

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE | RED LETTER TALKS PART 2

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Church, you know a name and His name is Jesus. Can we keep that celebration going a little bit longer? There is one name. That's what today is about.

And today also marks the beginning of what is known as Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, ending with the resurrection Sunday. When that one name, the name of Jesus Christ, proved to have power over death and sin—victory over the grave. Can we celebrate the name of Jesus?

We're going to celebrate next weekend, Easter weekend, and what we want to do right now across all of our campuses is to take a moment and pray toward this week and toward the weekend.

We believe that this is the crux of everything. And Jesus did go to the cross. And He did resurrect. That changes everything. Alright? So, what we want to do is just give Him this week. Across all of our campuses would you close your eyes and bow your head and let's pray toward Easter weekend.

Father, we believe in the name of Jesus, Your Son. We believe He came. We believe that He lived the perfect life. We believe He went to the cross and died. But He didn't remain dead. We believe that the Son of God rose three days later. So, this week as we go through Holy Week, help us to lean in and to remember all that You have done for us. You took our place.

And more than that, God, I pray that you would place an urgency on our hearts believing that this name, the name of Jesus, and this news, the Good News, the gospel, is the only thing that has the power to save.

So, God, I pray that You would give us courage to invite, the courage to tell people about You, and encourage them to come to a service this weekend. But bigger than that, I pray for conversations around You and a relationship with You.

God, I pray for anyone who we've taken off of the list, anyone we believe that we've already tried, and they won't accept. God, I pray by the power of Jesus that You would bring those names back to the top.

I believe invitations will be sent out in the name of Jesus. We believe that they will be accepted for the first time. We believe that they will come to church. We believe that they will hear the message, and they will respond and be baptized. We are praying all of this in the name of Jesus. And the church said: Amen.



One more time can we celebrate the one and only name of Jesus?

So, good. Go ahead and grab a seat, pull out your Bibles, get to John, chapter 14. Whoosh. What a start.

Hey, we're going to continue in our series Red Letter Talks. What we've been doing in this series is pretty simple. We're just going through the gospel of John. We're looking for those red letters that signify these are the very words of Jesus. And we're studying them all the way up to Easter saying, "What can we know about Jesus? How can we know Him better?"

And today we're talking about the concept of home. Home. I love being at home. Anybody else? Any homebodies in the room? At the campuses? I mean, you just got here but you're already thinking about being home.

I was just on vacation with my family and with some of our best friends. We went to the one place that all families from Indiana go to on spring break. We went to Florida. Yes we did. Florida is amazing. It has so many things that Indiana doesn't have. It has nice weather. It has beaches. It has the ocean. Maybe you've been there.

Even on a great vacation you get toward the end of the week, and you are like, "I'm ready to be home." There is this ache in our hearts, this want, this desire to be home.

There was a different spring break trip when I was a little bit younger where I really didn't feel at home. I took a trip when I was in college with three other buddies. We were going to, of course, Florida for spring break. This was going to be like a trip that I'd never been on before though. The way that they were pitching it to me sounded incredible.

You ever been in one of these situations? Everything sounds great when you are 21.

They said, "Hey, we're going to go to Florida. Sounded amazing. The four of us, we are going to go down and my dad is lending us his Ford Explorer. It's going to be great. Great—we have a way to get there. We know where we are going.

And here's what I should have known. They said, "We're not staying in one place. Listen to this. Every night is going to be a different city. Every day a different beach. We're going to hit all of Florida." Sign me up. This sounds amazing.

Some older, wiser people listening to this are like, "What's the catch?" Of course there was a catch. Here was the thing. We were not only going down in this Ford Explorer, we were going to be living in this Ford Explorer for the next week.

But they assured me, "Best vacation ever." And I go. Spoiler alert—it was not the best vacation ever. It was what it sounds like. I stayed in a car with three other dudes for a week. We were pretty much camping out, living outside. There was just a thin layer of a Ford Explorer between us.



I couldn't take it. By the end of the week I'm broken. I cannot sleep in that vehicle one more night. And at the time we were camped out at Panama City beach in a Walmart parking lot. Some of you have been there. Beautiful views. I couldn't do it.

I was trying to go to sleep. I couldn't go to sleep. I had snot in my throat. So, finally I hopped out of the Explorer, began to explore for myself. I looked up and the lights of Walmart never looked better. I was like, "I'm going to sleep in there tonight."

