

Resurrection Q&A

By Don Green

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Truth Community Church
4183 Mt. Carmel Tobasco Road
Cincinnati, OH 45255

Website: truthcommunitychurch.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm

Well, the question on a day like today is really simple: what do you do with the resurrection? What will you do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Many have shown that it's an established historically verified fact. This is not a fable that we preach, this is not something that old women gathered together in a circle and made up, it's not a story that his disciples concocted after he was crucified. This really really happened and the question is what should you do, what will you do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

I want to make this simple this morning. I want to put the cookies on the bottom shelf, so to speak, to make it very accessible. Whether you're a seasoned saint or whether you're new to the things of Christ, these are all things that the word of God can help us with and to understand what the response shall be, because if the resurrection is true, and it is, then a mighty miracle has taken place and there is a reason that we divide time by the life of Christ. And so what we want to do is turn to the gospel of John 14 and I invite you to turn there. John 14. We're going to look at the resurrection today through the eyes and through the mind of one of Jesus' disciples, Thomas, and I want to take you to a familiar passage to start in John 14. We'll read the first three verses to start with and we'll kind of work our way through a couple of sections in the book of John. John 14:1-3. Jesus said,

1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

We start there. Jesus is telling his disciples that he is about to leave soon. He's going to depart and he is preparing these men who had walked with him for over three years, he is now preparing them for his departure, preparing them to meet the aftermath of that with hope and courage.

So he's speaking to comfort them and to help them, but Thomas, his disciple, is uncertain about it all. It's foggy in his mind. Look at verse 4, Jesus says,

4 "And you know the way where I am going."

But in verse 5,

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

And I realize that there may be some of you here today that are in that sense, there's a fog in your mind and there's a cloud over your understanding as you contemplate the things that we've been reading and singing about here today, this Christ, and he arose and what does all of this mean. Well, let me encourage you by recognizing that there is someone in Scripture who had similar thoughts and similar doubts as what you might be feeling today. Thomas was one of his disciples. Thomas had walked with him for three years and it was not clear in his mind what Jesus was saying, but Thomas asked the right question. That's our first point for this morning, I think I forgot to say that. In terms of what you do with the resurrection, you ask the right question and the right question is this: how do we know the way? How do we know the way to make sense of the resurrection, which is another way of asking the question how do we know the way to heaven itself, because that's what Jesus was talking about in this passage, he was going to leave earth, go to heaven and prepare a place for his disciples where they could live and reign with him throughout all of eternity. These are magnificent themes. These are far beyond anything earthly that we could ever consider and Jesus lays heaven before them and Thomas says, "But Lord, we don't know the way. How do we know the way?" That's the right question to ask and that's the question that you need to ask also. What is the way to heaven? What will happen to me when I die? What about all of the bad things that I have done and said and thought? What about my guilty conscience? There's embedded in us a sense that we are not really ready for heaven and people try to overcome that and say, "Well, I hope I'll be okay." Or, "I think the good outweighs the bad." But at the heart of that is this awful sense of uncertainty and the realization that death will be a step into a dark unknown for so many who are like that.

So the testimony of your conscience and the testimony of Scripture is this, it's that you are not right with God. There's a reason for that uncertainty. There's a reason for those guilty feelings. It's because as an objective fact you are not right with God. You are not fit to meet him on your own and by yourself. Scripture says in Colossians 1 that apart from Christ, you are alienated from God, hostile in mind, and engaged in evil deeds. That's a serious matter because God is holy, he is set apart, he is without sin and he does not allow sinful men into his presence. In fact, Scripture says that he sends them to hell when they die because it is the righteous thing to do with men who have violated his law. And so this question what happens to me when I die, what is the way to heaven is of utmost consequence for everyone who would ever live and who has ever lived. This is the only question that ultimately matters.

So in light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the right question that you need to ask is simply this: how can I be reconciled to God? How can I be made right with God? How can my sins be taken away? How can I have assurance that I am going to be with God when I die rather than with Satan in hell? Those are the only two alternatives and so that's the question that we all have to grapple with. This is the question that we all need to

come to grips with. What happens to me when I die? How can I be reconciled to a holy God? That is the right question and it's the question that Thomas asked.

