

Well, let's take our Bibles and turn to acts chapter 10. Acts chapter 10:34. Would you stand in honor of God's word? We're going to read the inspired inerrant, sufficient, eternal word of the living God. We're going to break into a story in the book of Acts, the Apostle. Peter is addressing Cornelius and his household and he's going to tell them about the events of Easter. There's a phrase in this passage that will become a springboard for what I want to talk about this morning. Peter will describe Jesus as the Lord of all. That's a phenomenal statement. Jesus is the Lord of all. All that's going on in your life, all of life. And I want to remind you of that this morning in a message I've entitled, it's all under control. Just understand this Easter, whatever is going on in your life, whatever seems out of control, it's all under control because he's Lord of all.

Listen, acts 10:34, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, in truth, I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation whoever fears him and works righteousness is accepted by him. The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all. That word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea and began from Galilee after the baptism, which John preached. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

And we are witness to all things which he did in the land of the Jews in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. Him, God raised up on the third day and showed him openly not to all the people, but to witness his chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that it is he who was ordained by God to judge the living and the dead. To him all the prophets witness that through his name, whoever believes in him will receive remission of sins."

You may be seated. I want to speak this morning in the subject, it's all under control. It was sad of Michelangelo, the Great Renaissance painter that [inaudible 00:02:45] his fellow artists concerning their depictions of the Lord Jesus in art. He said to them, "Why do you always paint him on the cross? Why not rather paint him standing by an open tomb? Why do you always paint him as the victim? Why don't you paint him rather as the victor?" I like that. I like the perspective and passion of Michelangelo. He wants to see a triumph in Christ, not a tragic Christ.

He's troubled by how Jesus has been portrayed in art and so am I. Whether on canvas or on the silver screen, you'll see that the Lord Jesus is often portrayed in the Easter story as weak, as victimized, as a petty full figure. What we see gains our sympathy, but it doesn't Marshall our worship. Jesus is often presented as some political football who was mercilessly kicked between Herod and Pilate. In his suffering and in his scourging he seems to be the play thing of Roman soldiers. He's at the mercy of Jewish authorities. Albert Schweitzer, along with others tell us that his dreams and desires died on the cross with him. Yes, the presentation leaves us with sympathy for Jesus, but doesn't call us to worship. That's a caricature or by the way of the Easter story. I'm not denying that he was acquainted with grief.

I'm not denying that Jesus was weak, beaten, and bloodied and brutalized on the cross, but I want you to understand that's not the truth. It's not the whole truth. It's anything but the truth. The real truth is that Jesus is the Lord of Easter. The Bible is going on around him on what was happening to him was not out of control, but under his control. The events didn't spiral out of control. His hopes didn't die in his death. Man weren't the leading actors in the drama of the crucifixion. Christ was not a victim. He was a victor. That's how Peter presents them here. Doesn't he? To Cornelius and Cornelius's household, he does talk about how Jesus was killed by hanging on the tree. But he does talk about the fact that God

raised him the third day and that Jesus showed himself openly to many of his followers because you see, Christ is Lord. He's the Lord of all.

So when you and I look at the events of Easter, while at times things seem to be out of control, you and I need to realize that things were all was under his control. He was the Lord of all. And I want that to be a message you take home with you this morning. The Lord Jesus [inaudible 00:05:58], the Lord Jesus defeated the devil, the Lord Jesus apprehended the human story. Jesus died within the will of God. Jesus fulfilled prophecy. Jesus defeated death. Jesus showed himself to be the lord of life and the sovereign over the grave. And you know what? You and I need to hear that. We need to know that he's Lord of all. He's Lord over all that's happening to you and to me, because at times life seems overwhelming and out of control. Our health can seem out of control.

