

Two Kingdoms

Romans 5:12-21

It is wonderful to be with you all on this Resurrection Sunday.

This is considered the Holiest of Days we observe in Christendom.

Christians all over the world celebrate this day where our Lord conquered death, and rose again.

Our whole faith hinges on the resurrection of our God.

Our faith would be hopeless without Jesus beating death, it is the fulfillment, and culmination of this story of scripture, of God redeeming lost and sinful man to Himself.

Let's take a look at the story we all came to church for this morning...

Mark 16:1-8 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone

had been rolled away — for it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7 But go, tell His disciples — and Peter — that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you."

8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

You see Jesus has risen! The tomb was empty, and we know that Jesus' ministry continued on, over 500 witnesses attested to Jesus being risen.

His disciples went on to change the world forever, and still to this day, the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth continues on through His disciples.

You are proof of this this morning.

So this One Man Changed the course of History forever.

Now most of us now this day is not about the bunny. That is why we are here this morning.

Most of us know Jesus was raised from the dead.

So this morning I want to talk about why this is important to our faith as Christians.

If you are new here, well just know we center this ministry on verse by verse teaching through the Word of God, and we are going through the Book of Romans.

We as a church have made it to Chapter 5.

And we are halfway through this chapter, as I prayed about what to teach this Holy day, the Lord led me to the text we are in, in Romans.

And really it shows us why it is important Jesus rose from the dead, why our faith centers on this truth.

You know, we saw in this first part of this chapter of Romans 5 that there are four benefits for those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.

We see first of all Paul in verse 1 says we have Peace with God by our faith in Jesus.

And so we understand before we come to faith in Jesus, we are at war with God, our souls are in conflict with Him, but after that moment we believe we are reconciled through our faith.

Secondly, since we are now at peace with God, Paul explains to us we have access to God.

And that access means He hears us, and answers us.

This access now means we have a relationship with Almighty God.

This access to God means we are not alone in this world.

And thirdly this peace, which gives us access, means we now have hope.

It is a hope of our eternity with God.

We now are expecting the coming of this risen Jesus to take us home.

A heavenly home that He is preparing for us.

And finally Paul tells us in those first 11 verses of Romans 5 this all means we can glory in the tribulations of this life.

We now are looking at the hardships of life as a character builder knowing that God is teaching us through them,

Paul then tells us the Love of God is poured out in our lives by the Holy Spirit, our teacher and guide through this life.

Then Paul says that even when we were enemies to God, Christ died for us, and can justify us, save us from God's wrath.

This was the meaning of that Cross at Calvary.

So let's look at that verse we left off at last time

Rom. 5:11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Through Jesus we now have reconciliation.

And this is no small thing, we sometimes forget, or we just have heard this message so many times it loses its significance.

Our faith in Christ dying for our sins and being raised from the dead brings us peace with God; we are saved from God's wrath.

Have you ever wondered how we got into this sinful state?

How did we ever become enemies with God in the first place?

Was it our choice? I don't remember taking up arms against God.

I don't remember making the choice to be at odds with God.

It seems it was with me from day one.

And as Paul is about to tell us, it is something we are born into.

We are born sinners, born enemies to God.

We are born needing a Savior.

“Well that just is not fair”, you might say, but as we will see this morning, and as Paul is pointing out, fair for us is hell, we deserve it.

And it is incredibly more unjust that Christ had to die for mankind, who as we will see chose to be enemies with God.

Paul will now talk about the first man in God’s creation. The man we are all descended from.

Rom 5:12-21

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned —

For us to understand here what Paul is saying, we have to go back to the beginning.

We will see from the beginning God has given man free will, a choice.

Let’s turn to the first book in the Bible.

Gen 1:26-31

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth

and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.

And we see here in the beginning God kind of giving the title deed to earth, to his creation man.

He says it is all yours Adam. You have dominion over it all. Now look in Ch. 2 with me...

Gen 2:15-17

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

And Adam here is given God's Word, and the opportunity to obey it, or disobey it.

The next part of the story I want to bring you too, is the unfortunate part, it is the part of the story that will explain what happen, and how we ended up in this sinful fallen state and enemies with God.

You see it seems at least at one point, one of God's other creations, had freewill as well.

Man was not the first to sin. And we see a fallen angel here on the scene.

We see here in the Garden an enemy of God, we see a creature cunning, and spiteful, a liar from the beginning.

We see the fallen angel Lucifer from the very beginning trying to distort God's plans.

And we see him this time in the form of a serpent.

Gen 3:1-19

3 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of

the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

13 And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

And that was man's fate, the first man handed over the title deed or rule to the earth to Satan, sin and death now reign, because of man's choice to disobey God.