Look at it again with me there in verse 5, Thomas said, "Lord, we don't know where You're going, how do we know the way?" And it's a measure of the grace and the patience and the love of Jesus Christ that he answered that question when it was asked before him. He responds to the question. In verse 6, look at it there with me, John 14:6,

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Jesus made an astonishing claim that the only entrance door into heaven was through him, that there were no other alternatives. There are no side doors to get in. There are no other mediators between you and God. The Bible says that there is one mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus, that's in 1 Timothy 2:5. And so as you start to grapple with this question what must I do to be saved, how can I find eternal life, there needs to be this growing understanding embedded in your heart by the power of the Holy Spirit that somehow Jesus is the key to everything, Jesus is the only answer to that question, because that is what he himself said. And remember on this day in which we remember the resurrection, we're talking about the one man who was raised from the dead and therefore there is reason to believe and listen and heed to what he has said.

And so this one who would soon be resurrected from the dead said to his disciples, "I am the way." In other words, "I am the way to heaven. I am the truth about heaven. I am the life which alone can revive you and put you into heaven. No one comes to the Father but through Me." You see, he said it in the positive and the negative, didn't he? In the positive, he says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." That's enough for us to understand, but on the negative side he emphasizes it, "no one comes to the Father except through Me." And so the right question is, as we walk our way through this: do I know the Lord Jesus Christ?

Now Scripture here does not record an answer from Thomas or a reply from Thomas. Thomas does not respond to Jesus here in this way. Thomas' response is left open, as it were, and some of you are in that position. You've heard the gospel, some of you have heard it under the roof of Christian homes and yet you still walk in the deadness of your sins and without any regard for Christ at all. May God help you. Others of you have come in and you're new to this and maybe someone invited you today and you're in that position of not knowing Christ, and maybe you've never heard the gospel at all and God has appointed, let me just say this with full biblical authority, God has appointed this day for you to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and to understand that the way to heaven and forgiveness of your sins has been open to you. God appointed this day specifically for you to hear just that message. What a blessing from God.

But you have to start with the right question. What must I do to be saved? How do I find the way to heaven? That is the right question, but then what? Having asked the question, what follows after that? Well, our second point for this morning is simply this: give the

right answer. Ask the right question and then, secondly, give the right answer because as the gospel of John goes along, it records how Christ was crucified. Christ was nailed to a cross and what the Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15 is that Christ died for sinners. Christ died in behalf of sinners, on behalf of sinners. Jesus Christ was crucified for them and that has the answer to your guilt because what Christ was doing when he died on the cross was he was bearing the wrath of God against sinful men. Christ was receiving in his own body the punishment that sin requires and as the gospel of John describes that crucifixion, it goes on to say that God raised him from the dead. As we said earlier, that's the indication that God accepted the sacrifice.

You see, my friends, to put it in very plain earthly terms, you cannot go to God just as you are, you cannot just enter into the presence of God without a sacrifice that pays for your sins, and no human sacrifice apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, there is nothing that you can bring to God to do away with the guilt of your sin. You can't buy it with money. You can't go through religious rituals and find the forgiveness of your sins. Those are just empty works that do nothing to deal with the guilt in your life and the guilt of your heart. And there's no prayers that you can pray, you can't cry enough tears to wash away your sins. You are utterly and completely hopeless. The Bible describes it as a condition of death, that we are dead in our trespasses and sins. And as you start to understand the depth of your guilt and the depth of the wrath of God, it should start to dawn on your mind this situation is hopeless if I am left to myself, and that's exactly right. It's a helpless situation if you are left to yourself and every man and woman, boy and girl, should give up trying to save themselves, give up trying to be good enough to earn favor with God because it is an unattainable goal. God is perfectly holy, we are sinful and there's nothing that we can do to erase our past or to change ourselves anymore than a leopard can change its own spots. And so we're faced with, as we come to Scripture, we're faced with the reality that we are helpless before a holy God. That is why the death and resurrection of Christ is such wonderful news. That is why this past Friday is called Good Friday. Back in time, the thought of it's been lost in our day, I suppose, but back in time people understood that the day on which Jesus was crucified was a really good day because that was the day in which access to heaven was opened, not by anything that we had done but by what Christ himself had done.