Diseases can run a mark in our bodies, sales don't cooperate, and they can take life from us. Our homes can seem out of control. Some of you here this morning might be dealing with a disobedient spouse, a prodigal child, both who are beyond the reach of reason. We look at in our country and there seems to be chaos. It's forecast that 1 million people will try to cross our border this year. There are sanctuary cities who are defying federal law. Washington is in stalemate, Pickering rules today, the people's houses forgot the people. You look inside you and your motions are a raging sea of turmoil and terror. Things can seem out of control in life, but Peter would remind us that Jesus is Lord, Lord of all, Lord of all that. Lord of all that you're going through and never will go through. So I want to come and take you on a journey through the Easter story to remind you that it's all under control.

I want you to see as Michelangelo challenged his fellow artists, we need to present him not as a victim, but as a victor. I want to just suggest several words that will tell us the story and as I suggest them, I want you to see that Jesus is Lord. The first word that comes to mind this morning is time. Jesus was Lord of all. Jesus was lord of his final days. Read the story of Easter. Jesus was in complete control of his last days. Events didn't overtake him, death did not sneak up on him and surprise him. No, that's not the case. In fact, in Matthew 26:1-5, he'll tell his disciples that in two days he'll be crucified. He prophesied his own death. He knew that in two days he would be betrayed, arrested and crucified.

Earlier in Matthew 16:21, we read that Jesus told his disciples that indeed at some point they would have to go up to Jerusalem. There he would be arrested, there he would be put on trial, there he would be killed. But on the third day he would rise again. Note to self, Jesus predicted his death in two days. Then he predicts his resurrection three days after that. So the point that I'm taking it's a very simple point, Jesus is Lord of all times. His time, your time, anytime. In fact, one of the little phrases to describe the whole Easter story in John's Gospel, [inaudible 00:09:34] the hour. Several times in the Jesus story, he'll say, the hour has not yet come. It's not time for me to die. It's not time for me to go up to Jerusalem. It's not time for me to surrender to the cross. But then we come to the passion week and when he's praying in the upper room on the Thursday night, what did we read in John 17:1?

"Father, the hour has come. Now you glorify yourself through me. And when it's done, restore unto me the glory I had before this all began at the incarnation." This is the great truth to take home with you this Easter, that Jesus is Lord of all your days, just as he was lord of all his days. Do you realize the Bible says it all, your days are written down in God's book before you were formed? God knows your life. He's got your life in a book. All the days you'll live and what are in those days, the good, the bad, the ugly, the laughter, the tears, the gains, the losses, the advances, the retreats, they're all written down in his book. Doesn't the Bible say in the Book of Psalms, our times are in his hands. It's a wonderful truth that life's

not a roll of the dice, that history is not a runaway train, that Jesus is Lord of history. Your history, his history, history.

Every day that dawns, dawns with God's permission. And every day we enter upon is a day that God has planned for you and for me. It doesn't mean that he's directly involved in all that happens to us because God is not the author of evil or sin should it be perpetrated against us. But it does mean that even indirectly, he is governing not and God is aligned not to happen and God is going to do something through that in your life. He makes everything beautiful in his time. Ecclesiastes 3:11. So here's what I want to challenge you before we move on. You've got to trust the Lord at all times and then you've got to trust God's timing as you trust him at all times. It's not easy to wait. I don't like waiting, you don't like waiting. But waiting is part of life, especially the drive, the 91 freeway, but waiting is part of life.

Whether it's standing at a checkered, whether it's standing to get into the movies, whether it's sitting in traffic. Whether it's waiting on God to fulfill a promise, to hear a prayer. Waiting is never easy, but it's something we must do it. It's not a call to passivity, but it is a call to patience. I like what Warren Wiersbe said, "Your times are in his hands. God is the one who winds the clock of life, and his timing is never off." Think about that. The eternal God who lives outside of time, who's not a prisoner to time, who created time is always on time. Never early, never late. He just shows up at the right moment. I'll give you a couple of verses to think about. God was true at Bethlehem. Galatians 1:4, "In the fullness of time, God sent forth his own son."

