

**INTRO:** The world of numbers and mathematics whispers to us that there is a whole unseen realm of thought that exists apart from our perception of it. We can't see the world of mathematics, yet no one doubts that it's there. But the unseen world of math does not exist in isolation. It's inextricably tangled up with science, especially physics. John Polkinghorne, former president of Queens College at Cambridge University, said that

“If faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen,’ then **scientists are not unfamiliar with faith**. In elementary particle physics, we have good motivation for believing that...particles... such as protons and neutrons...are composed of constituents that are not visible to us (quarks and gluons), for they are, as we say, confined within the particles that they constitute, so that they can never be dislodged and detected individually in the laboratory. Physicists certainly know about unseen realities and they are content to put their trust in them. In fact, the wilder shores of contemporary speculative physics exhibit a remarkable propensity to invoke freely the existence of entities not directly detected by experimental science, such as the supposition that there are extra unobserved dimensions of space (as the string theorists cheerfully assume), or even the hypothesis of...[many] unobservable other universes (in the meta-scientific strategy of embedding this universe in an immense multi-verse, so as to explain, or explain away, the remarkable fine-tuning of the laws of nature in our world that is necessary for its having been able to evolve carbon-based life)” (Polkinghorne, “A Scientist Looks at the Epistle to the Hebrews,” in Bauckham *et. al.*, *The Epistle to the Hebrews in Christian Theology*, pp.116-117).

Now if all that was Greek to you, the long and short of it is, it takes a certain kind of faith to be a cutting-edge scientist. There is in science a conviction of things not seen. So when we come to the end of the gospel of Luke, and we see the account of Jesus' resurrection, we shouldn't consider it unacceptable or even pre-modern to find Luke calling us to faith in an event that others saw, but we didn't. Granted, it's a historical faith rather than a theoretical faith. But it is faith. A cutting-edge scientist has to remain open-minded about a realm of reality that he cannot as yet see. Jesus is going to show us another kind of open-mindedness this morning, an open-mindedness that transcends the realm of science and challenges to believe in the supernatural – in the reality of His own resurrection. And the final point that Luke presses home to us in these last paragraphs is that **Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill the Scriptures, to forgive sins, and to confirm His deity.**

### **1. JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD (LUKE 24:36-43)**

**He rose bodily.** The emphasis in vv.36-43 is on the reality of Jesus' resurrection. It was not metaphorical or mystical or merely spiritual. Jesus literally, physically, historically rose from the dead. The disciples' assumption that they're seeing a spirit emphasizes the bodily nature of the resurrection all the more. “*They thought they saw a spirit.*” We've made this point before in the last two weeks, but it bears repeating. The disciples were not expecting a resurrection. Their first thought when they see the risen Jesus is “we're seeing a disembodied spirit.” And they're terrified, which is the normal human response to the presence of the supernatural all the way through the Bible. Jesus' aim is to convince them to believe that He has risen bodily. Look there in v.39 “*See my hand and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.*” He even goes so far as to eat some fish right in front of them in v.41-43 to show them that he's not a disembodied spirit as they thought in v.37. The doctrine of Jesus' literal, physical resurrection is what makes Christianity different from every other religion. No other religion thinks that Jesus physically and literally rose from the dead. The apostle Paul even says in 1Cor 15 that if Jesus has not been raised physically from the dead, then Christianity is false. That's why we say in our statement of faith “by His death he took our punishment in our place and thereby made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen bodily from the dead He is now enthroned in heaven,” and we cite this particular passage in Luke 24 as proof.

Did you notice as we read the passage how many times Luke uses words for seeing and sight? In v.37 they thought they saw a spirit (they still can't trust their spiritual senses! They still can't recognize Jesus for who he is.), in v.39 “*See my hands...Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.*” In V.40 he showed them his hands and feet. In v.43 he eats a piece of fish “before them.” In v.45 he doesn't open their eyes, but he does open their minds. And in v.48 all this sight language culminates as he calls them witnesses of the fulfillment of what was written in Scripture concerning himself. Jesus calls them to testify

to what they themselves saw. And Jesus appears to all of them together at once, which makes it harder to treat this post-resurrection appearance as an isolated, subjective vision that no one else saw or confirmed.