I promise you church, I got out of that car, I walked into Walmart and began looking around. Where am I going to make my home for the night? Easy decision—the lawn and garden section right over to the left.

Who shops for lawn and garden items in the middle of the night? You know? If they are, they probably have bigger things going on than to be worried about a guy trying to get some sleep between two aisles.

So, I went into that section. I got one of those lawn chairs. I laid it all of the way down. I laid down and I got the best night's sleep of the whole vacation.

Until I was rudely awakened by a guy who I thought was taking his job a little bit too seriously. He began yelling from the other side of the lawn and garden section. I was waking up, "You can't sleep here." I was like, "Well, not with you yelling like that. That is for sure." But that ended the vacation for me and ended living in a Ford Explorer hopefully for the foreseeable future.

What we long for, jokes aside is a place to call home:

A place to call home is what our hearts ache for

Have you ever noticed that? Obviously, I wanted it when I was sleeping in the car. But even if you've never had a good home, you never had a safe place, a place you wanted to return to, you still longed for that. You had this vision of, "One day I'm going to have a place, a safe place, of refuge where I'm loved and known where I can call home."

The mistake we make is a lot of times we get into it, go through life, and we think, "Okay, the problem with the home is the house. If I could just tack on a few more thousand square feet..." Or, "The problem is the ones I share this house with. If I could just get a few of them out this would feel better." And we always feel like we're just a little bit away from feeling at home.

But I think it may be something more than that. I love the way C.S. Lewis famously puts it. He said, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world."

So, what if it's not the size of the house? What if it's not who is in the house with us? What if there is something deeper going on below the surface? We get glimpses of feeling at home here on earth, but they are just a shadow. What if they are just sign

posts pointing to a greater home, a greater reality that our hearts long for because we were created for a different world?

That's what Jesus is going to be speaking to in John, chapter 14—a forever home, a place that we can actually go and be completely satisfied. That is what He is offering in these red letters. If you have your Bibles, John, chapter 14, verse 1 is where we are going to start.

I just want to give you a little bit of context as to what we are walking in to. When we pick up on this scene it is less than 24 hours away from Jesus being crucified. Jesus is spending an evening with His closest followers. They are sharing a meal together. He's giving them some incredible teaching. It is an amazing time.

Then the conversation begins to shift in chapter 13. Jesus reminds them again, for like the tenth time that He is about to leave them. But they can't accept this truth. They are like, "What? This is brand new information. We have never heard You say this before, Jesus. He's like, "No. I'm going to go, and you can't go where I am going. And they were like, "No. We can. It's literally our motto: Where You go we go."

Jesus doesn't budge. Look at what He says in chapter 13. Jesus says:

"And Jesus replied, 'You can't go with me now, but you will follow me later.'" John 13:36 (NLT)

You can't go with me. He's talking to a group of people who gave up everything to follow Him and to be with Him. They had placed their hope in Him. This is the One. This is going to be the Savior. This is going to be the King. This is One who will usher in the new world order. And now we are at the end and You're leaving?

There is confusion that fills the room. There is sadness even and there is a silence. The room completely shifts. And I believe that Jesus speaks into the silence. That's where we're going to pick up in John, chapter 14. Look at this in verse 1:

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am." John 14:1-3 (NLT)

So, they are all worried. They are confused. And Jesus brings some clarity to the situation. There is a lot that is packed into these three brief verses. And what I love about the Bible is even if you've never read the Bible before, you read that and there is some understanding that you get of what is happening, what Jesus is offering.

When you begin to understand the context that it is written in, the culture, and how this statement connects to the rest of Scripture, you really begin to see how beautiful the words that Jesus is offering really are.

You see, the language that He is using here is proposal language. It's wedding language. And a lot of that is missed on us because our cultures are very different.

What Jesus is saying here is, "Hey, don't think about Me leaving as abandoning you. The picture that I want you to have in your mind is one of a groom leaving before he comes back for the wedding ceremony. That's what is about to happen here.

Now, as you can imagine, the first century Jewish process was a lot different than ours today. There are some similarities but there are a lot of differences.

I was just thinking about this because we just hit it. We just passed it. We got engaged 14 years ago at the end of March—14 years ago. Let me show you a picture of what that looked like. And you thought I look young now. Look at that.