Jesus came at the right appointed time, at the perfect moment. God was punctual at Bethlehem. We read in Romans 5:6 that "In due time, Christ died for the ungodly." Christ died at that exact moment. In fact, if you go back to Matthew 26:1-5 he says, "I'll die two days later, which is Passover." How ironic that Jesus would die on Passover. God's perfect time. In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. He was the Passover lamb who would die so that we would never face eternal death, hell, and damnation. God's punctual at Bethlehem. God's punctual at calvary. God's punctual at Pentecost. Write down next two verses one to four, look up later. When the Holy Spirit comes, he comes right at the right moment because it says, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, God sent the Holy Spirit."

My friend, God's never late. God's never early. God's all was on time. Now, you need to hear that because right now some of you are pacing up and down life looking at your watch going, Lord, where are you? You're waiting on God to do something. Give him time. Trust him at all times and trust his timing at all times. Don't try and get a jump on God. Listen to Warren Wiersbe once more. "When God is at work, he works with calmness and precision, not with haste and carelessness." There are several men in the Bible who became impulsive and run ahead of God. They paid dearly for their mistakes. Moses rushed ahead of God's will and killed an Egyptian and it cost him 40 years of waiting in the wilderness. Peter rushed ahead of God's will and cut off a man's ear, and Jesus had to heal that man or Peter would have lost his life.

Abraham run ahead of God and married Haggai, and their son, Ishmael brought trouble to their home. It's always at the interesting to run ahead of God. That's why the psalmist says, "Don't be like the mule and don't be like the horse. Don't hold back on God, but don't jump ahead of God." It's very tempting to try and get a jump on God, to run ahead of his perfect will for your life. To be unwilling to wait for his perfect answer at the perfect time.

Reminds me of a story I think I've told you before of the guy who was never late. He took pride in his punctuality. He would set the alarm every morning at 6:30, he'd get up, he'd get washed, he'd get

shaved, he'd put on his clothes, he'd go downstairs, he'd cook himself some breakfast. He'd get himself a cup of joe. He would grab his briefcase, he would would get into the car, and he would drive down to the ferry port. He'd get get on the ferry, a ticket across the water to down time. He'd walk a few blocks. He'd then take the elevator to the seventh floor of his office building. Not at 7:15, 7:00, not at 8:01, but at 8:00 o'clock, he would sit down at his desk every day like clockwork.

Until one day he slept in, woke up in a panic, time was short, just threw some water on his face, nicked himself shaving, put his clothes on, gobbled down a little bit of breakfast, grabbed a cup of coffee for the car, jumped in his car, drove like a madman, down to the ferry port. Gets to the dock side and realizes that the ferry is about 12 feet away from the dock. Realizes he might miss the ferry, realizes he won't make his appointment, realizes he's going to take a chance. And so he runs and takes a leap across the water lawns on the deck of the ship. Everybody's looking around and go, that's crazy. The captain comes down and said, "Sir, are you okay? I saw everything from the bridge. What were you thinking? You could have killed yourself. And if you had waited one minute, we would have docked, and you could have walked on."

The joke's on us because we like sometimes to get a jump on God. We're not willing to wait for his answer to come in his time, in his way. But just remember, Jesus is Lord of all. He's Lord of time. In two days, they'll crucify me and three days after that, I'll rise. He was lord over his final days. He's Lord over your days. Here's another word, traitor, traitor. Jesus is Lord of all, and he was Lord over the betrayal of Judas. That wasn't something that took Jesus by surprise. What was unknown to the disciples was known to Jesus. There was a rat among them. You know that story, it's Thursday night. It's the upper room. Jesus is celebrating Passover. Jesus is establishing the Lord's supper. Jesus tells them about the coming of the Holy Spirit in his absence. And in the middle of that, he drops a bomb. Now, one of you will betray me. One of you is a rat.