And so as the gospel of John speaks of the crucifixion of Christ, God raised him from the dead, Christ eventually appeared to his disciples, and if you will turn to the gospel of John 20, Jesus had appeared to most of his disciples in verse 20. It says in verse 20 he showed them both his hands and his side. He had mortal wounds and yet he was alive, and his disciples saw the imprint of the nails in his wrists, they saw the riven side, they saw the division in his side where the soldier had thrust the sword into his side, and he showed them that and the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord because they realized, having seen him with their own eyes, with their own hands, with their own ears hearing him speak, through all of the human senses by which all of us acquire knowledge, through their human sense they acquired the knowledge that Jesus Christ was really risen from the dead. Jesus showed them by many convincing proofs that he was alive, in fact, I want you to see this verse.

Turn over just a page or two in your Bible to the book of Acts 1 because this is what's going on in the verse that I just read from the gospel of John. In Acts 1:3, it says,

3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Jesus convinced his disciples that he was alive and he did that because he really was alive and he showed them through his actions, through his availability to them, that the resurrection was real.

And so the disciples rejoiced, it says in verse 20. They rejoiced when they saw the Lord. But someone was not there at the time and it was our friend Thomas. Thomas, it says, look at verse 24, John 20:24,

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

So Thomas did not see this early manifestation of the convincing proof of the resurrection of Christ. Thomas was not there when that occurred and you've probably heard Thomas described as Doubting Thomas. He wrestled with things in his career, so to speak, as a disciple. And in verse 25, that disposition of doubt manifests itself in verse 25. The other disciples were speaking to Thomas it says in verse 25, and they said,

25 ... "We have seen the Lord!" But [Thomas] said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

And Thomas here, you can't see it so much in the English, in the original language it's very emphatic, Thomas is saying this repeatedly and he is saying it emphatically. He's saying, "I will not believe unless this is what is done for me." And so he was a pessimist and he was settled in his pessimism and, you know, even that gives me hope here for some of you in the hardness of heart that you've lived with over the years, it gives me hope to realize that even in your settled opposition to the gospel, there is power by the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart to overcome your resistance and to bring you to true saving faith, in fact, the Bible says that without that work of the Holy Spirit, no one comes to faith. Jesus said, "No one comes to Me unless the Father draws him."

And so what we see here, we see side-by-side in the proclamation of the gospel, we see this glorious hope and this awful hopelessness, man left to himself hopeless to do anything about his condition, in Christ, in the Lord Jesus Christ, everything provided and everything given that is necessary to bring one to saving faith in him. And so we see this. We see this. Today, we say the Holy Spirit must come to a man in order for him to be saved because he cannot save himself. We see an illustration of this as Jesus physically comes to Thomas himself, Jesus comes to Thomas, look at verse 26 with me,

26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them.

This time the whole gang's together, so to speak, and Thomas is there, and Jesus came, Jesus came to them. Jesus came, my friends, knowing full well in advance what he was going to do with Thomas. This was a divine appointment by which Jesus was going to bring Thomas to saving faith. And so he came, verse 26,

Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."

Peace be with you. And you see that even when Jesus is entering into a realm where unbelief is present, even in the realm of your human heart where unbelief and rejection and indifference has reigned, Christ comes with a message of peace. Christ comes with a message of reconciliation. Christ comes with great power bidding you to himself, and that is what Jesus is doing with Thomas here as he approaches them in verse 26.

