



Truly Alive!

Ephesians 2:1-10

Sermon given on April 21

Calvary Chapel French Valley

Resurrection Sunday Service

@ FRM

Pastor Rick Lancaster

TRULY ALIVE!

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Greeting

- Hello, I am Rick Lancaster - Welcome to Calvary Chapel French Valley
- If this is your first time here – we are glad you came
- This service is being streamed live – so, welcome to everyone watching online – hi mom!
- To most of our country and in many other parts of the world the first Sunday after the first full moon following the Vernal Equinox is known as Easter Sunday
- Before I became a Christian, I had a sense that this one Sunday a year was more important to other Christians, like my wife Kelly, than a typical Sunday
- And so, like millions of non-Christians today, I would go to church on this one Sunday a year (usually)
- I wasn't looking for God, I didn't feel like something was missing in my life, I wasn't dealing with a tragedy – I was doing it for Kelly
- So, I went to a bunch of Easter Sunday services over the years – and guess what? I didn't get saved at an Easter Sunday service
- I did eventually become a Christian – and something changed in me
- The source of that change is the same for all Christians, though it manifests differently in each one
- Even though I have always been a living being, it was only after I became a Christian that I was truly alive
- I know that sounds like a weird thing to say
- Let's pray and then I'll explain what I mean
- **Pray!**

Teaching

- **Truly Alive!**
- If you have a Bible, turn to **Ephesians 2**
- There is a term that we use in Christianity to describe becoming a Christian – being born again – comes from **John 3:3**

Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

- The man that Jesus was talking to didn't understand what Jesus was saying, and before becoming a Christian it didn't make sense to me either
- But that is exactly what happened to me
- The Apostle Paul talks about what happens
- **Ephesians 2:1-10**
- Because of God's amazing love, grace, and mercy, He made us alive
- But what does that even mean? How do you explain it?
- Here is an illustration – not perfect, but it might help
- Approximately 1 out of 20 people are colorblind (CVD – color vision deficiency)
- I learned this week – 1 in 12 men versus 1 in 200 women
- It is currently incurable – it is in the genes
- With technology, having a little success increasing color vision, but no cures
- You can't make a colorblind person see colors – you can describe – point to them – even train them that certain things are certain colors, but you can't cause them to see the colors
- Some people are born blind to colors – all humans are born blind to the things of God – we are born life-blind
- Before I was saved – everything in the world was moving to a single end – death – to me = the end, nothing comes after that
- So that reality tainted my vision of everything in the world around me
- But then God made me alive – suddenly, everything doesn't end in death, but continues in life forever – it changed everything for me – it changed me
- Everything in life has an eternal component, purpose, and meaning
- Now everywhere I look, rather than being tainted by death, I see life
- Even in physical death, I see life – that's what Easter Sunday is all about
- On a Friday afternoon, almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus, God the Son in human flesh, died on a cross for the sins of the whole world

- His perfect sacrifice made a way for us to be ‘made alive’ 2

Corinthians 5:21

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- Jesus took our sins with Him onto the cross – so we could be forgiven – our sins were taken away
- And then, on the third day, just as He said, He rose from the dead
- Because Jesus rose from the dead – anyone who believes in Him is given life – spiritual life now and eternal life in heaven
- The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus = my/your sins are taken away and we are given life **John 10:10**

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

- I said earlier that when I was saved something changed for me
- In fact, a lot of things changed, but a big one was my perspective
- Once God opened my spiritual eyes, I started seeing the world differently – and that changed the way I lived – I started to be truly alive
- I want to share with you today three perspectives that changed for me, maybe one or more of them would be useful to you
- First perspective of the resurrection – **This life is not all there is!**
- Before becoming a Christian, life was – you are born – you live – you die and become worm food – end of story – and you hope you left some kind of mark on the world
- But because Jesus was raised from the dead, I know that I also will be raised from the dead **John 5:24**

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

- Before, for me, death was a deadline – all of life needed to be lived before I died – bucket list – urgency - stress
- Now, this life is preparation for the next life – eternal life with God in heaven
- This life is important, but it is not most important
- The resurrection of Christ points to a greater life – both now and in heaven with Him

- If you are living a great life now – praise God for it and enjoy – but remind yourself that eternal life is far better
- If life is bad or hard for you right now – ask God to help – then remind yourself this life is not all there is, and that eternal life will be perfect
- The second perspective of the resurrection – **This life is small compared to eternity!**
- In this life, our perspective is small
- We can't see the world or life the way God does **Isaiah 55:8-9**
“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”
- And because our perspective is small, the issues of our life become so much larger
- My granddaughter Aurora, who will be turning four next week, has helped me to see this more clearly
- If she is watching one of her shows and it is time for her to go to bed, it becomes a huge issue for her
- All she can see is the ‘right now’ of the situation
- I view it from the reality that she will be able to watch that show tomorrow, and the next day, and the day after that – I see it from a larger perspective
- Compared to eternal life in heaven, our biggest, most life-altering issues are small
- If your life is filled with great things – enjoy them – just don't make them the center of your life
- In heaven, the best things on earth would be about as valuable as a Happy Meal toy
- If life is easy for you – enjoy it – heaven is infinitely better
- And if your life is not filled with great things, in heaven, treasures are awaiting you
- If life is hard – heaven is infinitely better
- There is a saying, ‘Don't sweat the small stuff!’
- Compared to heaven, everything in this life, good or bad, is small stuff

- The resurrection of Christ can change our perspective about the things of this life
- One final perspective of the resurrection – **This life is not about me!**
- This one was a hard one for me – still working on it
- Let's look at the last verse of our text again
- **Ephesians 2:10**
- I used to view this world for how it could benefit me and my life
- If this life is all there is – get as much out of as you can
- I wanted everything I could get out of this world
- I lived and acted like this world existed to serve me
- On becoming a Christian, my perspective changed
- Jesus, the eternal God the Son, came to this earth as a human man, not for Himself, but for God **Mark 10:45**

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

- God created me the way I am on purpose, and then He saved me for a purpose – ‘good works’
- Instead of trying to get as much out of this world as I can, I want to give as much as I can to this world while I am here
- Because Jesus died and rose again, I know that anyone who believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life
- I believed in Jesus and it changed my perspectives about this life
- Not all at once or completely – I am still changing – God is still changing my perspective
- And He can change yours too
- **This life is not all there is!**
- **This life is small compared to eternity!**
- **This life is not about me!**
- Like the man born blind that Jesus healed in **John 9:25**

One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.

- I was born life-blind, but now I am truly alive
- I am so thankful to God that He changed my perspective
- It has filled my life with hope, peace, joy, and a radical excitement about the future
- And He can do that for you too – Jesus is risen! – Believe!
- **Pray**