

# Resurrection and New Beginnings

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[ 0 : 00 ] Many of us, if not all of us, will have had a close friend or relative that has passed away. And what would happen, what do you think would happen, if that dead person came back to life again, in your life?

Not to be disrespectful, but I bet you anything that the first thing that we would know from your lips is that that person came back to life.

Before we even saw you, you know that kind of news that would spread like wildfire, that everyone would know about before they even saw you? We'd all know that someone you know that had died had come back to life again.

And if we saw you and you hadn't told us, we would think it was very strange, wouldn't we? Like, I don't know, if I saw someone from church and Auntie Mavis had passed away on Friday and I saw you on Monday and we're having tea and you, and like I know that Auntie Mavis has come back to life again, I've heard it from everyone, and then you don't mention it.

You'd be like, well, what happened here? And if you went, oh, it's Auntie Mavis, it happens all the time. You know, she dies on Friday and on Sunday and Monday she's back again.

[ 1 : 28 ] Just don't worry about it. We're like, none of us have those stories. That's why the news is incredible. The number one thing we would know about you is that you know someone who was dead and came back to life.

And friends, this is exactly the story of Easter. You know, we've looked at it over Easter, and yet so few Christians tell us, or tell others, about the man that they know that was dead and has come back to life again.

So very few Christians actually make that a central plank, A, of the thing that they believe about Jesus, and B, the thing that they tell others about Jesus. And so today I want to relook at Easter and link the resurrection of Christ to some important aspects of Christian living that we may not have had time to cover over Easter time.

And so we're looking at resurrection and new beginnings. Resurrection and new beginnings. And I think the reason we don't tell people about the wonder of the resurrection is that we sometimes, we might not really understand it ourselves.

Or rather, we don't know how important the physical nature of the resurrection is. And how incredible that news would have been to the first disciples that struggled with what was going on in front of their very eyes.

[ 2 : 48 ] And so as we look at resurrection and new beginnings, we just want to start there at the physical nature of resurrection to see how it helps us with new beginnings in our life now. So the first point I want us to look at, by the way, just be in John chapter 20.

We'll take most of our lessons from there. Is the resurrection and physical reality. Resurrection and physical reality. So again, just to make the point, resurrection is of central importance to Christianity.

Without it, we don't have a savior that saves. We don't have a God who is trustworthy, and we've got nothing to hope for.

We don't have a future that we can hope in, if we don't have the resurrection. Physical resurrection. A dead person coming back to life again. And yet so many Christians live in this limbo place of knowing something about the resurrection, but it sometimes doesn't have as central a place or as important a place as I think it needs to have.

I think this is because many of us believe in this quasi-Christian-sounding version of Christianity that sounds like Christianity, but it's actually a bit of a rip-off.

[ 4 : 07 ] It's a major rip-off. And it goes something like this. Jesus died for your sins, so that when you die, your soul gets to be with God in heaven. You've all heard that version of it, of what Christianity is all about.

And it sounds so Christian, you're like, well, what's wrong with that? Well, the thing that's important in that kind of statement, that version of Christianity, is that the important things there are your soul and going to heaven and living in this kind of spiritual state.

what's not important in that version of Christianity is resurrection and physical life, your body and this earth. And the things that are important to the Bible is not your soul going to heaven when you die, but resurrection and your body and this earth.

And I'm hoping to show that to you from our Gospel in John now in a few minutes. So the Gospel writers stand completely opposed to the goal of Christianity, or Jesus died for your sins, so that when you die, your soul gets to be with God in heaven.

The Gospel writers stand completely opposed to this, which is why they stress the physical nature of Christ's resurrection. So Nick read it well for us, I think, John chapter 20.

[ 5 : 27 ] Let's have a look at verse 19. On the evening of the first day of the week, when the disciples were together, the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you.

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. And that's when the disciples became overjoyed.

Because they'd seen the Lord. Now they knew that the dead person that they saw on Friday, they ran away from, because they were all scared, has come back to life. Does that make sense?

We've covered a little bit of this over Easter time, so we might be going over a bit of the same stuff, but it's so important that I want to make sure that we get it. But then, that amazing story of, well, it's called Doubting Thomas.