Now, they all look around amusingly. I would've thought, but this [inaudible 00:18:35] all just turn around. Hey Judas, we knew it was you. But you know what, the Bible tells us they all started asking, Lord, is it I? Is it me? Jesus said said, no. I'll tell you who it is. It's the one to whom I give this bread. And in both Matthew 26:20-25 and in John 13:21-30, you have this incident where Jesus takes a piece of bread, dips it in the sauce, and he hands it to Judas. And the game is up. Then it says that Judas goes out, and it's night. Jesus has said to him what you do, do quickly. And he goes out into the night. And that's just a dramatic notation in the biblical record. It wasn't just night physically, Satan had entered Judas's heart and for him it was eternal night. He was the son of perdition. He would be damned because of his betrayal of Jesus Christ.

But I want you to see that Jesus knew what the disciples didn't know. He wasn't surprised. He's Lord of all, Lord of time, Lord of the traitor. In fact, they will leave that upper room. They will cross the Kidron valley, and they will go to a garden called Gethsemane. And there the Lord Jesus will surrender afresh to the will of the father. "Father, I pray that you'll take this cup from me, but if not, you're will be done." And somewhere late Thursday night, maybe end of the early hours of Friday morning, the piece of that garden is disturbed because Judas comes now haven't got his 30 pieces of silver. You can read about this in John 18:1-11 and Matthew 26:47-56. He comes to betray the Lord Jesus with a kiss, which has lived on an infamy, the Judas kiss. Betraying of a friend.

And he comes with a detachment of soldiers, says the biblical text. A cohort, that could mean upwards of 600 Roman soldiers. Our research tells us that. Now, on the low end, it could mean 200. Let's just split it right down the middle 300. A cohort at the attachment of Roman soldiers. We believe along with

them come some temple guards and others and Judas. And they come with torches, lanterns, clubs, swords, and they come to arrest the Lord Jesus Christ. But remember, he's Lord of all. He's Lord of time, and he's Lord of the traitor. And I want to show you that they come to arrest Jesus, but before they arrest him, as he allows them to, he arrests them. His power and glory is put on display. Because in John 19:6 we read it, "As the soldiers approached him to arrest him, it says they fell back.

Literally, they fell over. They staggered back, almost like dominoes falling. 300 soldiers rank upon rank falls back. It's as if they had a force field. It's as if they walked into an invisible wall. They were being reminded who's in charge of this scene. There's only one person truly in charge, and that was the Lord of all. What about Jesus displaying his power again in the middle of this arrest? When he heals the ear of Malchus? You know the story. In Luke 23:49-51 where Peter tries to cut off the servant's head. You say, pastor, the text doesn't tell us that. Well, it tells us he cut off his ear. You actually think that Peter said, you know what, I'm going to cut off his ear. No, I think he tried to cut off his head. The guy ducked, and he got his ear. And Jesus heals his ear, showing his power, Lord of all.

And then he tells Peter to put up his sword because he says, "Peter, look, I could call 10,000 angels and they would come and set me free. I don't need you or your sword. I can take care of myself. I'm Lord of all, which includes the angel armies." And then in John 18:8-9, you have one more thing. He actually starts commanding. He starts commanding those who'd come to arrest him. He says to them, you know what, you can take me. Because the soldiers are all back on their feet. They now make an approach to Jesus and this time that doesn't happen because Jesus is submitting to them willfully. But he says, hey, take me and not my disciples go. And you know what the text tells us, they were allowed to go. Not one of the disciples was arrested with Jesus. Now, most of them flee. And then we know that Peter follows him afar off into the place where he is put on trial and there are Peter denies the Lord. Don't forget that Jesus told us he would deny him, the Lord of all. What's the point?