**He rose authoritatively.** Yet even with the centrality of sight, Jesus' word has to do the explaining. Jesus actually expected them to believe before they saw him, based on OT Scripture and His own word. In v.25 he calls them foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken. If they had believed what they heard, they would have understood the cross and the empty tomb perfectly. But they did not believe what they heard, and so they did not understand what they saw. And even after Jesus appears to them here, Jesus says in v.38 that they are *troubled and doubts are arising in their hearts*, and Luke says in v.41 "*they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling.*" They can't believe their eyes. It's too good to be true. Even when He appears right before their eyes, Jesus has to tell them how to make sense of what they're eyes are seeing. His spoken word has to interpret His physical appearance, and the meaning of the disciples' experience.

Our culture says that experience is the great authority that confirms or denies any truth claim. So we ask questions like "Does it work? How does it make me feel? Have I seen it?" Yet the disciples had all the experience of the risen Jesus that they could want, and they still couldn't understand it apart from His explanation. They needed Jesus' word to interpret what they saw and felt when He appeared to them. Jesus' resurrection is not self-explanatory for sinners. He has to interpret His resurrection for us. And if that's true, then Jesus' word trumps our experience. His was raised with the authority to explain His resurrection to us. Trusting Jesus' word is the only way to understand His resurrection. That's clear from the interplay between Jesus and the disciples. Before Jesus appears to them, they are speaking (*lalou,ntwn*) with each other about Jesus in v.36. When he appears, He says (*le,gei*) peace, but they fear, and then He asks them (*ei=pen*) why questions (*dialogismoi*.) arise in their hearts. From there on, Jesus is the only one talking – because He's the only one able to make sense of the situation! The disciples never say a word, at least nothing that Luke thought was worth preserving. They have to listen to Jesus if they want to understand what they're seeing and feeling.

The resurrection of Jesus is real. It was a literal, historical, bodily resurrection. But we cannot understand its significance apart from Jesus explaining it to us in His word, which we find today in the Bible. My experience – what I see, how I feel, what works for me, all the things that come through my senses and emotions – my experience cannot be the measure of all things. The reason is that I myself am not the measure of all things. Jesus is the measure of all things. He is the one in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I don't know how to evaluate my experience rightly. Even when the risen Christ appears bodily to his most loyal friends, they don't know what to make of that experience. His word has to explain my experience to me. His word is what sets His resurrection in the proper context of Scripture and history. So unless I am submitting my experience to the explanation of the living Christ, I am idolizing my experience. I'm trusting my thoughts and feelings and senses and intuitions and perceptions over and above the word of Jesus Himself. And that means I'm making myself out to be a god. In self we trust.

**He rose graciously.** Yet... look at how gracious Jesus is with the weakness of his disciples. The last time Jesus saw the disciples, they couldn't even stay awake to pray with Him in Gethsemane. Even as late as the Last Supper they were bickering over who among them would be the greatest. Peter denied Him three times the very night that he was taken into custody. At the crucifixion, none of them are anywhere to be found, except a few acquaintances and women watching from a distance. So now that he sees them, you might expect Him to say a word or two about their disloyalty. This very expectation may have been one reason they were afraid to see Him – they had abandoned Him. The doubt Jesus sees in their hearts is not just the doubt of his presence, but the doubt of his favor and kindness to them. The first thing Jesus says to them is, "*Peace to you.*" And in their hearts, they're asking "Peace? Really? To us?" Yet there's not a whiff of resentment for their failures. No word of rebuke. He never even brings it up. Jesus is so merciful, isn't He? He's so patient with sinners like us.