He fell to the schemes of the devil.

And we can get mad at Adam, but I know my track record, I can't say I would have done it any different.

And man at this first sin was hopeless, eternally separated from God.

And at this point as Paul is talking about in Romans, sin entered the heart of man, death entered this earth.

And things were in Satan's control.

And now at first thought it seems hopeless, Satan is the god of this world, we relinquished our control and dominion to him.

And anyone looking at this world we live in can see evidence of Satan's rule.

Man in his fallen state lives selfishly,
murderously, dishonestly.

We lie, cheat and steal, we live for ourselves.

We see death all around us.

Man in his fallen state is no different than a dog,
following its fleshly drives.

He lives only for the cravings of his carnal nature.

Can there be any hope for man?

Did God give any clues to a remedy?

Are Adam and his descendants forever plagued by
this choice to sin against God?

Well God is all knowing and must have known the
choice, and the consequence of it, as we will see
a little further in Genesis 3.

He speaks to that Serpent of Old, and He lets him
know of his future.

Gen 3:14 So the Lord God said to the serpent:
"Because you have done this,
You are cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And you shall eat dust

All the days of your life.
15 And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel."

What we have here is God's first promise of another Kingdom; an opposing force was to come.

This here was Adam's and his descendants only hope, and for our earliest fathers of faith it was the only gospel they had.

God was going to raise up a Seed, from only a woman, physically impossible. But God spoke it.

God had promised an opposing Kingdom to bruise the head of the Serpent.

Satan would bruise this Seed's heel, but this Seed would bruise his head.

So there is a hope; a gospel from God, that mankind will not be stuck in this place of death and sin.

What a hope for Adam, and his wife.

God is so loving to promise a remedy for our mistakes.

And today as we will see in the rest of Romans 5.

We have a clearer Gospel... We live in a day where we can have a deeper understanding.

We see God has already raised up this Seed.

And Satan bruised Him on the cross, and we know that was what Adam and the Old Testament saints put their faith towards.

And now we know, and for 2000+ years Satan has been fighting a losing battle.

As Christ's Holy Spirit has been drawing in millions into His Kingdom.

At Adam's sin, our spirit was put to death, and our spirit is where we have this relationship with God.

We worship God in spirit that is where we have fellowship with Him, in spirit.

John 4:23-24

23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. **24** God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Last time we discussed the love of God poured out for us by His Spirit.

Rom 5:5

5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

We believe that God is 3 in One. Father, Spirit, Son.

Man is also 3 parts in one; we have our Soul, Flesh, spirit.

And remember, before Jesus left to be with the Father, He said there was a promise to those who believe. The Holy Spirit would be sent.

And the Spirit is who brings us into fellowship with God.

The Spirit allows us to come to God as a Father.

The Spirit is the promised Helper, Counselor, Teacher, and the One who dwells in us.

Jesus said where 2 or 3 are gathered in My Name, that He is here with us, and it is through His Spirit.

And this is the way God created man, to have fellowship with Him; it was why He created us.

But He gave us free will, and Adam chose wrong. And the day he did, well our spirit died, and our fellowship with God died.

And with the spirit dead, our flesh rules, and we chase after fleshly things.

And we then are left with one option, one choice, to have that fellowship restored again.

Our spirit must be reborn. But How?

It is only through that promised Seed.

John 3:3-8

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."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' **8** The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

And when our spirit is reborn, our fellowship with God is reestablished.

Before we come to Christ we are body and soul, like the animals.

The spirit only comes alive after Christ comes in.

We can even see scripture separate the three in

Heb 4:12

12 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The soul is connected to the flesh, and when our spirit is made alive, our soul is in constant battle between flesh and spirit.

And that comes up in later discussions in the book of Romans.

But we understand that first man brought death into the world, and hopefully we understand we are all born into sin and death, and that is why Paul says we were enemies to God needing peace.

So after all of that we are back to Romans 5.

Back to Romans.....

13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.)

What Paul is saying is that the sin that was in the world was the force that causes people to act separately of God.

All people are under the power of sin, and all people act in rebellion against God.

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Paul explains that **sin is not taken into account when there is no law.**

So before the Law, sin was among man, but sin was not imputed until the law.

Sin was around, death was proof of that, but no law yet was here to make it clear.

We will find out later that the Law brought to us the knowledge of sin, and those of us who know it, are accountable to that knowledge.

Look at Verse 14

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

You see Death reigned from Adam to Moses, because of Adams choice; mankind was born into this sinful state.