They couldn't catch Jesus by surprise and even in their attempt to arrest him, they are arrested by his glory and his power. I want to read a verse to you that's fascinating. I need to move on, but we don't want to move past as quickly. In John 18:1-4, John tells us the story of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus. And in verse four we read this, "Jesus therefore knowing all things that would come upon him, went forward and said to them" that's Judas' soldiers, the temple guards, and anybody else. "Who are you seeking?" He knew that Judas was going to betray him. He knew that he was going to be arrested, tried and killed. Just that little phrase, Jesus knowing all things. He's the Lord of all. Jesus knows all things. Doesn't Peter acknowledge that in John 21:17 when Jesus after his resurrection, asked him, Peter, do you love me? And Peter has to say it several times, almost three affirmations for three denials?

But there's that little phrase where Peter almost seems to be getting a little frustrated and it's kind of, Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you. Do you know that, that Jesus knows all things? Remember that scene back in John 6:6, feeding of the 5,000? It's been a long day. The people are tired, they're hungry, there is no Walmart in sight. And Jesus said, "Hey, what are we going to do?" And the disciples all looking at each other, scratching their head. I mean, Where would we get bread and water to feed 5,000 people? But you know what it says in John 6:6? I love this verse. I've gone to it many times when life has left me scratching my head, when there's a mystery to God's providence over my life, and I don't know what he's truly up to. I'd like to know, but I need to keep reminding myself, his ways are not my ways, and his thoughts are higher than my thoughts. I don't want to go out small enough to fit into my head.

And it says there that Jesus tested them, but he knew what he was going to do. That's something most beautiful that you can lay over your life. Whatever it is that's troubling you, whatever question is bothering you right now, he knows what he's going to do. He knows what he's going to do without hurt, that pain, that choice, that decision, that situation you're in. You may not know, and you may not be able to know what he's up to, but he knows what he's up to. I remember hearing Johnny Hunt, Southern Baptist preacher say that it's never left me since he said it. "Has it ever occurred to you that nothing has ever occurred to God?" What's the implication? God learns nothing. God discovers nothing. All that there is to know past, present and future God knows. God knows what the future is. He is our ordained future.

All our days are written down in his book. Our times are in his hand. He's Alpha and Omega. He knows the stars, and he knows them by number and by name. Think about that. He knows the end from the beginning. He knows our thoughts afar off. He knows when we sit down and when we rise up. Psalm 139, nothing causes his attention. I like what [inaudible 00:27:15] says, "Because God knows all things perfectly. He knows nothing better than any other thing, but all things equally well. He never discovers anything. He has never surprised. Never amazed." God's never amazed. Now, I am, you are. There are days in our life given a situation in life. I'll tell you what you and I say, I never saw that coming. Life has an ability to sneak up behind us and bite us, you know where. And it surprises us, and it overwhelms us and over takes us, but God discovers nothing. Nothing amuses him. He knows all things and in the middle of it all, he's working all things together for good.

Jesus is Lord of all. He's Lord of his final days. He's Lord over the heart, and the evil intent perpetrated by Judas because the devil had entered Judas's heart. This was an act of treachery, but Jesus knows all things. He's always one move ahead. Whatever man has done, whatever hell is doing. I remember doing a little study one day just thought that he knows. And then first it started to come into my mind. He knows our [inaudible 00:28:44] and he remembers that we are but dust. That's a promise in God's word. He knows our body. It's weakness. It's frailty. Remember the Job's story. Job says he knows the way I tick and when I come forward or fourth, I will be as gold. God's doing something in the furnace of affliction. The road called suffering is a path purposed by him. What about Jesus' statement in the Lord's prayer? He knows the things you have need of before you ask. That's wonderful.

Now, Jesus is isn't saying that so that you don't pray. Well, since the Lord knows, I don't need to tell him. That's not the point. The point is, as you tell him know that he knows, and he's able to answer your prayer. Because he knows all things and can do all things. And then in Revelation 2:16 we read, "Jesus says to the church at Pergamum, I know where you dwell. Even where sitting is." It's an amazing statement. A little church like beads in the wood, surrounded by the wolves of a pagan culture, frightened for perhaps, feeling outnumbered perhaps. And Jesus writes to them, I know where you dwell. I've got your address in my book. I see your home, your street. I see you coming out and I see you going in. I see the enemies that surround you, I know where you dwell. Even where sitting is.