What I love about that shirt is that it was two-fold. It doubled as a shirt and then you could throw it over a picnic table too and you would be ready to go anytime.

But my wedding process probably looked a lot like yours where you propose, hopefully she says yes, and then you begin to plan the wedding. Then you have a ceremony that lasts a few hours. And then, hopefully, if everything goes right you both move out of your perspective places and move in together away from your parents' house.

Wedding Process

The proposal

The wait

The wedding

Their process was very different. It was three-fold. There was the proposal but then there was the wait and then there was the wedding. During that ancient time, this is the way that it would look. A groom and his father would show up for the proposal ceremony. They would go to the home of his future bride. And they would have a conversation with her father. In that conversation they would offer him money to have his daughter's hand in marriage.

Then the groom would actually leave her gifts to remind her of what is happening and to make sure that this was real. It happened. Remain faithful because I'm about to leave, but I'm coming back for you.

And then there would be the wait. This is where the future groom and his father would go back to the father's house. And he would add on a room or even a bigger wing to his father's house to prepare a place for his new life with his new bride.

Now, here's the thing. There was no set time. Usually it was about a year, but it could be a little bit more, it could be a little bit less. The bride never knew when the groom was



going to return. What she did is she remembered the gifts. She remembered the proposal. And she waited faithfully.

Here's the thing. Only the father could decide when the room was ready. Only the father could decide when the son could go back and get his bride, which makes sense. In the beginning, after he proposed, after she says yes, they are legally married, but they haven't been on their honeymoon, if you know what I mean.

So, you can imagine. This man is married, and he goes back to his house. He has to build a room. I'm guessing he was thinking he'd be done pretty quickly so that he could get back to being married. He would be coming to his dad saying, "I know this sounds crazy, but I'm done. I knocked the room out last night. We can go back and get her now."

And dad would go check out the room, "Son, there are not even four walls in this room. There are two walls." He's like, "Yeah, it's an indoor, outdoor situation I was trying to maximize. Can we go back and get her?" But it was only the father who could decide when it was time.

And when it was time, it was time for the wedding. The waiting was over. The father and the son would go back, and they would pick up the future bride and bring her back to their hometown and they would have a party.

Guys, our celebrations, our ceremonies are maybe a couple of hours. They feasted for seven days. The wedding ceremony lasted seven days. There was a feast.

That's the proposal language that Jesus is using here to describe what is about to happen. He's leaving. There is going to be a waiting period, but He wants to assure them that He will be coming back.

And this isn't new language. This is the wedding language between God and His people that shows up in the Old Testament. In Exodus, when God rescues His people out of Egyptian slavery, He has this conversation with them, He makes a covenant relationship. He said, "Hey, I'm going to be your God, and you are going to be my people. I'm going to be faithful to you and you are going to be faithful to Me."

The Bible even uses marriage language to describe our relationship. Look at James 4, chapter 4. He says:

"You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God?" (NLT)

Now, when do you use the word adultery? Well, it's when someone who is married doesn't live like they are married.

And maybe the clearest picture we get of the relationship that God wants with us is in Ephesians 5 where he is talking about Christian marriage. And we get this illustration that he uses within the mystery of marriage:

The church is the Bride of Christ

That's something. We try to downplay the seriousness of our relationship with God, but this is the only kind of relationship that Jesus has offered us. The church is not a group of people casually dating Christ, seeing other people on the side, giving our hearts to lesser things. That doesn't work. The church is the bride of Christ. That is who we are.

We have to live like that's the relationship that we are in. It doesn't make any sense otherwise. I can't be a married man, and say, "Hey, I'm a married man who lives like a single man." My wife would say, "You are a dead man." Right? Those two things can't co-exist at the same time. Either we're married or we are not.

Jesus came to propose, to offer Himself to me and you and for us to be faithful unto Him as long as we both shall live. That is the offer that Jesus is making to us—proposal language. And the followers get it on some level, but they still have some questions as to what this is going to look like. Look at verse 4, He says:

"And you know the way to where I am going.' 'No, we don't know, Lord,' Thomas said. 'We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?'" John 14:4-5 (NLT)

This beautiful language, this beautiful moment ruined by Thomas. Now, Thomas gets a bad rap. But I like Thomas. I feel like he is known for two things: doubting the whole resurrection, kind of a big deal, and then here when Jesus is laying out this teaching and he is going to be the groom, we are the bride, you get it, you know where I'm going. I'm going to My father's house. And Thomas is like, "I have no idea where You are going."