It's a bit unfair to Thomas, I think. Because I mean, Auntie Mavis that comes back to life, bring Auntie Mavis back again, if you told me, yes, but your Auntie Mavis was dead on Friday and you saw her on Monday walking around here at the shop, right?

[ 6 : 36 ] I'm going to have difficulty believing that. You all would. And so you can't blame Thomas for being like, hey man, you guys can tell me this, but I need to see this.

It makes sense. It's not a bad, it makes sense to want to see that. And so, particularly in the next little section there, halfway through verse 25, Thomas says to them, unless I see the nail marks in his hands, how's that, and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I can't believe it, I will not believe it.

Okay? Fine. That's why you've got this next bit in the gospel. A week later, his disciples were in the house again, Thomas was with him, the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, peace be with you.

He says that three times in these resurrection appearances, by the way. And he says to Thomas here, put your fingers here. Yeah, take me.

Touch me. Put your finger here. See my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.

[ 7 : 59 ] There's no other way, there is no more direct way that the gospels can let you know that the thing that you're meant to get about Jesus is that the dead person that went into the tomb on Friday is now the living person standing in front of them.

Are you, can you all see that? Okay, it's a very important thing to get about Jesus. And yet, so many Christians cling on to this spiritualized, non-physical version of Christianity, of Jesus, the one that we spoke about earlier, because even though they read these accounts, so many people believe in this thing where Jesus floated through his grave clothes or he floated through the door when he saw people.

And when they say that, they're implying that, yes, he was, he's kind of back in the day, but he's different. There's this new thing about him.

It's a spiritualized version of Jesus. It's some version of that. But I want you to notice, and we don't often do this as closely as it's in the pulpit, and I've heard this so many times that I just, I felt compelled to, to just address this head on.

So I want you to notice in the text that nowhere does it say that Jesus floated through grave clothes or that he floated through the door to get into the room. Not in my Bible.

[ 9 : 16 ] I've looked at it in the Greek. It's not there. So, have a look at verse 6 and 7. Chapter 20, verse 6 and 7. I just want you to see that it doesn't talk about him doing this.

It doesn't tell us how he got out of his grave clothes. It doesn't tell us how he got into that room. So verse 6 and 7 in chapter 20. The disciples are running to the tomb.

After, yeah, disciples are running to the tomb. Simon Peter, who was behind, that's behind John, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head.

The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. And then the other disciple comes in and he sees that as well. Okay, it doesn't tell us how Jesus got out of those grave clothes. Yes, there's this thing, the Shroud of Turin.

I know people think that that's the burial cloth that Jesus got out of the tomb and that's proof that his body whoosh, whoosh through there and then like his little echoes of whatever, of his, of what?

[ 10 : 27 ] His electrons, his protons, what? In the grave clothes. No one knows why they've got this here. It's discussed in the commentators, but it's likely to show that Jesus' body wasn't stolen because if you're going to steal a body like the disciples, you know, the one story is that they took his body away, you're not going to stop and unwrap the guy and then fold the grave, the head cloth.

You've got a Roman guard on your case, you've got to get in and get out. Okay, so it's probably proof that he wasn't stolen. At the very least, you can't say categorically that you know how he got out of those grave clothes because the Bible doesn't tell us.

It's silent. So be careful about making a categorical statement about how he got out of those grave clothes. Are you with me on that? Okay, let's turn over to the story about Jesus and the disciples. I know he appears twice, but just have a look at the one of Thomas.

So back to 20, oh well, yeah, either verse 19. So on the evening of the first day of the week when the disciples were together, the doors were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, peace be with you.

Okay, so the doors are locked. My Bible doesn't say and Jesus floated through the doorway or wall or floor or ceiling or whichever way you want to have him float around and then stood, it just says the doors are locked and then Jesus was there.

[ 11 : 58 ] So you cannot categorically say that you know how Jesus got into that room because it doesn't tell us. He may have done that.

Personally, I don't think he did, but he may have done that. I think it's unlikely. I think that would have scared the disciples even more. This guy floating through the door.

Hello. Because then they're automatically going to think he's a ghost because we all know humans don't float through walls, but ghosts do.