I remember using that verse in the life of amount and my first church, [Hughes Spratt 00:30:29]. He was a good soul. He was tender soul. He had a propensity to depression, [inaudible 00:30:39] emotionally, never could quite understand why he became a policeman, given his death possession, but he did. I intervened several times in his life. One time he was so depressed he was on suicide watch, and we had to take his service revolver off him. At another time, he was told that he was on an IRA hitlist. Intel was good. The IRA was setting him up for an assassination. He lived just around the corner from June and I and the girls. And we loved Hughes and his family. And the Spratt's we're often in our house, and we were in their house and when that came down, that was like a [shriek 00:31:18] over that home. That

means he was being targeted. That means they knew where he lived. That means they had followed him. Working out the best time to kill them.

I remember getting into the home that day and reading Revelation 2:13. Hughes, Sheila was his wife. Hey, Hughes, Sheila, he knows where you dwell, even where sitting is. God's watching over your little home, God's guarding your life, brother. The IRA won't touch you in as God permits that. The angel of the Lord in comes to bid those that fear him, Jesus will never leave you or forsake you, Hughes, Sheila, he knows where you dwell. They might know, but he knows that he is greater than they, that the peace of God that passes all understanding guards your heart. And stand [inaudible 00:32:15] your door.

Here's another thing. Time, traitor, tree, tree. The story moves forward. We could have looked at trial. We could have looked at that moment when Pilate judge the Lord Jesus Christ, but before the day was done, Pilate had a sneaking suspicion that he had just been on trial and Jesus was making a judgment about all his judgements. Pilate's conscience bothered him. His wife told him to leave this good man alone. He tried to get himself off the hook by reminding the Jews that he releases a prisoner every year. He was hoping that they would pick Jesus, but they pick Barabbas and they said, crucify Jesus. And in an act of cowardice, in a moment of expediency, Pilate washes his hands off the Lord Jesus and hands them over to be crucified. By the way, Jesus was in charge of that all, wasn't he? Remember how Pilate comes in says, you know what, they want you killed. And it says in John 19, Jesus said nothing. And Pilate goes, hey, are you listening? I have the power to let you go or you could be killed. And Lord of all, what does Jesus say?

"You couldn't do anything to me except that power be given to you." And again, Pilate is reminded, I wonder who's on trial. Him or me? And by the way, my friend, that's always the case. Jesus has been tried by men. Jesus has been crucified by men. They took him with wicked hands and hung them on a tree. His trial is over. Our trial is still to come, it's called the judgment. And he who judged Pilate, will judge you and me and we won't be able to wash our hands off the Lord Jesus. He's not gone. He's coming. Lord of all, and every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is lord. Do it now and be saved. Don't do it now and be lost. But on a comeback, time, traitor, trial, tree, we're talking about his crucifixion.

Pilate hands him over to be crucified. The Roman soldiers bring them to that place. It looks like a skull called Golgotha. We call it Calvary. And there they crucified the Lord Jesus Christ in the morning. Across the next six hours, he'll say seven things. The sixth of those will be in the afternoon after the darkness. He'll say, it is finished, it is finished. And then we read in Matthew 27:50, "And Jesus yielded up his spirit." That's the thing I want to focus on for a moment. Jesus yielded up his spirit. He submitted himself to death. He embraced death. The language there that Matthew uses suggests that deliberate act. Having born our sin, having suffered in our place. Having said it is finished paired for Jesus now dismisses or yields up his spirit. I just want you to realize in the presence of death, Jesus bide in death, but Jesus didn't buy to death. Will come a day when you and I will buy to death.