I feel like Thomas is heaven like, "I said other things. I said other things all of the time. You just never wrote them down. Thanks John. This is who I am? No."

What I like about Thomas is that he's honest. Jesus gives this speech, you know where I am going, and I'm guessing Thomas looked at the room and nobody knew what Jesus was talking about. Everyone kind of had this confused look.

But Thomas was the only one brave enough to be like, "Question. Time out. We don't know. We have no idea. You speak in riddles, parables. You answer all of our questions with questions. I have no idea where You are going. Tell us where You are going and tell us how to get there."

That's the thing. Show us the way. Show me the path and we will go. Look at how Jesus responds. It's probably, especially for our culture, one of the most offensive claims that Jesus makes when He says it. Look at this in verse 6:

"Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'" John 14:6 (NLT)

Wow. Now, what we're going to do is just break this down word by word, red letter by red letter. He's asking what's the way? How do I get there? And He's saying, "I am the way." I Am—if you've been around the past two weeks you know that this is a name of God. So, Jesus is saying, "I am God." And then the next one, "I am the way, the truth, the life. I am the only way. No one gets to the Father except through Me."

Now, our culture cringes at this exclusive claim. And maybe you kind of tense up when you hear that as well. Why can't we just keep it at Jesus is good. Jesus is our way. Why can't it be like Burger King and you can have it your way and I'll have it my way? Because that's not what Jesus offers.

Well, what does that mean about other religions? It says that they don't lead to God. They aren't completely true, and they don't have the power to save you from being eternally separated from God. There is only one name in heaven and on earth that has the power to do that, and His name is Jesus Christ.

We believe in exclusively when it matters, being inclusive goes out the window when it's matters of life and death. Right? If you were dying and you were looking for a doctor, would it be loving for me to tell you, "Anyone can be your doctor. Just look around. Pick one. Anyone can help you. Anyone can save your life."?

You're like, "No, they can't. He's an accountant. She's a teacher. He's a plumber. She's an electrician. That doesn't make any sense. If there is only one doctor in the room, point me to the doctor. If there is only one who can save me, point me to the one who can save me. If there is one way, one truth, and one life then point me to him."

And that's what Jesus is doing here. It's not cruel. It's not mean. It's not even offensive, it's truth. There is an exclusive nature to the claims of Jesus. There is no way around them. At the same time, it's the most inclusive of exclusive statements.

Think about how most of us live our lives. When we think about things of heaven and our forever home and who goes there and who goes here, most people live under this idea: Good people go to heaven, bad people go to hell. That seems fair to us. But that's one of the most exclusive worldviews that there is. It excludes all of the bad people. It excludes me and you.

So, are you telling me that if I grew up in a broken home, if I grew up and I'm just living out what I was taught, if I make some mistakes and I stumble through life and I'm considered bad, there is no hope for me? I'm eternally damned to hell.

No. That may be the message of the world, it may be the message that you heard. That is not the message that Jesus came to bring. Jesus changed the game when He makes it about Himself, when He says, "I am the way, not your morality." It is to be exclusive and inclusive at the same time. Here's what I mean:

Jesus is the only one who can save anyone, and He is willing and able to save everyone



That is the Good News of the gospel. No matter your past, no matter your culture, no matter your ethnicity, no matter your social class, no matter what you've done or what's been done to you, Jesus offers Himself to you. Jesus makes a way when there is no way. That's what He is saying when He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

So, let's just go one by one.

THE WAY

He's the way. What does Jesus mean when He says, "I am the way."? Well, this is more than what we get in the world or other religions. Usually there is someone who leads a way and says, "Hey, go this way. Follow this direction. Here is a map and it will show you the way."

That's what we want, isn't it? We want Jesus to give us a MapQuest print out. If you remember. "Just give me the MapQuest print out. I will follow it step by step. I'll turn left. I'll go right. You just tell me the way to go."

But that's not what Jesus offers. Christianity isn't about following a map or even a set of rules, it's about a relationship with Christ. If we spend our whole life looking at a map, we would miss the person of Jesus who is right in front of us.

Religion says: do this, follow the map, keep going. Maybe one day you will arrive at your destination.

Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished." You have already arrived. You are home. God did the heavy lifting. God came to earth and made a way where there was no way. Our God is a way maker carving out a path for you and for me, not based on morality but based on the finished work of Jesus Christ. If there is anybody here who wants to celebrate that today, this is the moment.

We all have a way that we live life. Jesus offers a very unique way.

THE TRUTH

We all have a truth that we live by. And here's what this means when Jesus says, "I am the truth," it's not just that He is the truth, it doesn't just mean that He never lied, what it means is, "What I offer you is the truest, most real, most reliable thing that you can build your life on."

We try to make a home in all of the wrong places. We try to build up and acquire all of these things because we think this is true. If we could just have this, if we could just have that then we will have purpose, "I will have meaning in life, I will be enough."

And what Jesus says is, "I am the meaning of life. I am the purpose of life. I am the only one who is trustworthy. Everything else will eventually fail you or break you. But being in



a relationship with Me is the whole thing and it is the only thing that will satisfy the deepest desires of your heart. I am the truth.”

Do you have that? What is the truest thing? What is the thing that you look to that tells you that you are home, that tells you that you are satisfied? What is the thing that you are building your life around? And if that is true, if you have that, everything else will be okay.

Jesus says, “Whatever you put in that place will eventually fail you. I’m the only one.”

THE LIFE

And then He says, “I am the life. I am the source of life. It is me.” It was God who breathed life into us, who got this whole thing going. It is God who sustains life by giving us air every single day. And it is God who offers eternal life. No one can get to the Father except through Jesus.

And He’s offering a quality of life. We think that quality of life comes when we acquire more, we get this, or stop having this struggle, or this pain. He says, “No, no, no. It will only come—the riches, the best, the good life can only be found in My name because I am the life.”

What a claim. What a moment that Jesus is having with His followers, “I am the way, I am the truth, and the life. You don’t need to look any further. I’m right here. Come through Me. I’m the only one who can take you back to the Father’s house.”

But what if I told you that it still wasn’t enough? What if I told you His followers still needed a little bit more? If you need some comfort, if you struggle with faith, if you struggle with believing and wanting just one more thing, then you will give your life to Jesus, you are in good company.

It’s not Thomas this time. It’s Philip who speaks up. And look at what he says:

“Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” John 14:8 (NLT)

“That’s great. You have another new way. That’s great that there is truth that we can live by. That’s great that You are the one who has life. But what would really be helpful in this moment, what would remove any doubt from us (right guys?) is if God the Father were beamed down in this moment. If we could just see Him for a second, then we will be satisfied.”

But it’s just not true. What he’s asking for is what all of us ask for. Just remove any room for faith. “God, give me an air-tight thing. If I could just see it then I would believe it.”

But it’s just not true. That’s not what Jesus gives Philip. And I’m just going to go out on a limb and says it’s probably not what Jesus is going to give you. Look at how He does respond in verse 9:

“Jesus replied, ‘Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?’” John 14:9-10 (NLT)

This is what Jesus is getting to. “You’re trying to separate Me from God, you’re trying to make it seem like I am a way to get to God. I am God.” That is what Jesus is saying.

He’s saying, “Philip, you’ve read the story of how God spoke creation into existence. I was the narrator. It was my voice that spoke.” Jesus makes the invisible God visible. And Jesus says, “If you have seen Me you have seen the Father.” That’s powerful.

But I’ll tell you what scared me when I was reading this. What kind of haunts me a little bit. What He says to Philip, “If you had really known Me.”

You get this picture that Philip is not a guy who is just on the side of the road. He’s been with Jesus. He has seen the miracles. He’s seen Jesus heal. He’s seen Jesus resurrect people. He’s heard the teachings. He’s seen the blessing, but He still hasn’t made the connection that this is really God. He was so close but so far at the same time.

So, for all of my people who consider themselves a Christian, I hope that you take these words and really examine them. You can know about Jesus but not know Him personally. You can come to Him for a way that you want, a truth that you want, a life that you want, but if it’s not what He is offering, then you could be so close but really the farthest from God.

That tells me that you can sit in church but not know Jesus. That tells me that you can know your way to group but not know what it is like to be a part of the body of Jesus Christ.

You know your way to church, but not to the foot of the cross where you really come to terms with the fact that the only way to get there, the only reason you have a relationship with God is because of all that He has done.

Maybe you know your way around the Bible, but you don’t know the voice of God. Do you know Jesus? Maybe you’re like, “How can I know?”