And then it would be even harder to convince him that he's not a ghost. And yet, in Luke's gospel, we're not going to go there, but in Luke chapter 24, he says to them at that meeting, look, look at my hands, it is I myself, touch me and see a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have and then he eats some fish to prove it.

Which would be more difficult if he had sort of floated through the walls if you'd agree with that. Okay, it doesn't say. Okay. But be careful of saying that you know how he did it and especially that in some way that means that Jesus is in some way less physical than he was on Friday.

[ 13 : 14 ] Yeah, does that make sense? You're with me on that? You may not agree with me. I'm telling you what the Bible says or what it doesn't say.

In any case, remember that Jesus could already walk on water before the resurrection. So, you know, if you want to say that his body was somewhat different and could float around, well, he walked on water. He floated.

I don't know how he walked on water but he walked on water before the resurrection and we've got accounts of physical human beings being taken from one place to the next without floating and not being spirit.

Okay, so in the book of Acts you've got Philip, the apostle being taken or he's actually one of the deacons, being taken to the Ethiopian eunuch and then whoop, well, he gets there and then he goes again to another place.

He's not a ghost. He's not, he's not, he's just, he's moved. God does these things with people. It doesn't mean that they're not physical. Okay, I think I've made the point.

[ 14 : 16 ] Hopefully, that version of Christianity won't use these texts to say that you think that Jesus is spiritual when it's going out of its way to show us that he's physical.

the gospel writers go out of the way to show that the same body that was whipped, that had nails driven into it, that had a spear stuck into its side, that bled out and died, that same lifeless body that came off the cross and was put into that tomb on Friday is the same body that is now standing in front of them.

Of course, that's important. Otherwise, they wouldn't go out of their way to say that for us because it means all the promises that God has made about Jesus and therefore promises that God makes to you are real and true and will happen.

Does that make sense? That's the connection there for us. But, just two things to think about here. If that version of Christianity that I said that's the ripple version is the one that you believe in, you need to adjust your theology to bring it more in line with the Bible.

Or, if I can just be blunt about it, you need to repent of believing wrong things and putting your own ideas into the Bible and reading into them what God, instead of what God says has happened.

[ 15 : 39 ] Making up your own ideas. And then just be careful of buying into sort of glib, Christian-knee-sounding versions of biblical Christianity just because you grew up with it.

You've heard these things repeated millions of times. It doesn't mean that they're true. You need to do the homework, get your nose into the text, and let God's word determine what is true and what is not true.

Don't let your thinking and what you've been told determine for you what is true. Yes, we all grew up with some input into our lives as to what's true or not. That's how we get these things.

I used to believe all of these things. I believed in that version of Christianity until I, just over the years, I was like, I just read the text. I was like, it doesn't quite fit like that.

And so let the Bible tell you what is true and what you do believe. Does that make sense? Okay. That's the physical nature of the resurrection.

[ 16 : 43 ] Let's ask now, what difference does that make? What difference does it make if I believe in bodily resurrection or going to heaven when I die? What difference does the resurrection actually make?

Okay, by now you should link in your mind when I say the word, or Nick, when we say the word resurrection, we are talking about physical reality that is dead coming back to life.

We're not talking about other things. We're talking about biological human beings that have ceased to function, functioning again, however you want to use those words.

Well, the resurrection tells us that a new age has begun. The resurrection tells us a new age has begun. God has done a watershed thing in the history of the world by raising Jesus from the dead.

It's not just a promise of something that's going to happen in the future. Yes, it is. But it's something that started in AD plus minus 33. Actually, now that you think about it, in 20, 30, 31, 32, 33, in about 9, 10 years' time, we get to celebrate 2,000 years of the resurrection.

[ 18 : 00 ] Isn't that amazing? God willing, we'll be there to celebrate it together. The resurrection tells us that a new age has begun, an age full of God's creative power that helps us not to run away and escape from the problems of the world, but to give us the power to, the biblical word is save, but it comes with its own baggage, so you'll often hear me say things like, it gives us the power to change the world, or redeem the world, or fix the problems of the world, just like what Jesus came to do.