No man has power in the day of his death. Death will kick us whether we're ready or not. Death will come and steal us from our loved ones and from life. We will have to be subject to death. But I want to remind you, the biblical text would remind us, Jesus didn't have to be subject to death. Why? Because the wages of sin is death. What does the Bible mean when it says that? It means you and I die not out of physical complications, we die because of moral disobedience. Because Adam sinned, death entered the world. Death is a human experience because of Adam's sin. Whatever's written on your death certificate doesn't tell the whole story, at the foot, know there will be he or she died because of sin, but Jesus

didn't need to subject himself to death because he hadn't sinned. [inaudible 00:37:02] subject himself to death because he died on purpose. He died for your sin and my sin.

What did we read in John 10:11, "I am the Good Shepherd and I lay down my life for the sheep." That explains his death. You've got to look behind Pilate and the Jewish authorities and the betrayal of Judas. They're all but actors in a wonderful drama of redemption. It is God who stands behind the cross. It is God that delivered up his son for us all. It is the Lord that bruised him. Yes, Jesus suffered at the hands of wicked men, but you need to realize he also suffered within the will of God because he was the lamb slain before the foundation of the earth. He was our sacrifice for sin. He was wounded for our transgressions. He poured out his soul unto death. Jesus died on purpose to pay for our sin, and that's why he subjected himself to death.

He wasn't subject to death. Death couldn't take him. He led us lifetime. He dismissed his spirit. Doesn't he say in John 11:17-18, "I lay in my lifetime, no man takes it. And I have the power to lay it down and I have the power to take it up. That can't be said of any man either before or after Jesus Christ. To understand Easter, you've got to look behind the cross for it's God and his love that stands behind it. He's Lord of all. He's even Lord in death because he dies on purpose. He dies at the right time on Passover. He dies for our sin. That's a wonderful truth. Alistair Begg, speaking at a class at the Masters Seminary a couple of years ago where I was said this, "Compared to other religions, Christianity is so different because they have skills. We have a cross." What did he mean by that? Do a comparative study of world religions and you'll see it's all about what man has to do to get God, what man has to do to atone for his sins.

But you come to Christianity and the amazing thing is that God has sent his son to die for us to atone for our sins. They have skills, we have a cross. And Jesus is Lord of all, submitted himself to death on your behalf and my behalf to pay for our sin. It is finished. One Greek word to tell us die. It is paid. That's why we read in Hebrews 1:3 that after he had purged our sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Here's the last word that comes to mind term. I'm trying to make an argument that Jesus is the Lord of Easter. I'm trying to make an argument that Jesus is Lord of all, which is such an encouragement to you and me this morning. This Lord over all that's going on in our lives and nothing proves that better than Easter.

He's not a victim, he's a victor. look at time, look at the traitor, look at the tree. Look at the tomb, it's empty. When they go looking in the tomb, the Angel reminds the ladies, "Why seek you the living among the dead?" Because remember what he said, no man takes my life. I lay it down. I not only have the power to lay it down, I have the power to take it back up again. But that's the beauty of Christianity.

Moses is dead. Confucius is dead. Mohammed is dead. Buddha is dead. But Christianity proclaims Jesus is alive. The resurrection is not merely important to Christianity. Without it there is no Christianity. It's what makes Christianity distinct. It's why Jesus can say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No Man to the father, but by me." Because he came from the father. He died for us within the will of the father. He has conquered the grave and returned to the father.

There's only one savior, there's only one name under heaven given among men whereby they might be saved. Moses can't save you, Confucius can't save you, Mohammed can't save you, Buddha can't save you, Jesus Saves. Jesus paid for our sin. He's has conquered the grave. That's why Christianity is the only religion in the world where it's adherence. Go to the tomb of its finder to make sure he's not there. Because if he's there, we're in a world of trouble. But he's not there and that's why he can say, "Let not your heart be troubled." I love what Peter says. We'll wrap this up. In the book of Acts, Chapter Two,

speaking on the day of Pentecost. Again, describing Easter events. Peter says, "Men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man tested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did through him in your midst. As you yourselves also know him being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God."