They had no Law, no 10 commandments to know it was sin.

But they were in constant sin, rebellion against God, it is that way we are born.

This is how the Word of God describes the people before the Law:

Gen 6:5 Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

God was sorry He even made man, and it all comes back to Adams choice in the garden.

But we see here in this verse, Adam was only a type of Him that was to come.

Adam was where all of mankind descended from, and he is the father of our fleshly bodies, but it was a type of another Lordship. A picture of that promised Seed.

So Paul continues on here in Romans.

15 But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. **16** And the gift *is* not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification. **17** For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of

the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Now this is huge, and we need to make this point clear.

Sin came through one man's (Adam) choice; he made all men sinners, being the first man.

This is important to understand, why?

Why do we need to understand that we were all born sinners because of Adam?

Some people believe we are born sinless, and we have the ability to live these perfect lives.

How many of you have been around babies?

Are they born perfect?

No way... So selfish...No body teaches them to sin.

Freedom my 4-month old son already has a fierce temper.

Well, people believe in human perfection, and if that is the case, that we all are born sinless, and we all just messed up along the way somewhere

Marriage counseling with the sinless perfection guy, he expected his wife to live perfectly, if she called herself a Christian, and he expected anyone who called themselves Christians to be perfect.

He believed we were born perfect, and if we sinned once we were denied heaven, he believed it was possible to live a perfect life.

As we opened up scripture and discussed how no one could live up to this standard, and scripture started exposing his own sin, he left and never came back.

If we cannot believe sin entered the world through one man, then how can we believe One Man is able to save us from our sins?

It would then be up to our own good deeds, our own hard works, and we would come up way short.

But we are born sinners, and Christ is the one who can free any one of us who come to Him in repentance, and except His free gift.

This is why the empty tomb matters!

Our faith in Jesus, the One who came to die for us, justifies us before God.

Sin entered the world through one man (Adam) and Salvation comes through One Man Jesus Christ.

And our faith in Him makes us righteous, and we have fellowship with God once more.

So if we had 2000-year-old men sitting around, we might have an argument that man was born sinless and perfect.

But the death of our flesh is proof that sin has destroyed man from the beginning.

Jesus being the only Man who proved to have power over death, and in His life, we find eternal life.

Look at the next verses.

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment* came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. **19** For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

That is why we have to make that one choice that will affect our eternity, because our flesh has no chance, it is dying.

But Paul keeps giving us opposite extremes, and fortunately the second conquers the first always.

Adam was the imperfect first born, Christ was the first perfect born.

Christ's gift always makes void Adam's mistake.

Christ Obedience to go to the cross, after living that perfect sinless life, overrules Adams disobedience.

So only by our faith in Christ's obedience can we be justified.

We are still subject to the physical suffering and death brought by sin in the world.

But we are free from the eternal spiritual separation that we would experience outside of Christ.

Paul says **by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.**

This is what makes this day so Holy, this is why we every year remember this day, that Jesus rose from the dead.

This week speaks of the horrors that Christ endured, in obedience to God's plan of salvation.

Jesus showing us, in His resurrection, that He is the ultimate sacrifice.

The ultimate Passover Lamb.

This one Man's obedience changed the course of this world, and human history forever.

That is why this day is so important.

Look what Paul says next...

20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Rom 5:20

Law was added so that the trespass might increase. NIV

This statement is certainly not what Paul's Jewish readers expected to hear.

Paul had already explained that the law was ineffective for salvation.

But now he says that rather than being an antidote for sin, it actually increases sin!

Paul is winding up the argument he has been carrying on through the first five chapters of his letter.

The purpose of the law for his own people, the Jews, had been to make them aware of their need for salvation; thus, their trespass was increased.

Sin was present from Adam, but the giving of the law was like having a huge spotlight turned on.

The sinfulness of people became all the more defined

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The solution to sin was not law, but grace.

I found this illustration in the life application commentary:

OPEN ARMS

As sinners, separated from God, we see his law from below. Sometimes it seems like a ladder to be climbed to get to God. Perhaps we have repeatedly tried to climb it, only to fall to the ground every time we have advanced one or two rungs or perhaps the sheer height of the ladder is so overwhelming that we have never even started up. In either case, what relief we should feel to see Jesus with open arms, offering to lift us above the ladder of the law, to take us directly to God. Once Jesus

lifts us into God's presence, we are free to obey-out of love, not necessity, and through God's power, not our own. Then we know that if we stumble, we will not fall back to the ground. Instead, we will be caught and held in Jesus' loving arms.

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And when we make that choice to surrender our lives to Jesus, we let go of those things that have kept us bound.