And so we need to begin to look at resurrection and new beginnings, resurrection and new beginnings. So, the first thing to notice is that there's this, the resurrection starts this new creation, the resurrection starts this new creation.

So the resurrection breathes new life into a world that is in chaos, that is dying, that is broken by sin. It kind of restarts God's original creation project.

So the resurrection, Jesus' resurrection in AD 30 whatever, plus minus, restarts God's original creation project. Okay, why do I say that?

Because in John in particular, John is scattered through his section here, John chapter 20, clues that he was thinking of creation accounts of Genesis when he's talking about the resurrection of Jesus.

[ 19 : 26 ] And by linking Jesus' resurrection to creation, and I'll go through a few verses in a second, he is saying that what we have here is a whole new creation. A whole new world is about to start happening in this world.

There's been a sea change in how God is operating in the world. So, chapter 20, verse 1, John notes that early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw the stone had been removed from the entrance.

So you've got darkness, you've got the first day of the week. That takes us all the way back to creation. the first day when things begin to happen. It's the start of something that will grow and develop.

Remember, John is a Jew, and so they've got these creation themes going in their head. They all know what the first day of the week means. Then, actually, just in chapter 19, just before that, all of this takes place in a garden.

That's very interesting. Just a little comment there, chapter 19, verse 41. At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had been laid.

[ 20 : 43 ] Because it was the Jewish day of Passover, and since the tomb was nearby, that's where they laid Jesus. We heard about that was Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. Jesus was buried with a rich man, but it's noted that it's in a garden.

Where have you heard about creation happening and a garden being? In a garden. Oh, Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 again. The garden of Eden was a place where life was meant to be launched from into the world.

The garden of Eden is like a launching pad for God's creative power to go into the world through his people. But instead, the garden became, instead of the garden being a place of life, it became a place of death.

death. But because of Jesus' resurrection, this garden tomb, this empty tomb, does become that launch pad for new life into the world that God had wanted for the original garden.

So there's an, can you see the creation themes coming through? And then, in chapter 20 again, in verse 22, Jesus breathes on his disciples and he says, receive the Holy Spirit.

[ 21 : 58 ] Verse 22, with that he breathed on them, said Jesus, peace be with you, as the Father sent me, I'm sending you, and with that he breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit, if you forgive anyone his sins, they're forgiven, if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

That word, you would have thought, breathing is a natural word, but it's a key word, and it's in the form, the exact same form that is used in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, where God breathed into man the breath of life.

It's not used often, in fact, it's almost only used for those two occurrences. The exact same word used of God when he breathed into Adam, the breath of life in Genesis 1 and 2.

His breath, the Holy Spirit, Christ now, how's this? Christ now has the power of the Holy Spirit. To give new life.

The Holy Spirit listens to his command, because he rose from the dead. He didn't do this before he rose from the dead, he only did it after he rose from the dead, to prove that he is who he says he is, and he's got this power now.

[ 23 : 08 ] Yes, the Holy Spirit was poured out later at Pentecost. This is kind of like a prophetic outpouring. He's like, yes, boys, you're going to get this thing. I'm just going to do this for you now so that you know what's happening. Jesus controls the Holy Spirit, he enters into our lives as Christians, makes us alive, and becomes this life-giving power.

We're supposed to understand the Spirit as something that empowers and enables. Empowers and enables. The same way that God's Spirit took dirt and made it stand up and start doing things.

Dirt becomes useful to God when he makes it living, and he sends Adam on a mission. Go into the world. Rule and subdue it. Jesus here does exactly the same thing.

We'll look at that in a few minutes. As the Father sent me, I send you. You're the new creation. You're the new Adam. You're the new people of God. You've got something to do.

Okay. All of this is to say that there's a strong link between resurrection and creation, or rather new creation purpose for God's people in God's world. That's the point that John is making by drawing our attention to the creation.

[ 24 : 25 ] I think that brings us to our next point where the resurrection starts a new way of God's people relating to him. The resurrection starts a new way of God's people relating to him, and it's a new covenant relationship that he puts into place.

So in the Gospel of John, Jesus has referred to God as his Father, showing that he's a special, unique bond with God that no one else has. No one spoke of God like that. In fact, the Jews wanted to kill Jesus when he spoke about God as his Father.

