

Easter Sunday

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Date: 20 April 2025

Preacher: Craig Dowling

[0 : 00] Music leading us to worship. Let's pray.! Let's pray. Thank you for the glorious, powerful message of your resurrection.

! And we want to see the inner depths of that! And where that comes from, to the world and life today.

So gather our hearts and minds now. Amen. Amen. The world has always liked heroes.

We love heroes who carry out great hero styles. We love those who save people. Whether it be a fire officer saving one from fire.

Saving a comrade in war. Or an everyday member of the public saving of an attack. Every year the pride of the nations award is shown on all the heroes.

[1 : 10] We simply love our accounts of heroes saving. And over the years I've asked people on and off. Out of all the great things from fires, floods and what not.

What would be the one truly man to be saved from? After a little thinking. And recently it hit me. All our heroes around the world are people from fires, floods and what not. But no one. Absolutely no one.

Save us from death. Absolutely no one can enable us to. And since the world doesn't offer people such a saviour.

We're trying to find another way. Lots of books. Scientific problems. All sorts of diets, medications, exercises and all such things.

[2 : 14] All designed for a little longer. And to push the ultimate fate of death a little further away. But people still keep finding the same result.

Power. Our saviour. On this earth. To save us. And then. And then. One.

Turns to the accounts of Jesus. Paul. And everything. Everything.

Absolutely. Changes. Read with me now. If you can. Matthew 28. Verse changes. Matthew 28.

Verse 1. After the Sabbath had dawn. On the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene. And the other Mary.

[3 : 19] went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake. For. And going to the tomb. And going to the tomb. Rolled back the stone. And sat on it.

His appearance. Was like. Like a snow. The guards were so afraid of him. That they shook. And became like dead men. And be afraid. And be afraid. For I know that you are looking for Jesus.

Who was crucified. He is. Just as he said. Come and see the place. Where he lay. Then go quickly. And tell his disciples. And is going ahead of you.

Into Galilee. There you will see him. Now. I have told. To be clear. To be clear.

No one in this. No one in this world. Or on this earth. Can see. But. But then there is Jesus.

[4 : 18] And Jesus. Like none other. No one compares. No one comes close. In fact. Jesus is the only. In the entire universe.

And the only. Real. Hero. Because only he. Can ultimately. Save us from death.

To the grave. Only he. Has power over death. And that's because. He. His very self. Death. As read here. He. First emptied. His own grave.

And that's because. He's God. Now how do we know this? How do we truly. Truly. Know this? Because of this.

God's story. Scripture. This. Incredible. Blueprints. The business plans. The partnerships. The scientific. The scientific. Explanations.

[5 : 14] All the accounts of humans. On earth. All wrapped up in God's love story. This is how we know. Has been convincing people. Of Jesus. Resurrecting power.

These last two thousand years. In people. From all nations. All cultures. And all styles of life. So it's worth looking. So. So.

Come with me now. Come and see. Let's journey. Look back. Across God's story. And find our way. Back today. To today's reading. To discover.

That Jesus. Really is. The only. True. Savior. That God promised humanity. Can save us from death. It starts. Well.

It starts as expected. In the beginning. Across six. Incredible. Mind-blowing. Majest. Let there be light. Land. Sky. Sea. Trees.

[6 : 10] Oceans. People. Animals. And God saw. And God loved. His creation. And paying special attention. To his most precious.

He formed a sacred love for them. He created a sacred garden for them. Could dwell. As one. As friends.

No rituals. No regulations. No religion. Just friendship. A truly. That would last. Forever. There was no end point.

I.e. There was no death. In a relationship. So when we. We press on. In Genesis. And get the chapter. People.

Freely chose. To leave. The garden. The life that came with it. I.e. That eternal. Never-ending.

[7 : 06] Friendship. With God. Hmm. How. Brutally. Hard. And how. Upsetting. It truly.

Broke. His heart. But what it did not. Change. His love. For people. For us. Or his commitment. To us. The story.

Can left the garden. God came. Running. After us. To invite us. Back home. Being like God.

Anymore. It talks about us.

Being riddled. In sin. And unholy. Unrighteous lives. How on earth. Could we just. Return. To a sacred life. With a holy.

And pure. God. Well we couldn't. Nothing. That managed. We had left. We had left the garden.

Destroyed the earth. Declared all sorts of war.

[8 : 04] Created all sorts of immorality. Punishment. Was in order. The wages of sin. Is death. Having left.