Here’s a question that I would ask you to really sit on this this week:

When someone asks you about Jesus, how do you describe Him?

Do you describe Him relationally or do you describe Him historically? When you talk about Jesus does it sound like a book report that you’re giving on a biography that you just read?

You're spitting facts about who Jesus is: He was born in Bethlehem; Son of Mary and Joseph; started His ministry at the age of 30; did some miraculous things; went to a cross. Is it all about the facts?

I would just say, it should probably sound more like wedding vows. Have you ever been at a wedding where someone moved from the traditional vows?

They said, "We're going to write our own." And in this moment they stand up in front of all of the people and they share the deepest, most intimate things about this other person, what they love, what you couldn't get out of a book, but it's how it has affected them personally and how they love—their love story.

Is that how you talk about Jesus? Is it out there? Is it historical? Is it facts and figures? Or is it personal? Is it, "I lived most of my life not believing in God, not really thinking I needed God, I was doing my own thing, going my own way.

Until one night when I sat down having a conversation in my Pontiac Grand Am GT, five percent tint so you couldn't see in through the window. You couldn't see in, but Jesus was in that conversation. And this woman began to describe to me the gospel, that Jesus was the Son of God. That God sent Him here for me.

And I remember sitting there in that moment believing, wanting it to be true. It was the most beautiful thing that finally satisfied who I was and what I was trying to do my way. I lived under this premise that if I could just be a little bit better, if I could do more, then I could make everyone happy.

Take it a step further. If I could be better, I could even take away some of the pain from the people who I loved most. And I was silently dying underneath the weight of it all. I couldn't do it. It never mattered what I did. I couldn't be perfect.

And in this moment, in this conversation, when I heard about what Jesus had done, that He truly dealt with it, not in the superficial way that I was trying to, but He came to earth, and He paid the penalty for my sin and my debt. He removed everything that was keeping me from coming home to the Father. And He did it willingly just because He loved me. I never felt so loved and so known.

And from that day on, I have given my life to Jesus. I've imperfectly done it. I have messed it up a ton along the way, but He has remained faithful to me. And even in the waiting I believe with all of my heart that He has left me with gifts that He will not leave me alone. He will never forsake me or abandon me. I hold on to the day when He returns and a new heaven and a new earth emerge. I believe I will be with Him for eternity.

It's personal. You can know a bunch of things about a bunch of people. I know a lot about Denzel Washington. I know that's not even his name. His name is Denzel, but his dad's name was Denzel as well, so his mom got confused, "Stop, one of you now is Denzl one of you is Denzel."

I know that he was a trash man. I can tell you most of his movies. I could quote most of his movies. But I do not know Denzel Washington and he does not know me.

But I can tell you about Jesus. I know Jesus. I can tell you about my wife. I know my wife. Do you know Jesus? Here's why it matters. Here are some more red letters.

Matthew, chapter 7, verse 22. Jesus says:

"On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' But I will reply, 'I never knew you.'" Matthew 7:22-23 (NLT)

Got all the way through life, they did amazing things for God, but they never knew Him and He didn't know them. So, I just want not to scare you, but I want to sober you up to the reality that it's not just going through the motions, it's not doing what I think I should do.

How can I know Jesus?

He's offering it to you right here.

Believe that Jesus is God

You will approach the relationship very differently. But it begins with that. Do you believe that Jesus is God? That's what He is getting to all over John 14, "Believe that I and the Father are one. Believe that I am God." Because once you get to that place, you have to know Him.

It's no longer just your way and His way coming together in this hybrid. It is His way or no way. And, "I need to know the way. I need to know the path. So, I'm going to stick as closely to You so as You whisper the way to go I know where to go." It's completely different, "I have to know You. I'm dependent on knowing You, the truth."

We all grew up with different truths. If we could just have that if we could just have this, "I'm going to build my life around this." That was the truest thing about me until Jesus.

What He says about you is the truest thing about you. Until the life He has called you to is the most important, what you value more than anything else, you won't really know Him because you don't have to.

But when you know that He's the only one with the keys, when He's the only one who can offer what He's offering, He's the only one who has the truth, then, "I'm going to look at You differently. I'm going to desire You differently. I'm going to know You differently."