But here's the amazing thing. The resurrection opens up this special relationship to anyone who has Jesus as their Lord. We get to call God our Father, and he calls us his sons daughters.

Let's have a look at verse 17. Jesus is dealing with Mary. She's realized that the person standing in front of her is Jesus.

In fact, that's a little bit of the gardener language. That's why she thought he was a gardener, because she's in this garden. So verse 15, Jesus says, woman, why are you crying? Who is it you're looking for? Thinking he was the gardener, she said, sir, if you've carried him away, tell me where you've put him and I'll get him.

[ 25 : 49 ] Jesus says to her, Mary. And he must have done it in that way that when you say someone and you just know their name, Mary.

And she just knew, she had that recognition software we've got. Ah, wait a minute. She turns towards him and cries out in Aramaic, Rabboni, Rabboni, which means teacher.

And then the thing we're looking at here, Jesus says, don't hold on to me. She must have run up to him and tried to hug him or wanted to hug him. That's natural.

I'm just going to make a point here again. He says, don't hold on to me for I've not yet returned to the father. So, some people would say about how he's in his glorified state, it would be dangerous for her to touch him and this, that, and the other, except later on he tells the guys to touch him.

So even there, it's not about him not being physical, just that I've not yet returned to the father. I've got something I've got to go do. I can't stay here. And then this, go instead to my brothers and tell them, I'm returning to my father and your father, to my God and to your God.

[ 27 : 14 ] So I said, well, just a moment ago I said, we get to call God our father, we're his sons and daughters, if we have Jesus as our Lord. Actually, he says, go and tell my brothers.

if you're a Christian, you get to be included in the family, the household of the living God. You get to share in the sonship of Jesus.

We get to relate to the God of the universe, who was previously hostile to us because of our sin. We now get to relate to him as our loving father, who treats us like he treats Jesus.

And he won't let anything bad happen to Jesus. That's why he brings him back from the dead. And we get that same promise if we're a Christian.

Now, this relationship is not just a private personal relationship as meaningful and powerful as that is. God is our father, we're his sons and daughters. It's actually a covenantal relationship. So, it's got some implications that we need to look at there.

[ 28 : 33 ] But in order to uncover that, we need to go all the way back to Ezekiel 37, where this covenant language actually comes from. So, remember at Easter time, we looked at the prophecies of Easter and where these promises come from in the Old Testament.

That's where all this stuff comes from in the Bible. So, Ezekiel 37. Sorry about that. So, now, we've read the first ten verses. I mean, if you've never heard this before, it's an incredible passage of scripture.

Full of what? Resurrection of dead bones. I mean, they go into detail as to what's going to happen with the people that God wants to be alive.

Verse 4, prophesy to these bones. Also, just to give the context. So, this is Ezekiel. Now, Ezekiel's seen some amazing stuff.

He's seen amazing stuff. He's seen stuff that none of us has ever seen. And then God takes him to this valley. And I saw a great many bones, verse 2, lying on the floor.

[ 29 : 51 ] And then God gives him a little test. Hey, son of man, can these bones live? And then Ezekiel's answer is like, well, Lord, you know.

Ezekiel's dead bones, guys. Like, what, you know, what now? Interesting, the way that God makes those bones live, for our purposes, is that God doesn't make them stand up.

He gets Ezekiel to get them to stand up. And we'll see a little bit later that that's part of our purpose now as Christians. God doesn't get the world to wake up and live.

He gets them to live through us doing things, speaking them about Jesus and loving them. Verse 4, prophesy to these bones and say to them, dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. This is what the sovereign Lord says to these bones, I will make breath into you and you will come to life.

I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin. I will put breath in you and you will come to life. Then you will know that I'm the Lord. Just imagine Nick has got an evangelism group running.

[ 31 : 00 ] Just this last year, on Saturday yesterday, we went out and canvassed the Plumstead community for the work that we're going to do at Latimer, the homework club. But what if one day we get this WhatsApp message, hey guys, let's meet at the cemetery here.

and I just want you to go tell those guys to get there. Just go up, get up. It's Ezekiel like, okay.