God's eternal friendship. A part of humanity. Very very important. To note here. That it was not part of God's. Original plan. We really. And so again.

I ask. But what about God's love? And again. I clearly state. It's really. He loved us. Far too much. To declare our punishment. So.

To provide. An escape route. A way out. A chance to avoid punishment. A chance to go back home. Deemer. A saviour. A messiah.

One who would save. Us. Rightly deserved. A messiah. Meaning. The anointed one. Oil. To be.

[8 : 57] The saviour. Of the world. One who would save. Him. God is on to it. Early. In. The bible. Genesis 3.

As of all. The bible. Humans. Have literally. Just left the garden. And God. Begins. To clerk. And in a recorded. Conversation. Where God.

Talks directly. To satan. All on your belly. And you will eat dust. All the days of your life. And I will put enmity. Between you. And the woman. He will crush your head. And you.

Will strike. His heel. What? Is the arch holder. Of all the sin. And darkness.

And find ourselves riddled in. After the garden. And satan did not want. A saviour. Getting to earth. The phrase. You will strike. His heel. Refers to satan's.

[9 : 52] Repeated. Attempts. To his life on earth. Or better put. His attempts. To defeat. God's saviour. But. God said. Well it foreshadows.

Satan's defeat. When Jesus. The promised saviour. Pump. On satan's. Head. A strike. To the heel. Is not deadly. But a blow. To the heel.

Here is God. Early in Genesis. First promising us. That a miss. Will come. And he will win. Jesus. And so.

Beyond. Genesis. To unfold. And in God's. Very very very wise. Thinking. Unfortunately for us. That to send the Messiah.

Here at this very early stage. In Genesis. Would be pointless. Early. No one as yet. Understood. Why. A saviour was needed. What holiness looked like.

[10:48] Or how to live. Holy lives. It would simply. Not have been fair. These things. First. In spite. Of what God. Thinks of religion.

How cold. Sacrifice. God's own words. In spite of that. For a season. And for a time. He allows it to happen. Why. Teaching method. Where humanity.

Could learn. These things. What. What holiness. Is. What good is. Why punishment. Is needed. Why a saviour. Is needed. What we need.

So on. Fast forward. To today. 2025. And we are able to read. All about. But back then. It first needed. Taught.

And God is fair. And God. Who serves. To remind us. Why the Old Testament. Is still. Vitally. Important. Jesus. Why Jesus came.

[11:45] It teaches us. Righteousness. It tells us. What the Old Testament. At the time of religion. Unravels. The books.

The commands. The stories. The plans. It's all there. All the history. Read it. And the best part of it is. Throughout it all. One.

Constant. Woven. In. Mess. The world is harsh. It's dark. It's evil. But don't lose hope. A saviour is coming. In. In Deuteronomy. Fifth.

Book. Of the Bible. Into. Chapter 18. There in the desert. We're to live in community. How to be moral. How to behave. How to love. And within.

All that. Moses. Declares. The Lord. Will. Raise up for you. Happy. From your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him.

[12:41] That's the future Messiah. God's continuing to keep his promise. And there's a little more detail here. Isn't there? As we read Moses' words. From within Israel. But will be for the whole world.

Will be for every nation. And as God's story continues. And talk of the future Messiah. Continues. Clarity begins. As to what exactly.

The work of the Messiah. Will be. The Psalms. Get deep into this. They clearly define. A saviour. Whose work.

And focus. And not. A political. Or military. Leader. His one. Soul. Broken relationship. Between God and man.

By dealing with sin. By dealing with darkness. And yes. Dealing with death. Dealing with all that is evil. Scripture continues. The story continues. The message keeps being delivered.

[13:38] And throughout it all. Humanity learns. Standards. Morality. Right. Each other. What God is like. God's attitude. God's personality. What we should do.

And shouldn't do. Lots and lots. And around. That continuous promise. A saviour is coming. And so. Further into the. Isaiah chapter 9.

Where we finally. Begin to get some of the finer details. The saviour will arrive. We're told. What to look out for. As three Isaiahs.

He will be born as a baby boy. For unto us a child is born. And then. All falls into place. The details are laid bare. For all to see.

The Messiah. Will be. Will be despised. He will be betrayed. He will be oppressed. He will be afflicted. And laid like a lamb. To the Lord. Tells us. For he bore.

[14:33] The sin. Of many. And made intercession. That is it. That is the promise. Of Genesis 3. Where we started. Being laid out.

And explained. Word. The punishment. The death. That God declared. We all deserve. Back there in Genesis. Will not. Jesus the saviour. Will come. And take it.