Those sins that entangled us, and we step out in faith, we find, Christ is the One who carries us.

We just have to make that first step, and the Law becomes something He helps us to obey.

Look at the next verse with me...

21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We were born into this sinful place. Sin is reigning.

Remember Adam gave up the title deed or the dominion to Satan, who is the ruler of this earth.

There is no hope for sinful man, death is the only outcome.

And the death apart from God is an eternity apart from God.

But thankfully Paul in this chapter keeps giving us the answer.

Every time he speaks of man's sinful state, he gives the remedy.

Christ came and gave us the solution to our corrupt flesh.

And as the early saints only had the promise of the Seed of the woman to crush Satan's head.

We are looking to the day where Christ will take the title deed of this earth, because He paid for it with His blood on Calvary.

Look at

Rev 5:1-7

1 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll(title deed) written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.

What a horrible thing for Satan to remain in control of this title deed of the earth, John just weeps, at the hopelessness of the thought, "Is there anyone?"

5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

We see Jesus is the only way out from this curse of sin.

He is the only One who paid for it.

And we are now, knowing that God has been faithful to His Word to Adam, and the many prophets after, we are looking to the promises ahead.

That soon He will come, and soon we will meet Him in the clouds, and we will rule and reign with Christ for all eternity.

We have a clearer picture now, than that of the older saints.

We see that Christ will reign, and we, who put our faith in Him, in this dispensation of Grace, will be there with Him.

And a day is coming for that Dragon, that Serpent of old, who has made our lives miserable...

He will be cast into Gehenna, known as hell, that final judgment, where for all eternity he and all who chose to stay enemies with God will be in eternal torment.

And the thing with God, as from the beginning He wants us to choose.

He made a way, He sent His Son, so that as Paul says even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But you see we have to choose this path He made for us.

What will you choose to reign in your life, sin and death, or grace? Grace overpowers the other.

But some choose death all the more.

You see we are in a unique time in since the creation of the world.

We are in a time where this gift is freely given to us.

Our choice now, gives us a privileged position for all eternity, as the bride of Christ.

You see we are all here to make one decision in this life, to make one choice.

And that is to except God's free gift of salvation.

And that is what matters in this life.

We get so distracted with our pursuits, and our busy lives, we lose focus of this.

And that is not just a onetime prayer it is a choice you make with your life.

Jesus told those who wanted to follow Him to count the costs.

It isn't some ritual that saves you; it is a life under the supremacy of this Grace.

You know some people choose wrong daily.

But God seems to give us that choice, wanting us to come to Him with our own free will, finding the peace He has made for us.

But some choose sin, and that is a scary place to be.

There is a lot of debate you know about once saved always saved.

Kind of these grey areas, but there are people who live in these grey areas.

There is this portion of scripture in Revelation that is pretty heart wrenching...

Turn to Rev 22:11

11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

Rev 22:14-15

14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

We see a contrast here again, and we see the choices we make here on earth will in fact go into eternity.

This part of John's Revelation is what he sees in eternity.

We don't get another chance outside of this life.

Our eternity is sealed by the choices we make here in this life.

And he is told those who choose to stay in their sin, they remain that way for all eternity.

It is their identity still.

Only if we could understand the enormity of our sins, they are huge, and have eternal consequences.

Listen to the list John listed:

Sorcerers.... Pharmakeus..... Those who choose to do drugs, and justify it with silly arguments, the Word

of God is clear, if you choose to stay in that place of sin, you will have no part of eternity,

Sexual immoral, there are those who choose to still have sex outside the context of marriage.

There are those who say they are Christians who choose to cheat on their wives and husbands, there are those who choose homosexuality, and other sexual immoral deeds, who choose to look at pornography.

And they are choosing their sin over their eternity with God.

Murderers, Jesus said if you hate in your heart you have already murdered.

And people are choosing to stay in that sin of hatred and bitterness over their eternity with God.

Idolatry, there are those who choose to worship the things in this world, and the treasures found in this life, rather than God.

And those who love and practice a lie will have no part.

It doesn't matter how many times you attend church; how many times you fake it.

God sees your heart, and your spirit is not reborn, He wants you, all of you.

And people choose to live in their sins, and still come and worship, for like fire insurance, but it is just a lie.

There are some who believe coming to church just on Easter is enough to get by.

You see God wants to cleanse you, and free you of the lie.

The whole point of this part of Paul's letter in this chapter of Romans, is that God made a way.

And like I said earlier, the way overrules those sinful natures.

But I am willing to bet there are some now, already justifying your sin, instead of just turning to the One who can free you of it.