Anyone watching? Bones. Okay. But it's like an incredible picture because they then start doing that. Like in the Disney movies, magical fairy dust, and they get transformed.

That's for the girls. For the guys, it's like transformers with a truck. And the bones, all the muscles.

And then it's like done. I'm like, I'm optimist prime. It's the coolest thing ever.

[ 32 : 20 ] That's exactly what's going to happen to us at Resurrection Day. A friend of mine who taught me all this, he wants to put on his tomb a quote by Arnold Schotzenegger from Terminator.

I'll be back. Okay. So this, again, physical resurrection.

But we need to move on. And so, I just want to point out some similarities between here and what John is doing in 20 and see that there's a correlation between the two.

So there's physical resurrection. There's the promise of the Spirit, in the same way that Jesus breathed out the Spirit in verse 13 and 14. Now, we didn't read that far, but this whole passage, you've got to read the whole chapter, it's an integral whole.

So verse 13 and 14, so these bones are all standing up. Then, verse 13, then you, my people, God is again speaking through Ezekiel, then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord.

[ 33 : 26 ] When I open your graves and bring you from them, I will put my Spirit in you and you will live and I will settle you in your own land, then you'll know that I am the Lord and have spoken and I've done it, declares the Lord.

Okay, so there's a promise of the Spirit. There's also a promise of a king, so go all the way down to verse 24. This whole, this, the whole chapter works together in one whole.

So verse 24, at that time, I'm just putting those words there, but my servant David will be king over them, after I've raised him from the dead, and they will all have one shepherd.

They will follow my laws and be careful to obey my decrees. They will have David their king as their shepherd over them. Okay, John goes out of his way to tell us that Jesus is the shepherd.



Jesus says he's put those words in Jesus. Jesus, I am the shepherd, meaning he's the king, the kings were known as shepherds because they lead and protect their people. So you've got resurrection, the promise of the spirit, a king, John chapter 20, tells us at the end of the chapter why he wrote those things, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ.

- [ 34 : 43 ] In other words, that Jesus is the king. That's the point it's making there. Then there's a promise of physical eternal life, as if you don't have that already from these verses, but verse 25, they will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers live.

They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David, my servant, will be their prince forever.

The promise of eternal physical life on planet earth, and more specifically, a certain sliver of planet earth, the place they're busy fighting over right now, the land.

is Canaan. And then verse 26, I will make my covenant with you.

So this is the covenant relationship where it comes out. Verse 26, I will make a covenant of peace with them. It will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I'll put my sanctuary among them forever.

- [ 35 : 49 ] So this relationship is going to be covenantal in nature, and then when you're in covenant, you get God's peace.

And remember every time Jesus appeared to his disciples, he says, he gives them his peace. Be at peace, he tells them. peace. The reason it gives us peace is because the whole point about a covenant is it gives you protection.

Remember how covenants work in the Old Testament? A king would arrive and say, hey, I'm your new king, and I'm going to protect you from everyone. And any time someone messes with you, they're going to mess with me. And he's a bigger and stronger king than you are, so he's like your big brother.

That's the point of being in a covenantal relationship. Yeah, you've got to pay me. He had to pay the kings. It's a bit of a mafia kind of contract.

But we don't have to pay God anything. He paid it all. And then he gets to protect us by making us in covenant with him. Verse 27, my dwelling place will be with them.

- [ 37 : 01 ] I will be their God. God and they will be my people. So that's the echo in John 20 of Jesus saying, I'm going to my father and their father, my God and their God.

It's covenantal language. You meant to see it as covenantal language. I will be their God and they will be my people. Here's the true, the great promise of having Yahweh, the creator God, the redeemer God of the Old Testament, the only true God, as your God, and for you to become part of his chosen people.

What's important to grasp here is that resurrection and covenant relationship are intricately connected. You can't have one without the other. That's Ezekiel 37, and so the same is true in the New Testament with John and Jesus' resurrection.

That brings us to our last point. Well, one last point in Ezekiel 28. We'll go back to John 20, verse 28, the last verse in Ezekiel 37. When I am your God and you are my people, then the nations will know that I, the Lord, make Israel holy when my sanctuary is among them forever.