For us instead. And so. As the old test. God gives. Some last minute. Pouters. There in Micah. He says. Keep an eye on Bethlehem. Come for me.

One who will be ruler. And Zechariah. Just before the new. Old Testament closes. Shout. Daughter Jerusalem. See your king. Comes to you. Righteous and victorious.

Lowly. And riding on a donkey. Jesus is that ruler. Jesus is that king. And as God's Messiah. Jesus will create. Our disciples. Whom he will rightly.

[15:27] Rule over their hearts. And in doing so. Restore us back. With father God himself. And we're told. As he does. As he does all these.

He will care for the poor. He will teach God's ways. He will shine like a massive. Blazing. Burning light. He's here. As I say it. 39.

About 4,000 years. Of recorded history. Explained everything. Now all we need. Is these prophecies to be fulfilled. Flip a page or two. Enter in. Into the New Testament. And we read. Jesus.

His birth. In Bethlehem. His teachings. His relationship. With father God. His life. Of light. It's all there. John.

[16:27] The biographies. Of Jesus life. On earth. The first chapter. Of Mark. Is straight to it. Peter's mother-in-law. Followed by crowds. And crowds.

Of hurting. And sick people. All flogging. To him. Proof. Of his Messiahship. And then in verse 37. Peter tells. Chicken for you.

Whole communities. Have become desperate. Just for a glimpse of him. Communities. To his light. Again. Proof. And so Jesus.

Press on. To other villages. The crowds. The people. Just keep coming. And Dean. A minute to pause. Asks them. Who do they?

All the people say I am. John the Baptist says one. But what about you? Who do you say I am? God's Messiah. Says Peter. Watched.

[17:23] Read. Heard. Seen. All your teachings. All your miracles. We see your light. So in two single words. Spoken by Peter. All of law. All of prophecy. All of scripture.

Had just been. So back. To that question. How do we know Jesus is definitely God's Messiah? Definitely the saviour? Just like Peter.

By reading scripture. Just having entered the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Messiah. And his name is Jesus Christ. And even more extravagant.

Is the fact that he is God's. When God first declared a coming saviour. In the form of a suffering servant. Many misunderstood it. But the few. That concludes. That the suffering servant. Would actually be God. His very self. But it was. It was. So finally. We approach the last chapters.

[18:22] We see him on a donkey. Through the gate. People rejoicing. Prophecy fulfilling. We then read. Very clearly. And very plainly.

That Jesus. Was beaten. Betrayed. Oppressed. Afflicted. And led like a lamb. To the slaughter. Of many. And made intercession.

For the transgressors. In other words. He absolutely. Bore our part. That is the promise. A way back there. In Genesis. At the very start of the Bible. That is the promise.

Way here. In the New Testament. Jesus. As God's saviour. Took our deathly punishment. Promised. Came. And died.

For us. And then scripture says. Joseph. And Nicodemus. Buried him. And then.

[19:18] Ready for this. Because this is the single. Most. Greatest. Power ever here. On the third day. He rose. Back. To. Life. Life. Scripture tells us.

That he began. To breathe. Scripture tells us. His buried. Body. Lickly got up. He walked out. From his deathbed. And. And remember. Genesis 3.

He. Stamped. He stamped. On the head of death. I.e. He destroyed. Defeated. I.e. He.

He is. The official. The one. And the only. Probably. Because he. And only he. Can. Save us. From death. He is God's.

He is the only. Savior. And so. We arrive. Back. At the passage. We first. Opened. With. Day. Or as Matthew. Pends it. At dawn. On the first day. Of the week. Sunday morning.

[20:14] Mary Magdalene. There was a violent. Earthquake. For an angel. The Lord. Came down from heaven. And going to the tomb. Rolled back the stones. Like lightning. And his clothes. Were white as snow. The guards.

Were so afraid. Of him. That they shook. And became like dead men. Not be afraid. For I know you're looking. For Jesus. He was crucified. But no. No. No. No. No. He is not here. Because he's alive. He's risen. Anyone.

And I mean. who simply believes. In him. With happiness. Says. You are forgiven.

God. With happiness. Says. You are. Forgiven. And that. Done. Taken care of. Jesus took that for you.

And now. You are. With God. And what's more. for the world, for life, for humans, where we would forever be friends with God and never die.

[21:14] That the physical yet temporary shell of your body may cease to work, but there will live on beyond this life. And by believing in Jesus, you can be assured we're in heaven, in that eternal