Sinner, maybe you realize that you've betrayed the Lord. Maybe you've failed Him miserably, disowned the cause in the heat of the battle, bribed by the enemy with the pleasures of sin. You've discovered treason against Jesus in your own heart; and now that the deed is done, you doubt that Jesus is not very interested in your companionship anymore, because your own actions have proven that you're not the most loyal soldier in his army. Maybe you expect a stern face and a sharp rebuke from Him, and so you are reluctant to approach Him, reticent to see Him. Oh friend, nothing could be further from the truth. That is not the voice of Jesus. He is more merciful and gracious than that. His heart is not as fickle as yours. He is just like His Father, "*merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...*" (Ex 34:6-7). "*A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench*" (Isa 42:3). "*If we are faithless, he remains faithful – for he cannot deny himself*" (2Tim 2:13). This is why J.C. Ryle said "Where is the sinner, however great his sins, who need be afraid of beginning to apply to such a Savior as this?" (Ryle, 2:511).

Yet that's not all. Not only does Jesus speak peace to the very friends who betrayed Him. He condescends to their weakness to convince them of His presence. He knows that they cannot simply rely on their senses. But he gives them something to see. He shows them his wounds. He invites them to touch Him. He even has a bite to eat in front of them, not only to convince them of his bodily presence, but to imply that he still wants to have table fellowship with them. I know it's probably too casual, but Jesus shows up after his resurrection, after the betrayals of his friends, and he's not asking why they betrayed Him. He's asking what's for dinner. "*Have you anything here to eat?*" Did ever saint find this friend forsake him? or sinner find that he would not take him? No, not one. Just and holy is thy name, I am all unrighteousness; false and full of sin I am, Thou art full of truth and grace. Plenty grace with thee is found, grace to cover all my sin, let the healing streams abound; make and keep me pure within. Thou of life the fountain art, freely let me take of Thee; spring thou up within my heart, rise to all eternity (Jesus, Lover of My Soul, BH180).

## 2. JESUS ROSE TO FULFILL SCRIPTURE (LUKE 24:44-49)

**Faith in Jesus' resurrection is based on His word (v.44).** The Christian faith is inescapably based on the spoken and written word. That's the combination that predominates in vv.44-49. "*These are my words that I spoke to you..., that everything written about me must be fulfilled.... He opened their minds to understand the [written] Scriptures. Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed.*" Now why does Jesus set it up like that? Why does he want the disciple's faith to be not primarily in what they see, but in what they hear? The reason is that Christian faith is personal faith. It's faith in the power and trustworthiness of Jesus. Jesus keeps going back not to what the disciples saw, but what they heard. "*These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you.*" Jesus wants our faith to be not in what we see, but in what He says. In fact, what the disciples see only serves to underscore what Jesus said. *These are my words that I spoke to you.* Truth is not just what corresponds to reality. Truth is what corresponds to Jesus' determinative word. Jesus wants us to take him at His word, because that's what faith is – personal trust. It's trusting that someone is who they say they are, based on their character and word. If I have a private investigator follow my wife to see where she's going, I do that because I don't trust her. If I'm a manager and I'm always looking over my employee's shoulder, I'm not trusting that he's being a faithful employee. It's the same with Jesus. He wants us to take Him at His word, and when we do, we always find Him true.

**His resurrection fulfills all Scripture.** Jesus says in v.44 "*Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.*" (o[ti dei/ plhrwqh/nai pa,nta ta. gegramme,na evn tw/| no,mw/| Mwus?se,wj kai. toi/j profh,taij kai. yalmoi/j peri. evmou/Å) That's what he had been telling them this whole time. The Jews had separated the OT into 3 parts – the Torah (Law, Instruction), which was Genesis to Deuteronomy; the Nevi'im (prophets), which included all the historical and prophetic books; and the Ketuvi'im (Writings or Psalms), which included all the poetic books, Job through Song of Solomon. Those

three sections – the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, encompass the whole OT. The focus of that sentence in v.44 is on the Scriptures as a whole. The original word order puts the phrase “about me” at the end. “...that it is necessary to be fulfilled all things that are written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms concerning me.” The emphasis is on all things written, and the qualification at the end is that all those things written to be fulfilled are things concerning Him. IN other words, Jesus explains that each whole section in its entirety is written “*about Me.*” Now, we might object to that and say, “no, all that Jesus is explaining here is the specific little parts of those 3 sections that are about him, like Dt 18:15 the prophet like Moses, or Psalm 110 about the priesthood of Melchizedek, Isa 53. But certainly not all of the OT is about Jesus. That can’t be true.”

