck this morning by how many times we sang the name Jesus. and that's how it ought to be.

We are not religious people. We are in a relationship with the living Lord Jesus Christ who died once for all so that we could be forgiven, died so that we could be free, died that so at last, one day, we shall go to heaven saved by his precious blood.

[23:12] Do you know this, Jesus? Do you have this resurrection hope in your heart? Do you believe that because he lives, then you will live also.