So you go on and you read on in verse 27 and you see Jesus meeting Thomas at his very point of weakness. Thomas had said in verse 25, "I've got to see His hands, I've got to put my hand in His side," and Jesus in a gracious condescension to Thomas says to him in verse 27, look at it there with me,

27 ... He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands;

He held his hands out to him, probably palms up so that it would be easily visible. Held them up to the light, as it were and said, "Thomas, look, it's Me. These are My hands. Look. I invite you. Put your finger in them. Put your finger in the hole that the nails made, Thomas. I'm right here."

and [He said] reach here your hand and put it into My side;

He invited Thomas to physically handle his own flesh so that Thomas could have verified for him the reality of the resurrection. And so Jesus with no sense of restraint, no sense of hiding anything, Jesus lays it all out to him and says, "Thomas, come and see," and in a spiritual sense, my friends, that's what's happening to you today. Through his word, through the word of Christ, through the word of God, Christ comes to your heart, lays himself open, as it were, and says, "Come and see. Come and see the truth." He invites you to his word. He invites you to read and read again because the word under the power of the Holy Spirit will persuade you if only you will take up and read, as was said in the year of Augustine some 1,600 years ago. Take up and read.

A little aside here. I have no sympathy for those who reject the gospel of Christ, who reject the testimony of sin, judgment and righteousness, who refuse to read the Bible for themselves, who simply take it on the basis of a YouTube video that they watch that these things are untrue, who take it on the word of a friend who hates the gospel and says because they said this, or because they said that, I'm going to reject it myself. I have no

patience for that kind of insincerity, that kind of hypocrisy. My friends, my friends, I plead with you and I beg with you, you've got to take up the Bible and read it for yourself. You say, "Well, I grew up in a Christian home. I heard it all from my parents." No. No, that doesn't work. Pick it up and read it for yourself because it is as if Christ comes to you with an open Bible and says, "Look in here and find My nail-scarred hands. Look here in My word and find My riven side. Look in here and find the reason that I suffered for sinners like you at the cross." And read it for yourself. There will be no excuse for those at the day of judgment when they stand before a holy God and say, "Well, someone else told me it wasn't true and I believed what they said." That's not going to avail.

You have to settle these things for yourself. You have to ask the right question for yourself and you have to find the answer for yourself, and the beauty of considering Thomas is that in Thomas you see what the right answer is, you see what the response of faith is to Christ, and it's very brief and yet it is full of conviction and power. Look at verse 28. Actually go back to verse 27 because I interrupted myself, as I often do. Jesus said, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side," and then he gives him a command. He says,

and do not be unbelieving, but believing."

He says, "Thomas, stop the unbelief and believe in Me in light of what you have seen." And Thomas responds to that command. In verse 28 it says this, look at it there with me. With Jesus Christ fully in front of him, manifesting the convincing proofs of his resurrection,

28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

"My Lord and my God!" Here's the thing for you to see this morning and the response of Thomas as you will see in just a moment, is exactly what Scripture is teaching you that your response must be to Christ as well. The response that saved Thomas is the response that saves you as well. Thomas made a personal confession in the presence of Christ and in the presence of the other disciples. Look at it there, he says, "My Lord and my God!" Do you notice that personal possessive pronoun, first person singular, mine? My Lord. My God. In other words, with Christ in front of him, he says, "I receive You as mine. I receive You as My Lord, the Master. I submit myself fully, completely and unreservedly to You, O Christ. My God. There's only One and You are Him."

And so as we deal with the right answer to the question how can I be right with God, the answer is simple. It's laid out before you right here. You must come humbly to Christ by faith and receive him as your own. In other words, understanding that Christ paid a price for sinners like you, understanding that Christ lovingly invites you to come to him for eternal life, you hear the call of Christ, you sense the persuasion of the Spirit on your heart, and abandoning any claim to self-righteousness, forsaking everything that you have ever known or owned, you come to Christ and say, "I own You as my God."

This is what it means to be saved by faith alone. The idea of faith is that you receive Christ, you welcome him, you submit to him, you kneel before him, you bow before him, you bend your heart to the greater heart of Christ, so to speak, and you rest in him. And what we mean by resting in Christ is this: you realize that Christ alone can save you because he is the way, the truth and the life; you realize that there is nothing that you can do to save yourself, you come as a helpless sinner before him; and in humbleness, in great humility, with deference and reverence, you say, "Lord, save me too. Save me. Deliver me from my sins, my Lord. I will follow You wherever You lead me. I submit to You. You are my Lord. I want You. I receive You. Help me in my unbelief." And in a completely casting yourself upon Christ and nothing of yourself, you flee to him and you ask him to save you in a recognition of who he is and what he has done. Recognizing his person, God in human flesh. Recognizing his work, the saving work that he did for sinners at the cross of Calvary when he shed his blood. You say, "Lord, I need that. I want that. I ask You to save me." And you come as a helpless sinner, a helpless enemy of God and ask him to save you and reconcile you to himself.

