

What if Christ is Not Risen?

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn to Psalm number 124. We're going to deviate from our reading through the book of James today.

And we're going to read Psalm 124. If the Lord had not been on our side, let Israel say, If the Lord had not been on our side when men attacked us, when their anger flared against us, then we would have been swallowed alive.

The flood would have engulfed us. The torrent would have swept over us. The raging waters would have swept us away. Praise be to the Lord, who has not let us be torn by their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird out of the fowler's snare. The snare has been broken, and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. May God bless the reading of his word. Turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

[1 : 31] 1 Corinthians chapter 15. I'll be reading the first 28 verses on Paul's discourse on the resurrection of Christ.

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.

By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter and then to the twelve.

After that, he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

[2 : 46] Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all, he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

For I am the least of the apostles, and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But, by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect.

No, I worked harder than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. Whether then, it was I, or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

But, if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless, and so is your faith.

[3 : 57] More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God. For we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead.

But he did not raise him if, in fact, the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either.

And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.

If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.

The firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep, for since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

[4 : 57] For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn, Christ the firstfruits, then when he comes, those who belong to him.

Then the end will come. When he hands over the kingdom of God to the Father, after he has destroyed all dominion, authority, and power.

For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he has put everything under his feet.

Now when it says that everything has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him, who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

[6 : 06] Here we hear God's word preached. Here we hear God's word preached. Familiarity breeds contempt.

We've heard that phrase, haven't we? It simply means that we take for granted familiar things, even important things.

We are even apt to take God himself for granted. The fact that he is our God. The fact that he's on our side.

Now that was true of Old Testament Israel as well. So God gave him a song to periodically sing. It was a what-if song. It's Psalm 124 that was read for us.

If the Lord had not been on our side, let Israel say. So I want you singing this song, and as you sing it, you say this, Israel, and think about it.

[7 : 14] If the Lord had not been on our side when men attacked us, what would have happened? Well, they would have swallowed us alive. They would have eaten us up.

They'd have swept us away like a flood. We had been caught in their snare. Oh, but praise be to the Lord. He has not let us be torn by their teeth, not let us be caught by their snare.

He has been on our side, and that made all the difference in the outcome. And so to appreciate the fact that the Lord is on our side, we're to think, what if the Lord had not been on our side?

That is the way most people live today, without the Lord on their side. So here we are. We've come to another Resurrection Sunday. And we don't want to take Christ's resurrection for granted, but to glory in it, and to glory in him who bore our sins on the cross and died and was buried and rose again, triumphant over death.

So we're going to ask, what if Christ had not been raised from the dead? What difference would it make?

[8 : 32] I saw an online post by a church in South Bend that claims to be a Christian church, and they held a conference in which there was a lot of open denial of fundamental, orthodox teachings of Scripture.

And one of the questions asked there was, do we have to believe that Christ actually rose from the dead? And some appeared ready to abandon this cardinal teaching of Scripture as well.

Now, I would suggest that before they abandon it, that they consider the ramifications of such a denial. And think of the difference that it would make to their faith, to Christianity, to their destiny.

Consider the what if. And you see, that is exactly what the Apostle Paul did 2,000 years ago when some in Corinth were denying the resurrection from the dead, and others were thinking about doing the same themselves.

They denied that there was any resurrection of the physical body at the end of the age when Jesus returns and calls us from our graves.

[9 : 44] They said there is no physical resurrection. And so here in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul tells them what a difference such a denial makes. And he begins by reminding them of the Gospel that he preached to them and that they had believed.

And he lists some of the things that are of first importance in that Gospel. That Christ died according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he was raised the third day.

And then he appeared to over 500 believers, the Apostles, last of all, Paul himself. And then we come to verse 11 in his address. Whether then it was I or they, these other Apostles, this is what we preach.

We have one message. All the Apostles, we preach one message, and this is what you believed. But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, that's what we preach.

How then can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there's no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. You see what he's saying?

[10 : 58] If you deny the whole category of bodily resurrection for us, at the end of the age for anyone, then you must also deny Christ's resurrection.

resurrection bodily from the grave. If you deny the whole category, you deny everyone that is raised. And verse 14 says, and if Christ has not been raised, you see what he's doing.

He's putting the what if question. If Christ has not been raised, well then, our preaching is useless, and so is your faith.