But v.45 says that he opened their minds to understand “*the Scriptures,*” generally, holistically, inclusively, unqualified. It does not say that he opened their minds to understand just the few scattered Scriptures that were concerning him. He opened their minds to understand that the general thrust of all the Scriptures is His death and resurrection, and the preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins in His name to all the nations. And in v.46 he tells us what was written. “*Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*” Now the million-dollar question is, where is that written in the OT? If Jesus is just proof-texting here, where’s the proof-text? What OT verse says that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and the repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem? The truth is, there is no verse that’s worded like that. So where is Jesus it?

Well, the only two specific OT passages that mention a 3<sup>rd</sup> day rising are Jonah 1:17 and Hos 6:2. Jonah 1:17 says “*The Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*” But the book of Jonah overall is a warning to Israel itself about disobeying God’s call to be a light to the nations. Jonah doesn’t want to go to Nineveh in Assyria. Assyria was the enemy. And Jonah fights God to the bitter end. God’s final question for both Jonah and Israel is “*Should I not pity Nineveh...?*” Jonah represents a soured Israelite nationalism that wanted to keep God’s grace all to herself. Jonah is Israel hoping that God will judge the nations rather than leading them to repentance and forgiveness. But if that’s right, then a reference to Jonah 1:17 as a type of Jesus’ resurrection isn’t just a proof-text. It’s saying that Jesus is not just the better Jonah, raised from the dead. Jesus is the better Israel, back from the judgment of exile (cf. “swallow” Jon 1:17). Jesus did not only what Jonah failed to do. He did what Israel failed to do, as represented by Jonah.

The other place in the OT that mentions a 3<sup>rd</sup> day rising is Hosea 6:2. “*Come, let us return to the Lord; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.*” Now that passage is about the restoration of corporate, national Israel through repenting of their sin and being restored after a figurative period of 3 days. Yet Jesus seems to apply this third day restoration to His own death and resurrection, even though it’s a prophecy of Israel’s corporate, national restoration. But if that’s how Jesus is using Hos 6:2, then Jesus is saying that He Himself, in His resurrection body, is the restoration of corporate Israel; and that’s a statement not just about Hosea 6:2, but of the whole history of Israel told all the way through the OT, begun in Law, continued in the Prophets, and reflected on in the Writings. But if Jesus applies to Himself a clear national restoration prophecy like Hosea 6:2, then he seems to be telling us how to think of Israel’s national exile and restoration in general, all throughout Scripture. So it’s possible to make the case that Jesus is proof-texting from 2 isolated verses. But the verses he chooses are ultimately about the broad shape of Israel’s history – their purpose as a light to the nations, their failure to accomplish that purpose, God’s judgment on them for their disobedience, and God’s restoration of them. To refer to Jonah 1:17 and Hos 6:2 is not just to refer to 2 proof texts. It’s an appeal to the broadest brush strokes of Israel’s identity, mission, and history all the way through the OT.

**Jesus must open our minds to understand how His resurrection fulfills all Scripture.** Open-mindedness is a biblical concept. And the biblical definition of open-mindedness is to have your mind opened to the meaning of Scripture as it finds its ultimate fulfillment in the physical death and supernatural, physical resurrection of Jesus

from the dead. Open-mindedness is defined in v.46. According to Jesus, you are open-minded when you believe that *the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*” That’s an open-minded worldview. Until you believe that, Jesus assumes that your mind remains closed. Naturalistic science is a close-minded worldview, both according to Scripture and by its own self-definition. It assumes that the world is a closed system with no possibility of supernatural intervention or divine suspension of natural laws.