And when life isn't just about what we make it, life isn't just about what I can get out of this world, when I realize life is not just now, but it will go on eternally, either with God the Father or separated from Him for all eternity, it begins to change the way we go

through life. It begins to change the way we look at life. It's a little bit different. Things that we used to think were important are not so important.

I can get a whole lot of life. I can be good at life. I can acquire a bunch of stuff, but at the end of the day, when I see that Jesus is the only one who offers this kind of life, I'm going to get to know Him a little bit better.

And it's when we believe that He is the way, the truth, and the life, that we come to know Him. Do you know Jesus? Do you want to know Jesus?

What I would say too is, I believe there are a bunch of people here today who want a relationship with Him. And I just want you to know that He wants a relationship with you. He has proposed to you. That is on the table for everyone.

And we're in the waiting season right now, from the time that Jesus came the first time until He comes back again. But He did not leave us empty handed. He left us with some very specific gifts that He lists in John, chapter 14. Look at what He says in John, chapter 14. He says:

"If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth." John 14:15-17 (NLT)

So, on this way that you are going, when you are trying to decipher what is true and what is real, what is false and what is reality, God is saying, "Hey, in the waiting I'm not going to leave you alone. I'm actually going to give you My Holy Spirit. That is you finding home in God, He is going to make a home in you. You are going to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. You will not be left alone. "You have Me to strengthen you along the way."

And look at the gift that He offers in verse 27, for those who wait, He says:

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid." (NLT)

If you are going through your life waiting for that thing or that person to bring you peace of heart and of mind, I just want to say, "You were made for more." There is nothing in this earthly world that will be able to provide that kind of peace. It is only through Jesus.

That is what He offers to you today, in this moment in real time. And when you place your faith in Him, those are the gifts that you will get. And then we spend our lives waiting faithfully on the Lord. We are His.

We have hope. We know that one day that the groom is going to return. We know one day that there is going to be a heavenly celebration. And in Jewish culture it sounds amazing—they party for a week; it was a feast for a week. In heaven the party never ends. It is a constant feast, a constant prayer session where we finally feel at home.



And like I said, I just want to invite you into that relationship where you can begin to know Jesus. Here's the thing. He's done all of the heavy lifting. What you have to decide is, "Am I willing to lay down my ways? Am I willing to lay down my truth? Am I willing to step into the life that Jesus has for me, not just one day in eternity but right now in this moment?"

If that's you, what we want to do across all of our campuses right now is to invite you into a time of prayer where you can make that relationship yours. Jesus is proposing to you, and you get to respond.

We already know what He's done. He came here to propose. And He didn't get down on one knee, He was raised on a cross showing what it looks like to propose to those who He loves.

But He didn't remain dead. You see, He would go to the cross. He would pay the ultimate price. And it wouldn't be diamonds, it wouldn't be a ring, He would shed His very blood for me and for you.

And then, three days later He would rise proving He had power over sin and death. And on that other side He said, "I will return. And I will bring you to your forever home. I will bring you to the space that your heart longs for that nothing in this world can satisfy. It is only in Me and Me alone." That is what you can respond to today.

So, right where you are, no need to move, just close your eyes bow your heads and pray this prayer with me.

Father, we believe that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. I pray right now, and for all of those who want to pray this with me, please do so.

Jesus, I believe that You are the way. God, I could never make my way to You, You had to come to me. I can't be good enough. But God, You came for me while I was a sinner, while I was Your enemy You died for me. Jesus, I repent. I turn from all of the ways that I used to live, and I turn to You, and I trust that You are the truth.

God, I trust that You are the only One who is strong enough to lead me. I trust that You are the only One who I can truly build a life on. Jesus, I trust, I believe that You came to bring life and life eternal. And I believe that that starts right now. So, Jesus, I believe in Your name, I believe in Your works, I believe in the resurrection.

Jesus, we pray all of this in Your perfect and holy name. And the church said: Amen. Amen.

Hey, can we celebrate everyone who made that decision today? If that was you, at all of our campuses, that's an incredible thing. Don't leave here without talking to someone, But also, your best first step is going to be to get baptized next weekend, Easter weekend. Hold onto that. Okay?



Right now, in this moment, we are going to worship. So, everyone at all of the campuses would you stand to your feet? Because there is one name above all names. There is one name that stole the sting from death itself. And we are going to celebrate and worship in the name of Jesus right now with every voice lifted. Let's worship together.