So let's look at what the what if. First of all, if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless. Our. Paul, the apostles, and everyone who preaches that apostolic gospel, it is useless.

It's the gospel of Jesus Christ. You notice in verse 1, he says, now brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, and on which you've taken your stand.

[12 : 02] He tells us a couple things about this gospel that he preached. Notice first its origin. In verse 3, he tells them that it was a gospel that I received and then passed on to you.

In other words, he's saying it didn't originate with me. This gospel that I preach is not something that I made up myself, that it had its origin in my thoughts, in my ideas, my mind.

No, not at all. I only preached what I first received and passed it on to you. That's what the apostles were. They were pass it oners.

What they received, they passed on. And furthermore, he could tell us that it was not something he received from men, but from Christ himself.

In Galatians 1, 11 and 12, he says, I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, meaning from any man.

[13 : 09] Rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. That's the origin of my gospel. It came to me from heaven, from Jesus Christ, the Son of God himself, and I passed it on to you just as I received it.

That's its origin. He then tells us of some of its necessary ingredients. Necessary, absolutely essential ingredients.

He says, what I received, I passed on to you as of first importance that Christ, and we'll pause there, because the gospel is about a person.

It's about Jesus Christ himself. Not an imaginary person in a storybook, but the Christ of history.

As real as George Washington, or Alexander the Great, or any other historical figure that has ever lived, Jesus Christ, this gospel is about him.

[14 : 15] And not Christ as you imagine him to be. Not Christ as you would like him to be. Not Christ as you saw him to be in some movie.

But the Christ revealed in Scripture, who is fully God and fully man. The gospel is about this Christ revealed here in this book. The very word of God.

And no other Christ will save. Can save. There is no other but him. Furthermore, the gospel is not just about his teachings.

It's not just about his ideas, his morals. At the very heart of the gospel is what Christ did. Real historical events.

Things that happened. And the three events mentioned of first importance in this gospel is that Christ died for sins. According to the Scriptures, he was buried and he rose the third day, was raised the third day according to the Scriptures.

[15 : 17] And this is one way that Christianity is unique among all the world religions. The founders of other world religions are dead. Whether of Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism.

And though they're dead, their religion is not affected in the least by that fact. because their religion is only so many teachings and rituals and morals and ideas.

Things that make no difference whether the founder is dead or alive. You just follow their teachings and you're good to go. But biblical Christianity is not like that.

For it claims that its founder, Jesus Christ, is alive. A unique claim. It claims that he was dead. Really dead. And is now alive forevermore.

You see, this resurrection from the dead, it's not just an idea. It's not just a metaphor. It's a historical event. It's something that happened. But if in fact it did not happen, then the whole Christianity, the whole of the Christian religion is useless.

[16 : 30] Not true of other world religions. They go on fine with dead founders. But verse 14 says, if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless.

Empty. In other words, my studying of the Bible and preaching to you each week is worthless. A worthless exercise in futility.

It's good for nothing. I could preach to you the pure gospel of Christ. That he died for sins, was buried, and rose again, and whosoever believes in him has everlasting life, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

But if Christ has not been raised, I'd do more good going home and mowing my yard today. And you'd be better off to go home and do something else today.

Because my preaching of the gospel would be utterly useless. Though it's 16 ounces to the pound gospel according to the scripture. Worthless. Because the gospel is more than just morals and rituals and teachings and ideas.

[17 : 42] It's about a living person. Jesus Christ. And what he's done, what he's accomplished, what he did in space-time history, and what he's doing and will yet do for the salvation of his people, those are things that no dead person can do.

And therefore, Christianity comes to nothing if Jesus is still dead. Now, Paul says another reason his preaching would be useless is because it would be based on a lie.

Verses 15 and 16, if Christ has not been raised, the what if? Well, then we're found to be false witnesses about God for we've testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead, but he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. So surely you've got something better to do than to listen to useless preaching from someone telling lies about God.

You see, it leaves no room for these liberal pastors who say Christ is not God. Christ is not risen from the dead, but he was a good teacher.

[19 : 01] Impossible. Good teachers don't lie. He said he would rise again. And if he's not been raised, then even Jesus' own preaching is useless, is a fraud.

Now the Lord made many astounding claims about himself, didn't he? Claims that no other sane man would ever make. He claimed to be the eternal son of God.

If you looked at him, he looked like he was in his 30s, but he stood there and claimed to have never begun, that he was God's son, that he had come from heaven. He existed before his birth forever.