**Fulfilling Scripture entails forgiving sins.** Jesus says it is written, as a result of Christ’s suffering and resurrection, *that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations.* Now notice. It’s not just forgiveness of sins that should be proclaimed. It’s repentance from sins that should be proclaimed. Repentance precedes forgiveness. The proclamation of the gospel is incomplete unless we call sinners to repentance from their sin. So sinner, repent! Turn away from your sin. The resurrection of Jesus means that He is the judge of all men. That’s what Paul told the Athenians in Acts 17:31 *God has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.* Jesus resurrection is both an invitation and a warning to repent of our sins. And this call to repentance should go out indiscriminately, both to those who claim Christ and those who don’t. It’s a great privilege to belong to a pure Church, and hear the Gospel preached, and take the Lord’s Supper. But doing those things doesn’t necessarily mean that we are repenting (Ryle, 2:518). The preaching of repentance calls unbelievers to repent for the first time, and reminds believers to examine themselves to see if they are growing in repentance and persevering in the faith.... Notice too that we are commanded to use a certain method in spreading this news. We’re commanded to proclaim it, to preach it, to announce and publish it as truth, not as an idea simply to be discussed or a possibility to be considered. Your sins can be covered and forgiven in the blood of Jesus Christ, and you can have new life in His resurrection, if you repent of your sins and turn to Him in faith. And the converse is also true. If there is no resurrection of Jesus, there is no forgiveness. That’s what Paul says in 1Cor 15:17. *“If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins...But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man [Adam] came death, so by a man [Jesus] has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”*

**Christians are witnesses to His resurrection.** By ending with the theme of eyewitness in Luke 24:48, Luke is coming full circle. He’s ending where he began in 1:4, with eyewitnesses and ministers of the word who have delivered the things accomplished among us. That’s why it was so crucial that Jesus appeared to the original disciples in person, for them to actually, physically see. That’s why they would have to be fully convinced both by Jesus’ word and by their own senses of sight and touch. They would be the first witnesses, eyewitnesses. Their first-hand testimony of Jesus’ resurrection would be the historical bedrock that would serve as the foundation for the preaching of the gospel and the building up the church that we see in Acts.

But every Christian is a witness to Jesus’ resurrection. We may not be eye-witnesses, but we certainly word-witnesses. And we are living monuments to the work of Gods’ grace in giving us new life, raising us up with Christ, giving us new hearts that love to obey and serve Him. Jesus calls you, Christian, to be a witness, not just in your lifestyle, but in your words, in your verbal testimony to the truth and power and authority and love and mercy of Jesus Christ. I know I’ve been quoting J.C. Ryle a lot in the past few weeks, but it’s hard not to quote him when he says stuff like this: “Such testimony will doubtless be believed by few comparatively, and will be thought by many offensive and extreme. But the duty of a witness is to bear his testimony, whether he is believed or not. If we bear a faithful testimony, we have done our duty, although, like Noah, and Elijah, and Jeremiah, we stand almost alone” (Ryle, 2:520). How is it with your soul in that way, Christian? What do you know of bearing testimony to the truth of Jesus’ resurrection among those who don’t yet believe it?

### **3. JESUS ROSE TO CONFIRM HIS DEITY (LUKE 24:50-53)**

**He leaves us with a blessing.** In v.50 Jesus leads the disciples out to Bethany, he blesses them, and as he

blesses them, He's taken up into heaven. The word for blessing occurs 3 times in these last few verses. Once in v.50, once in v.51, and once in v.53. The first two refer to Jesus blessing the disciples, and the last one refers to the disciples blessing God in return. By blessing them, he's conferring a divine favor and benefit on them. He's exercising a divine right to distribute God's favor and mercy to whomever He will. And that blessing proves that as the divine Son of God, He is good, and He uses His authority to bless those who believe in Him. His kindness here is a token of his divinity. God is good, and just as God the Father loves to bless His children, so God the Son loves to bless those who are His.