Listen, Jesus died on purpose. Jesus didn't die because Pilate surrendered him to the Jews. Jesus didn't die because Judas betrayed him to the authorities. Jesus died because God purposed it. "God so loved the world that he sent his son into the world to die for our sin, and to conquer the grave. So that whosoever believes on him should not perish." That's hell, my friend. Jesus preached hell. Jesus died so that you don't need to go there. But if you die without him, you'll go there. But if you believe in him, you will not perish but have ever lasting life. And here's what Peter goes on to say, "But you have taken by lawless hands having crucified and put to death whom God raised up having loose the pangs of death because it was not possible that he should be held by it."

I love that. It's our closing thought. It was impossible for death to hold him. If the police arrest someone, they've got about 24 hours, they either charge them or let them go. And after 24 hours, if they have been charged them, everybody has a right to say or let their lawyers say, you know what? If you're not going to charge my client, then let them go. My friend, it was impossible that death could imprisoned Jesus because death had no claim on him. Death couldn't charge him with sin. And after he carried our sin and died in our place, he stood up and walked out of death. To announce that because he lives, we can live also. He's the Lord of life, death can't hold him. Death had no claim and him, death had to let them go. And it's a wonderful thing this Easter to know that if we lay hold of him, death will never fully lay hold of us.

Let me tell you this story by way of challenge. E. Stanley Jones was a great missionary to India. He once visited the city of Copenhagen, and while he was there, a friend took him to the great cathedral there to see the statue or the sculpture of Jesus by the Great Danish sculptor, by the name of Thorvaldsen. It was a famous statue of Jesus where Jesus' hands are stretch out. He's looking down. And as Stanley Jones stood looking, his friend nudged him and said, "You'll never see his face unless you kneel at his feet." Because that's the way the statue had been sculpted. You'll never see his his feet unless you kneel at his feet. And so E. Stanley Jones gets down at the feet of Jesus, looks up into his face. And it's as if the arms of Jesus are gathering around him.

Well, my friend, as we close this morning, you will never see the face of Jesus, the Lord of Easter, unless you at his feet. Unless you surrender up every ill conceived and weak idea you have about him. He's not just a man, he's God. He didn't just live as an example. He died as our savior. He's not just a path to spiritual consciousness, he's the way, the truth, and the life, and you won't come to the father, but by him. You've got to surrender up your ill conceived and petty full ideas of by Jesus and acknowledge him as the Lord of Easter. You got to surrender up your fears of man. You got to stop punting the ball and acting like Pilate. You can't wash your hands of Jesus. He's not gone. He's coming back and every knee will bow and every tongue confess. You got to surrender your life, your future, your sin to him. He'll forgive your sin. He'll take charge of your life, and he'll promise you life eternal. You can't see his face unless you surrender. Surrender to the Lord of Easter.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for our time this morning. The magnificence of this season captures us afresh. The glory of its message, the truth of its events. We Marvel at you the eternal God, sent your son at the perfect time within history to die for our sin. We thank you that you're the Lord of time. And our times are in your hands. Lord, we may be forgiven to think that Jesus became a victim of Judas's hatred

and Judas's betrayal and the judgements of Pilate and Herod. But we realize that you delivered him up for us all. That he died on purpose, and he died for our sin.

Oh, God, we thank you that he stood up on that third day in the presence of death, and he walked out of the Valley of the shadow of death. And according to Revelation 1:18, he holds the keys of death and hell. He decides the future and the destiny of mankind. And so we pray for those of us that know him. May we bow afresh to his Lordship and may we allow him to lead us along paths of discipleship and obedience. And for those who are here who haven't crowned him the Lord of life, may they kneel and surrender their life to Jesus Christ for we pray and ask it in his name, Amen.