He claimed to be the only savior of sinners, that no one can come to God the Father except through me. Imagine that, someone standing and saying that. That he had eternal life in himself to give freely to people who were under condemnation, that he was the judge of all the earth who had assigned the eternal destinies of heaven and hell to everyone who's ever lived based upon what they did with him and his gospel.

And when the Jews asked him for a miraculous sign to prove that your claims are true, and remember, Jesus had been going up and down doing all sorts of miraculous signs, but when they asked him again for a sign, he says, only a wicked and adulterous generation asked for a sign, and none will be given it except for the sign of Jonah.

[20 : 45] For just as he was three days in the belly of the great fish, so the Son of Man will be three days in the belly of the earth. In other words, Jesus is willing to hang all of his claims upon this one claim that I will rise again.

And if I rise from the dead, then you'll know it's all true. And if I don't, you'll know it's all a pack of lies. I'm just another religious fraud.

Do you see how important the factual bodily resurrection of Christ is to Christianity? If Christ has not been raised, then our gospel is not worth a breath to preach it. Maybe you've played the game of Jenga, and there are these blocks of wood that are stacked up into a tower, and then each person takes their turn to try to pull out one of those blocks of wood without bringing the tower down.

And it's possible, isn't it, to actually take blocks out of the tower, and the tower still stands. But eventually, someone pulls a block that bears the weight of the tower in a critical way that brings it all crashing down.

Now, the resurrection of Jesus bodily from the dead is one of those blocks. And if you take it away, the whole of Christianity is nothing but lies, not worth my preaching, not worth Paul's preaching, not worth the apostles' preaching.

[22 : 34] The resurrection of Christ is just that important. Do we have to believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ is the question that's being answered.

Paul says so, that without it, our preaching is useless. But notice, secondly, it's not just that our preaching is useless, so is your faith. That's the second thing.

If Christ is not raised, your faith is as useless as our preaching. Your faith in the gospel that we are preaching. Your faith that receives Christ and eternal life in Him. Your faith in a crucified, buried, risen Savior is useless if, in fact, Jesus has not been raised.

Those ideas mean nothing if the historical fact is not true. And if He has not been raised, then the preaching of the cross really is foolishness and so is your faith.

It's folly, utter folly. For Christ's death for sin is of no saving value to anyone apart from His real bodily resurrection from the grave.

[23 : 45] Let me say that again. Christ's death for sin is of no saving value apart from His resurrection from the dead. There are two essential parts, inseparable parts of the saving work of Christ.

Without both, there is no salvation. It's like the right leg and the left leg. Both are needed in order to walk. And there is no salvation if you don't have both the death of Christ for sin and the resurrection from the grave.

Romans 4.25, speaking of Christ, He was delivered up for our sins. There's His death. And was raised to life for our justification to make us right with God.

Christ's resurrection is just as necessary for our justification before the Father as His death for sins. And if Jesus is not raised to life, your faith in His death, in His cross, in His blood, will not make you right with God.

Christ's death has no saving power to atone for sin apart from His resurrection. Can Paul really mean that? Is he really saying that? Look at verse 17 of our text. He says, if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is futile.

[25 : 07] You are still in your sins. But I thought Jesus died for sins. Well, yes, we taught that, but if He's not raised, you're still in your sins.

What good is a gospel that leaves you still in your sins after believing it? It does nothing to remove sins from your record or remove you from their power over you or their power to condemn you.

The death of Christ will not remove sin from you if Jesus has not been raised. Do we have to believe in the resurrection of Christ from the dead?

Well, according to the Apostle Paul, yes. Look at verse 2 of the text. He says, I want to remind you of this gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you've taken your stand.

By this gospel you are saved if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. But if you start letting go of these essential elements, otherwise you've believed in vain.

[26 : 13] Your faith is futile. He said it three times in this passage that if you don't hold firmly to that, the resurrection of Christ, then you've believed in vain.

Your faith is useless. Your faith is futile. Three times. Indeed, the only gospel that says is the gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

So Paul writes in Romans 10 in verse 9, if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

You will be saved. Do you mean we need to believe in the resurrection of Christ from the dead?

Paul says, as you do if you want to be saved. So what if Christ is not raised? Well, your faith in Christ's blood is futile and leaves you in your sins.