This is the fullness of what that confession means. To state it more theologically, you must repent of your sins and receive Christ by faith. What does that look like? Well, you recognize Christ as God in human flesh because, in the context of Thomas and the resurrection, you realize the resurrection compels that response. You realize that to deny the resurrection and to deny Christ is just an act of inexcusable rebellion against a holy God because it is true and you can't rebel against the truth without there being really serious consequences against it, and you hand your guilt to Christ, as it were, and you ask him to reconcile you to God. You give your life to him unreservedly and unconditionally forever and trust him to take you to heaven simply because he has promised to do that with everyone who receives him by faith. Scripture says, "For it is by grace that you've been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not as a result of works lest anyone should boast."

You see, my friends, I say this sympathetically and I say this as a complete fellow sinner myself, we must fundamentally understand and deal with these basic truths, those of you that come to our church, you've heard this a lot, that's okay, repetition is the key to learning, and we never outgrow our need for these great truths. God is holy and you are not. You are not a good person. You are a sinner who has fallen short of the glory of God and you must be saved, you must be reconciled to God if you are going to find forgiveness of your sins. In other words, you must have a Savior or you will die in your sins. You need someone from outside of you to save you and the only person who can do that is Christ, the very one that you've offended. And so you go, as did the tax collector in Luke 18, and you just simply cry out and say, "Have mercy on me, the sinner!" And if you don't understand the things that are being spoken, ask him to be merciful to you to open up your mind to these things.

Call on Christ like Thomas did because Jesus promises to bless you. Look at verse 29. Look at the promise here. There's a bit of a rebuke to Thomas in verse 29 and a promise for those of us who are hearing these things 2,000 years later.

29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed?
Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

You see, every one of us is in that position. The truth of the matter is, you don't have to see Christ in physical flesh in order to believe. His word and his promise is more than enough, especially as it is certified to us by the power of his Holy Spirit. And so his word is enough, his promise is enough, his explanation is enough for all of us to find the answer to the only question that matters: what will happen to me in my sins? The answer is to come to Christ and the beauty of this, my friends, you come to the climax of the gospel of John in the next two verses, in verses 30 to 31, the beauty of it is, is that everyone here, everyone under the sound of my voice is invited to this salvation to receive it freely and without cost. You can be saved today if only you will come.

Listen, even though you have offended a holy God, in this hour of grace there is nothing to keep you from coming to him. There is nothing in God that keeps you from coming to him. God is willing to receive you and to receive you now. Freely and without condition, simply come like Thomas did, "My Lord and my God," confessing your sin as you do. And you see this there in verse 30 and 31 where it says this,

30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

In other words, Christ did a whole lot of stuff, Christ did many many things that were wonderful to behold but not everything has been recorded for us in Scripture, just selected things have been said, those things which are sufficient to inform us and to lead us to faith in him. They're not all written down. Elsewhere in Scripture it says if all of it was written down, I suppose the world couldn't contain the books that would need to be written so great and so wonderful is Christ and all that he did in his incarnation. But verse 31 says this,

31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

In other words, John says, "The whole reason I wrote this gospel was for you. God recorded His word so that someone like you, a lost sinner, could read about Christ and find what is necessary for salvation and be led to believe in Him."

And look at the promise that's attached to it, "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." That the wonders of forgiveness, the wonders of eternal life, the wonders of a clean conscience, the wonders of new life and a new power to overcome sin, and a new reason to live, and a new person for whom to live, in the Lord Jesus Christ, that the wonders of heaven itself can be yours and certified to you with a confident assurance that no man can shake, all of these blessings and 10,000 beside can be yours simply by believing in Christ. Now I ask you: why would you walk away from that? I ask you: what else could you possibly want? What could keep a man from coming to Christ except a love for his sin? The Bible says

in Romans 10 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. You can come to Christ today and enter into all of these riches.