The frightening part is you could very well be justifying your sins just enough to end you up eternally separated from God.

We are not in a time to be in a grey area or lukewarm.

This is a day in age where we must all choose, choose whether today you and your household will serve the Lord.

Or choose to follow the dictates of your own wicked heart, and the ruler of this world.

You know the condition of your own heart this morning, you know if you are justifying your sins.

I challenge you this day to repent, to choose life, to choose Christ.

To put to death that Old person, to throw out that garbage you are holding on to.

Garbage illustration –Trash day at my house is exciting for me.

Sometimes I go through everything, the fridge, the shed, the office, the kids room, I even have an extra trash can.

I love to get rid of trash. Sometimes I fill up my trash cans to overflowing. And I wonder will they dump it?

And as I round that corner at my house, and I see the trash cans are emptied I rejoice.

All that garbage is gone. I start planning next week's mission.

But never do I sit, and think to myself man I sure miss that pile of weeds, or that bag of rotting bread. Its trash I am at peace with it being gone.

Some people are just holding on to their trash in their lives, man it's time to let Jesus clean you out.

You will not miss it. Once you are free of it, you will not sit around think man I sure wish I had that sin in my life.

It's gone, buried at the dump.

John says in 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Admit, confess our sins this morning to God, and let Him cleanse us, may this be the day we stop excusing our sins, and secure our salvation.

The thing about faith is it requires you to believe. You have to move forward in faith.

If we ask to be cleansed and go right back to it, it showing we really don't have faith we can be healed.

But if you ask for forgiveness, and live like you are cleansed, it is showing you do have faith He has cleansed you.

He will do the work, if you let Him. It is your choice!

Today is the day of your salvation.

The Elders and I will be around after service.

Find someone to pray with, don't leave here wondering if.

Settle it once and for all today.

Remember that Grace always wins.

And there is plenty for all who would receive it.

Don't let the Kingdom of sin and death rule in your life, believe today on that wonderful Savior, the Seed of the Woman, Jesus.

And be free to live for Him, for all eternity, in the Kingdom of God.

It is no accident you are here this morning.

If fact, I know in a very personal way that God uses this day to bring those who might not ever come to church any other time.

I know personally how effective this day can be for the Kingdom of God.

It was Easter 2004; I was spun out of my mind.

I was up all weekend partying with my 18-year-old girlfriend....

I had promised this young lady I was going to change so many times.

I filled her head with all kinds of lies.

I convinced her to move out of this High Desert to Lake Havasu City with me.

I told her things would be different, I promised.

And this young lady found out when she moved out there nothing in me had changed.

I was the same dirt bag I had ever been.

She was so let down, she felt trapped in her own addiction.

Methamphetamine had gripped her life.

This guy promised her change, he was supposed to be her hope, her way out.

She was angry frustrated, and confused.

She woke up that Easter morning and something in her told her to go to church.

She in her misery and pain, spoke up to her pathetic boyfriend, and demanded he take her to church.

I laughed at her, and told her there was nothing to be found there.

She persisted as the voice in her heart grew louder, something was calling her.

Maybe it was the lack of sleep.

She spoke up again, and again.

Finally, her boyfriend yielded to her plea.

We went to church that Easter morning with hundreds of other people.

I sat with my arms crossed, thinking it was all joke.

Not my girlfriend, she hung on every word the pastor said.

He described this Savior who loved my girlfriend, died on the cross, paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The pastor explained that there was sin in her life.

The message seemed to her that it was pointed right at her, she knew she was a sinner, that was no problem for her.

But then he shared how this sacrifice on the cross, offered her something, where her sin abounded, Grace abounded much more.

She broke down in tears, finally an answer to her broken souls searching.

The Pastor asked at the end of the message, anyone who would like to receive eternal life, to please come forward.

It took everything in her from sprinting up to the front, she prayed right there to ask Jesus to come in her life.

Now that girl in that very moment was freed of her addictions, her guilt, her shame, all of her horrible deeds, washed away, by this Man who was willing to go to the cross for her.

That young lady changed my life forever, as I saw her grow in her relationship with Christ, I desired what she had.

She has not stopped going to church since that Easter Morning.

It was a few months later, I followed her to this Savior of hers.

That young lady became my wife, and our lives have never been the same since that Easter morning 12 years ago.

Like I said, I personally know the power of this day, and I know some of you were brought here by that same Holy Spirit.

Surrender to Him today, we are here, if you want to pray, don't wait another moment.

Today is the day you walk into your destiny.

While the worship team is playing this last song come forward.

No one will judge you, in fact they will rejoice for you!

Amen.