[27 : 15] And not just you, but here's the next one. It also means that your believing loved ones who have died in the Lord are also still in their sins and lost.

Verse 18, then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. They're still lost in their sins. They're still, they're not saved because they're united to a dead Christ.

If he did not rise from the dead and a dead Savior and being united to a dead Savior can do nothing for you. You see, salvation, eternal life, flow from a living Savior.

Savior. And it flows, that life flows to all who are joined to him by faith. And because they're one, the one they're united with is alive, then they too will be raised to life.

But if he has not been raised, then your believing loved ones are still lost and in their sins. Now, it's of no small comfort for us who've lost loved ones who died in Christ and were joined to Jesus to know that they're still joined to Jesus and that when he returns, he's going to raise them from the dead.

[28 : 49] Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4 that the reason we do not grieve for them as those without hope is because we believe that Jesus died and rose again.

And so, because he died and rose again, we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. You see, he's alive, he's coming back, and he's bringing back those who died with their faith in Jesus Christ.

He's going to raise them from the dead, and then we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Therefore, comfort one another with these words. What an encouragement these words are to us. We'll see them again, we'll be with them, and together be with the Lord, because he's coming back to raise their body, but if he's dead, he can't come back and raise them.

And this happy reunion that we're told about will never happen. It's just a pipe dream.

[30 : 00] In Christ, we have this comfort and sure hope of a happy reunion, because they were united to a living, risen Savior. He's alive, and he's coming back for their bodies to raise them from the dead.

We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. So because Jesus lives, so shall they.

But if Christ is not risen, there is no comfort. You are still in your sins, and those loved ones who died in Christ are still lost and in their sins. And then verse 19 caps off this whole what-if argument, and it's this, that if Christ is not risen, then we have no hope in Christ beyond the grave.

No hope in Christ beyond the grave. Verse 19, if only for this life we have hope in Christ, we're to be pitied more than all men. If we don't have hope on the other side of death, we are the most pitiful, those to be pitied more than any other, because we lived our whole life for a lie.

We hoped, we lived for this hope, this expectation that proved in the end to be false, after all, and we built our whole lives on this sinking sand, thinking we were saved from sin, when all the while we were still lost and in our sins.

[31 : 22] We lived expecting a future resurrection from the dead unto eternal life with Christ. We laid up treasures for that next life. We denied ourselves sinful pleasures here, and we lived for the hope of eternal rewards, of being with Christ, which is better by far.

And what a pitiful people we are to have lived our whole lives for a pack of lies. And to be left without hope beyond the grave means we're still under the fear of death.

We're still under the sting of death. It can hurt us. It can take us before our judge and be damned forever and ever. That sting is still there for us.

For if Christ has not been raised, then death is won and Christ is lost. Because he wasn't able to do what he was sent from heaven to do, to save us and to bring us safely to his heavenly home, to be with him forever.

No, sin is won, death is won, hell is won, and Christ and us who hoped in him are the eternal losers to be pitied above all men.

[32 : 35] If Christ is not risen, that means I have no good news for you today. That means I have no gospel to preach to you today.

And it means you have nothing and no one in which to put your faith today to give you victory over sin and death and hell.

Well, Paul's had enough of this. Have you? This what-if business? It's fulfilled its purpose. 19, down to verse 19, and now he comes back to reality, because that's not reality, that's imagine.

What would have happened if Christ had not been raised? But verse 20, but Christ has indeed been raised from the dead. This historical event really happened, and that's why Paul is so careful that he included in verses 5 to 8, these eyewitnesses who saw the resurrected Christ.

He lists them. 500 of the brethren at one time saw him, and most of them were still alive, that you could go talk to them, and talk to this one, and that one separately, and compare what they said, and it would all match, because they all saw him.

[33 : 52] Indeed, that was one of the qualifications, to be an apostle. You had to have seen the resurrected Christ, because he called on the apostles to go preach a gospel that included not only the death of Christ for our sins, but the fact that he really rose from the dead.

They were called to be eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ, and that's why when you read through Acts, you see not just Christ's death, but Christ's resurrection, pounded home, you see, the two stand or fall together.

Christ has indeed been risen, so Paul can preach with confidence. You know, most of those apostles were so convinced of it that they were willing to die for it, weren't they?

You don't die for something you know is a lie. You might die for something that you were so sure of that you'd seen and heard and handled him with your own hands and knew he wasn't a vision, he was a real man and saw him eat.