Then the nations will know that I'm the Lord. So God then sends his people on a mission to let all the people of the world know that there's this new life to be had in the coming Messiah and having God as their father.

- [ 38 : 31 ] And so let's go all the way back to John 20 again and we're going to end with this mission, this new mission that we become part of by becoming part of God's resurrected people.

So we're going to look at resurrection and new mission and we'll end there. So all of this feeds into the new mission that Jesus now sends his people on. Because Jesus is resurrected and because that starts a new covenant relationship between God and his people, we get a new life given experience.

We now, we, meaning us here at St. Peter's now, have the ability, the power to go and share this amazing new life with others. So John 20 verse 21.

Jesus says, peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. Just notice what Jesus doesn't say.

He doesn't say, as the Father is taking me away, so I will take you away. As the Father sent me, where did the Father send Jesus? Well, read the Gospel of John.

[ 39 : 49 ] It tells you, John chapter 1. He came from God into this place, into this world of darkness, into this world of sin, to save it.

Jesus goes into the world, so he's sending us into the world, to do for the world the same thing he did, to rescue, to save, to love, to redeem, to change. Now, yes, we don't do it in our own strength, but we've got the Holy Spirit, and we've got the power of Christ in our lives.

So, just two verses, not in John 20, but it will be up on the screen, you don't have to turn there, just to make the point about God sending what he came to send Jesus to do. For God didn't send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him, John 3.17, that's after John 3.16, the famous verse, about God loving the world.

God, John 8.35, Jesus says, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin, but the slave doesn't remain in the house forever.

The son, however, remains forever, so if the son has set you free, you will be free indeed. And friends, this is the rescue mission of Jesus, to rescue people from slavery, to give them their freedom.

[ 41 : 18 ] And that's such a cool mission to be part of, don't you think? Like all the cool stories in the ancient Roman world, Spartacus, this dude that helped free the slaves. Yeah?

Many people preferred to be in slavery. Okay, fine, let them stay there. But a lot of people are just waiting for a rescue in their life. And if you've been saved, if you've been rescued, you get to become part of God's rescue mission to the world.

You get to do for others what Jesus has done for you. You know, every boy grows up wanting to be a rescue of some sort, somewhere in their life.

You know, when you ask him, what do you want to be? Oh, I want to be a fireman, a firefighter, maybe work at the NSRI, or a mountain rescue, those all cool jobs. Or you want to be that knight in shining armor to save the princess.

Girls don't think that you're left out. Girls also want to be in the action, the rescuing action. It's slightly different. In this sense, being a helper, you remember Eve was the helper for Adam, but we all know that men need a bit of rescuing, well, it was.

[ 42 : 26 ] And so being a helper is actually being a rescuer, ladies. And so I think this is how we see ourselves as Christians, not running away from the world or its problems or its people, but running into the world to where the fire is burning.

To run to people who are closest to disaster, to take the message of Jesus, to take the gospel as a lifeline for change, to take the truth of God's word to put out the lies that people believe and the lies that are put out there in the world, and take the love of Jesus, to heal people's hurts.

We have all the solutions and the power to make all the difference to save God's world and to save people in it. Not through me, but through Christ in me.

So, friends, that's why resurrection is so important. It gives new life, it gives you a new covenant status, and it gives you a new mission. But it gives us the confidence that even though we are going to be going into enemy territory, the victory is already assured, the victory is already ours.

And the proof of that is that our king, our master, our God, who was dead, is now alive. Isn't that good news?

[ 43 : 54 ] And doesn't that make you want to be part of that mission? I think so. But let's pray and ask God's help for that. Lord, we've visited these wonderful passages of scripture again, and read all about Jesus' amazing resurrection, that he came back from the dead, and what that means for us, and our relationship with you, and Lord, our relationship with this world, that you want to save, that you want to redeem, that you love, that you don't want to see continue suffering sin.

Lord, redeem us from our own sin, give us the gift of your Holy Spirit, fill us with your Spirit, fill us with this resurrection power of Christ, so that we get to be part of your rescue mission.

In Jesus' name, Amen.