Christian friends, one of the wonderful things about this is that the resurrection tells us that the access, our access to God has been secured forever. When Jesus died on the cross for our sins, he paid for them in full. There was nothing left to be done to satisfy the justice of God against our sins, and when we believe in Christ, the full righteousness of Christ is credited to our account so that there is a double blessing that takes place for us, and I'm building up to a pastoral point here, the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin, Scripture says in 1 John, and Scripture says that God made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we could become the righteousness of God in him. There is a full and complete imputation, a crediting of the righteousness of Christ himself to everyone who believes in him so that your position in Christ is fully secure. All of your sins past, present and future are washed away without any need for any contribution or purgatory or anything like that by you. Christ paid it all, that's what we sing. All of your sins cleansed, washed away. What was once red as crimson is now white as snow.

So there is no guilt before God and in its place God has given us this standing of perfect righteousness before him. Here's what that means, it means that there is nothing that can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord. Because Christ has paid for all of our sins, because Christ's righteousness is fully credited to our account, we stand before God holy and complete with nothing left to be added to it, and because that is true now and it is true always, it means that there is nothing that you can do to lose your salvation. The whole point of Christ coming to save his sheep was that he would save them to the uttermost, and in the resurrection, we see that our access to God has been secured forever, that death has been overcome, that sin has been paid for, and that even death cannot now separate us from Christ our Lord.

Do you some of you live in fear of dying? Is death an uncomfortable thought that you choose to ignore because you just shudder at the unknown element of it and the fearfulness of it? Salvation takes away the fear of death. Jesus said, "Because I live, you will live also." Those who come to Christ by faith are joined with him and everything that happened to Christ in his resurrection now belongs to us and will be what happens to us. Death holds no fear for us. Because Christ lives, you will live also.

And so on this wonderful Resurrection Day with so many wonderful friends gathered together, we see the greatness of what Christ has done. You ask the right question, how can I be reconciled to God? You give, as it were, your heart answer of faith, the right answer. You look at Christ and say, "My Lord and my God! Save me from my sins. Make me Your own. I cry out to You for a mercy I don't deserve." And in that, and in that the fullness of eternity is guaranteed to you, not by anything that you have done but by what Christ himself has done.

My friends, those of you that have yet to bend the knee to Christ, some of you no doubt from families within our church, young people, we pray for you, we care for you, we love

you even as we know that you are resistant or indifferent, whatever the case may be, other visitors that have come today, all of this is still for you. God has given you another opportunity to bend your knee to Christ. Christ came to reconcile sinners just like you and even if you have rejected and rebelled against him for years on end, the offer of the gospel while you still have breath is open to you. All of your sins can be forgiven today. You can receive eternal life now in the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no reason to delay, is there, my friends? And so I ask you as we close: will you receive Christ today? Will you repent and believe in him as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God!" Or, perish the thought, will you walk out of this room in unbelief and still condemned? Christ calls you. It's time to come. Today is the day of salvation.

Let's pray together.

Gracious Lord, as believing people, as Christians here today, we come and thank You for the work of Christ. We thank You, dear Lord, for all that You've done on our behalf. We believe and we haven't seen You with the eyes of flesh but we've seen You with the eyes of faith, and we know that this is true, we know that You are God in human flesh, we know that You have made a perfect sacrifice and that our sins are completely atoned for and we love You for it, and we give ourselves unreservedly and completely afresh to You today. Father, for those that are here and still in darkness, won't You extend Your mercy to them as well? If You extended it to us, why not extend it to them? Why not be glorified more in their salvation rather than in being glorified in their judgment? Father, Your own word says that mercy triumphs over judgment, won't You show mercy on those who are lost in our midst here today? Won't You have Your Spirit work in their heart to open their understanding and open their hearts to Christ? Won't You do that, Father? You're a saving God, it's why Christ came. We're only asking You to act in accordance with Your own character, Your own saving mercy, Your own saving grace. Father, we're asking for Your glory and for the good of sinners everywhere who would hear my voice. And so, God, in this great moment, we ask for a work of Your Spirit upon each one and we'll trust You for the outcome as we place it in Your hands, in Your wise, loving, powerful hands as we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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