That's how it was, and they were willing to die in proclaiming a risen Christ. So Paul can preach with confidence that Christ is alive and you and I can believe with confidence that Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.

[35 : 04] And because Christ has been raised from the dead, well that changes everything. There are amazing consequences and maybe we're so used to it that we haven't realized just how precious this truth is.

Let's think again about the difference it's made. I do have good news for you, whoever you are this morning. I have a gospel to preach to you, the same gospel Jesus and the apostles preached and you do have a living savior to put your faith in and your hope in and never be ashamed.

Paul says when Christ was raised from the dead, it was as the first fruits of a greater harvest to come. So he didn't just rise individually and that's it.

So Christ rose, but that doesn't mean that there's ever going to be a resurrection of the body. No, no, he rose as the first fruits and there's a latter fruit to be reaped from the harvest field of death because he was raised.

We too shall rise. His resurrection guarantees ours for since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

[36 : 15] For as an Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn, Christ, the first fruits and then when he comes, those who belong to him, then the end will come after he has put all his enemies under his feet.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death. And that will happen at his coming when he reclaims us from the grip of death unto eternal life with him.

And then the saying that is written will come true. Death has been swallowed up with victory. So where, oh, death is your stain? Where, oh, death is your victory? Where, oh, death is your sting?

For the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm.

Stand firm. Your faith does not rest in cleverly devised fables, but in an historical event that really happened.

[37 : 23] Real events. Christ has died for our sins and was raised from the dead. So stand firm. Let nothing move you.

Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, knowing this, that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. It's not just you serve him and die and that's it. No. He's going to raise you from the death to rewards in heaven that will blow your mind.

There is coming a resurrection for us and you will see it and you will be there. And so the resurrection of Jesus changes everything for the believer. It gives us hope beyond the grave.

We just saw that that was one of the things that was gone. If Christ is not risen, we have no hope beyond this life. Pitiful us. But if he is alive, then we have this unwavering hope that we sang of here a minute ago, a hope beyond the grave.

Peter says, praise be to the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ in his great mercies. He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Our hope has not died.

[38 : 30] It lives. Why? Because Jesus lives. And as long as Jesus lives, our hope lives on. However dark the night, we have a living hope because we have a living Savior.

That means we haven't lived for a lie. That means we're we haven't lived for vanity, but we've lived for the only thing worth living for, the one who saved us and died for us and was raised again for us.

We have a reigning and risen Savior. And because he lives, I can face tomorrow. I can face tomorrow with a sure hope because he lives for me. And the Christ that I'm united to is not a dead Savior.

He's a living Savior. He's a fruitful living vine. And the same grace, fullness of grace that dwelled in him flows to me, the branch that's united to this living vine.

The same supernatural divine energy that is found in him flows from him to me, the branch. And I can draw from his fullness all the grace and energy that I need for each tomorrow.

[39 : 40] Strength for today. Bright hope for tomorrow. Well, how many tomorrows? Every tomorrow. Every day.

The day of my death. Bright hope. Because I know that's not the I know. My living Savior is waiting to receive me. Stephen saw in vision as he was being stoned.

He saw the Savior standing up to receive him. He's alive. The day of death, but the day of judgment. If Jesus is still in the grave, how will I ever stand before the judge of all the earth?

Well, but because he's alive, he will present me faultless before his father. Here I am, father, and the children you've given me.

These are mine. My blood atoned for their sins. And then will he own my worthless name before the father's face. And in the new Jerusalem, appoint my soul a place.

[40 : 52] How is it that I can know dead certain that there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus? Well, who is he that condemns?

It is Christ Jesus who died. More than that, who was raised to life and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for us. Now, who would it be that could condemn if he's there pleading his blood and righteousness for us?

There's no condemnation as long as Jesus is alive and standing before the father's throne, representing us there to his father. Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him.

Why? Because he always lives to make intercession for us. That advocate. Yes, I sin, but I have an advocate with the father, someone who pleads with the father on my defense.

Jesus Christ, the righteous one. He's the propitiation for my sins. He's the one that turned God's wrath away from from me by taking it himself. And there's nothing but love left from the father for me.

[42 : 03] He's there for me. And. And the father's pleased to look at him and pardon us because we come on his arm. We come in the cleft of the rock that was smitten for us.

He lives. And therefore, he's able to save completely those who come to God through him. Have you come to God through Jesus? Well, you're you're to be envied.