**He leaves us for heaven.** The wording there in v.51 is deliberate. Jesus doesn't ascend to heaven like some superman figure. The text says that He is carried up into heaven, passively (*avnefe,reto*, imperfect passive). The passive voice here indicates that it's God who is carrying Him up into heaven. Who else could it be? God is bringing Jesus up to where He belongs, to the Father's right hand, to sit on the throne of heaven until all His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. And that is the ultimate proof of Jesus' divinity – God the Father Himself is testifying here that everything Jesus said about His own divinity while He was on earth was true. He really is Daniel's Son of Man. He really is the king who brings the authority of God's kingdom with Him. He really is the one who the wind and the waves have to obey. He really is the Servant from Isaiah, sent by God to proclaim liberty the captives and to recover sight for the blind and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. He's the Lord of the Sabbath. God wants Jesus in Heaven because Heaven is His home. It's where Jesus came from, and it's where Jesus belongs.

**He leaves us worshipping Him.** Another indication of Jesus' deity is that he accepts the worship of the disciples. When people try to worship apostles or angels, they get rebuked. The pagans at Lystra called Paul Zeus and Barnabas Hermes when they preached the gospel. "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men" they said (Acts 14:11), and the priest of Zeus tried to sacrifice oxen to them. But Paul and Barnabas stop them. "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God" (14:15). When John sees the angel talking to him in Rev 19, he says "*I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.'*" But when the disciples worship Jesus, Jesus doesn't correct them. He accepts their worship, as He is being taken up into heaven by God, and there is no correction either of the disciples for worshipping Jesus or of Jesus Himself for accepting that worship. Jesus really is God.

**He leaves us in the temple.** And notice where the disciples end up in the very last verse of the gospel. They end up "*continually in the temple blessing God.*" There is no disconnect between worshipping Jesus in Bethany and worshipping God in the temple. In fact, their realization of Jesus' deity and the joy of that discovery is exactly what drives them back to the temple to worship God for all He has become for them in Jesus Christ. And they are at the temple continually, all the time. Now that's interesting. When they discover that Jesus is God, they don't simply go home to their prayer closet or into their house for a quiet time. They might have done that, but that's not what Luke thinks is notable. What Luke records is that they take their joy to the place of public corporate worship. They go to temple. They want to be together with God's people in His presence, singing His praises, hearing His word, praising God publicly for the life, death, and now resurrection of Jesus. That's how they show their loyalty to Jesus. They show it, at least initially, by continually being in the temple praising and blessing and thanking God. And that's where the Luke's gospel ends – in public worship and praise and thanks for the humanity, deity, resurrection, and eternal life of Jesus Christ.

## CONCLUSION

**Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill the Scriptures, to forgive sins, and to confirm His deity.** Of course, it takes an open mind to believe that now, doesn't it? If I believe that, then I can no longer hold to a purely naturalistic worldview that sees the universe as a closed system and miracles as categorically impossible. If I believe that Jesus really rose from the dead for all these reasons, then I'm saying something about the authority

of Jesus and His word. I'm saying that from now on, I have to let Jesus' word interpret my experience, and not the other way around. I'm saying something about the main idea of the whole Bible, that the whole Bible is not ultimately about me, or giving me a playbook for life, or an ethical checklist, but it's all pointing toward the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus to fulfill God's plan, atone for sin, and confirm His divinity as the one who will save all those who repent and judge all those who don't. I'm saying that I want to turn away from my favorite sins and trust in Jesus Christ to deliver me not only from the penalty but also from the power and influence of those sins, and from my own love of those sins. I'm also saying that I want my own lifestyle to revolve around joyful public worship with God's people. I'm saying that Jesus is the second person of the Godhead who is worthy of our worship. To say that Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill the Scriptures, to forgive sins, and to confirm His deity, is to say all those things. To believe in Jesus' resurrection a doctrinal statement. It belongs in the annals of church history, and on the pages of church creeds and confessions. But it can't be left there. The resurrection of Jesus is has to lead us, ourselves, into new life with Him by faith – a life of holiness and worship, a life of mercy and compassion, a life that's slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness for others, especially others who fail us, just as Jesus has shown us mercy time and again after we've failed Him. We want our words and our lives to witness to the reality of Jesus' resurrection in the newness of our own holiness, love, and grace, informed and interpreted by Jesus own word. Christian, you are His witness. Are you testifying to the truth of His resurrection and His divinity, or have you been pleading the 5<sup>th</sup>?