Nothing can snatch you out of his hands. Everything can be snatched out of the hands of a dead man. But nobody can be snatched out of the hands of the Savior.

Do you see how secure you are? Because he's alive. He's alive. And he's not only there as our forerunner. He's there at the father's right hand or as our as our advocate.

He's there as our forerunner. Kids, sometimes if words are big, just just divide them in half. Forerunner. It's someone who runs before. And if Jesus is in heaven as our forerunner, as Hebrews 6 tells us, it means there's after runners coming along behind.

[43 : 14] That would be you and me who have who have trusted in the Savior. And so the head will not be separated from his body forever. No, no.

He he he says, Father, I want those you've given me to be with me where I am. And that prayer will not be denied the Savior. You see, because he lives, his atoning death on the cross really does cleanse from sin.

It doesn't leave us in our sins. It's gone. And because the one sitting on the throne of grace is a real man, a living man who knows what we're going through because he's been here.

He's been tempted and tried just as we are. So so when we come in our temptations and in our trials and we're so weak and we can't stand and we can't we can't go on and we cry out to him.

It's not like we have a high priest who who's unable to sympathize with us. We have one who who who knows everything about it. He was here and he knows that our strength is weak.

[44 : 22] He remembers that we're dust. He knows what we're made of. And so he pities us in our sins and our failures, our falls, our weakness.

And he he's there. And therefore, we can come to him. With confidence, knowing we have a living king sitting upon the throne of grace.

The king of grace. He's risen. And and he's got mercy for me. He's got grace for me to help me in my time.

A dead king can do no help for his subjects. A dead high priest cannot help anyone. But Jesus ever lives to help us in our times of need.

And so because Jesus is risen, our preaching is not in vain. Your faith in him is not in vain. Our hope beyond the grave for ourselves and our loved ones is not in vain.

[45 : 22] Our loved ones in Christ is not in vain. And our living for him is not in vain. And all because. He is risen indeed.

This is the gospel once for all delivered to the saints. This is the Christ of whom it speaks. This is the good news that this weary world needs so bad. And that you and I need so badly.

as well. A brief word to the loss this morning. If Christ is not risen. Then you can safely ignore him and everything that he ever said.

It is of no importance to you. It's not worth a second of your time to listen to anymore.

But hear me, if Christ is risen, then there is nothing that matters more than that you come to know this Christ. Christ. And that you pay attention to his gospel.

[46 : 30] That you see yourself as the one who is still in your sins, but that Jesus is the one who can take you out of your sins. You're still under condemnation, but Jesus was condemned on the cross that you might not ever be condemned.

That you're still under the sting and fear of death, knowing it will take you to hell. But Jesus entered into that hell on the cross and died that he might give you eternal life.

And so there's nothing more important than to have dealings with this savior. Nothing, nothing can compare in importance to this. He indeed is risen.

And therefore God has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man that he appointed. And he's given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.

It's appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. And God has appointed that all judgment should be done by the son. But the son was dead.

[47 : 41] Ah, no judgment then. Wrong. God has given assurance that the day is still on his calendar.

And he's given proof of it to all men, every single one of you. He's proven to you. Judgment day is on. And you'll stand and give an account for your life before the judge.

And if you have a sin that's out from under the blood of Jesus, if your sins are not covered by his blood, you'll go away into everlasting torments.

But if you cast yourself by faith on this savior and if you receive him, that's what it means to believe, to trust in him, is to receive him and salvation in him. And he will give you eternal life.

Eternal life with himself. Where's your hope? Well, in Christ alone my hope is found.

[48 : 41] Can you sing that? Let's rejoice together in the gospel, in our savior that is living and therefore our hope is alive. It's number 15 in your grace hymns.

Number 15. Let's stand as we sing. In Christ alone my hope is found. Thank you, Father, for giving your son and giving him up to the cross for our sins and punishing him in our place.

Thank you for raising him from the dead. Thank you for remembering that eternal covenant between you and your son that if he laid down his life that you would raise him from the dead and give to him the reward of his sufferings even of people for himself.

Why should we gain from his reward? We cannot give an answer but we know this that it's all of grace and we've sung of it, we've heard of it and we bow our hearts in worship.

May the great name of our living savior be preached and praised throughout the world this day, world without end we ask through our savior's name.

[50 : 14] Amen.