

Easter Sunday 2019 (April 21)

“One Day: Where Life Is Found”

Luke 24:1-12

At the beginning of 2019, we looked at what the Bible says about time from God’s perspective, and the 24-hour days that all of us get one day at a time. For the last several Sundays before Easter we have been in the Gospel of Luke, discovering some of the 24-hour days Jesus lived. We’ve been looking at passages that begin with **One Day**. In a sense, we’ve been on a journey with Jesus, travelling **One Day** at a time all the way to this moment. As you know, the last couple days in His life are filled with disappointment, betrayal, suffering and death. And then we come to “On the first day of the week.” (Luke 24:1) **[Prayer]**

Everyone thought he was gone for good. Many were celebrating the end of his reign. Others mourned what could have been. No more miracles; no more comebacks. The powers-that-be were ready to move on; ready for another leader. And then . . . early one Sunday morning . . . Tiger rose up and won his 5th Masters. We love resurrection stories, don’t we? People rising from the ashes . . . ‘coming back to life’ in one way or another.

There was a lesser known ‘rising from the dead story’ the weekend before Tiger’s big win, and I’m happy to say we have footage. You may have heard that just over a year ago I didn’t hit a single clay target at the Young Life Man Camp skeet shoot. My career in shooting skeet was over before it started. But all that changed two weeks ago. I rose from the ashes. I came to life! Check it out. **[Video of Skeet Shooting]** Seeing a comeback is life-giving in so many ways. That’s why we love spring. Spring is the ultimate comeback. Winter doesn’t get the final word. Life bursts forth from the ground.

On the other hand, we are saddened by loss, death and the destruction of beauty – which is why you felt what you did earlier this week when Notre Dame was on fire. Whether you’ve ever been there or not, watching a building that has stood for 850 years go up in flames caused us to gasp . . . and grieve.

I sort of gasped inwardly on Monday morning at Jenny Hoesel’s funeral service. We were watching a memorial video with pictures of her and Jerry’s life at almost the same time the fire was starting in Paris. And one of the pictures was of Jerry and Jenny and their two boys with the New York City skyline in the background. Can you guess what I noticed about the picture right away? The first thing I noticed were the Twin Towers in the background. I immediately felt that sense of loss; another reminder of an end or death, right in the middle of a funeral.

We love resurrection stories because we are drawn to life, but we hate destruction stories because they remind us of death. And we're constantly trying to get death out of our heads. "Focus on the positive." "Don't dwell on the negative." Deny death! The story of Jesus includes both His life (day after day) and death. But it's His life after His death that is the key; the hinge-point of history. We wouldn't be here without a resurrected Jesus. Each of the four Gospel stories about Jesus contains numerous accounts of His bodily resurrection. The first several verses in Luke barely get us started. But right in the middle of our passage today we hear and discover an important question: "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" (Luke 24:5)

This is the big question for us this morning – whether you believe in the resurrection or not. My hope is that all of us will ask, and keep asking, ourselves this question regardless of where we may be on our faith journey. I recognize some do not believe in the literal truth of Jesus' resurrection while many others do. But this is a good question no matter what you believe. So I'm going to keep this question up and let it pester all of us for the next several minutes.

If I only spend time trying to convince those of you who are unconvinced in the literal truth of the resurrection of Jesus, you'll go into defensive mode and won't have to deal with this question. And if I spend too much time defending the validity of the literal resurrection, those of you who already believe Jesus rose from the dead won't have to deal with the question either. You'll just be tempted to cheer me on. Here's what we know for sure: whether we believe in the resurrection of Jesus or not, **all of us are looking for LIFE**; life that is full and rich and robust; life that is meaningful hope-filled; and life that doesn't end . . . or end too soon.

And yet, here's what else I know: ALL OF US spend an awful lot of our time chasing after that which leads to death, dead ends, and disappointments. We yearn for life, but we keep chasing after and grabbing onto people and things that cannot give life, produce life, or sustain life.

For a moment, it feels like certain people and accomplishments and possessions are full of life. They give us bursts of joy. In many cases they are good things that are meant to be enjoyed. But they are not meant to give life. In fact, if we try to squeeze life out of them, we will be left with deep disappointment.

We think that we can find life in our education, or well-funded pension. We look to our marriages or jobs or kids to make us feel alive. It can be technology or the square footage of our dream home that we cling to; or experiencing sexual fulfillment; or figuring out our sexual or gender identity. And when all these things don't give us what we crave, we get desperate and devolve to sports teams and shopping sprees and internet sites and vacation hotspots. We keep looking for life in places and people and things that only lead to dead ends.

Why do we keep doing this? “Why do WE keep looking for the living [for life] among the dead?” And why don’t these people and things deliver in any lasting way? In fact, why do they leave us even more disappointed and restless? Augustine gave us an answer to these questions all the way back in the 5th century. He famously said, “You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds rest in You.”

We long for LIFE! The song you’re about to hear taps into that longing . . . that restlessness . . . that deep sense of hope that, **One Day**, our longing and restlessness will be over.

Restless by Switchfoot at 9:30

I am the sea on a moonless night,
Calling, falling, slipping tides
I am the leaky, dripping pipes
The endless aching drops of light
I am the raindrop falling down,
Always longing for the deeper ground
I am the broken, breaking seas
Even my blood finds ways to bleed

Even the rivers ways to run
Even the rain to reach the sun
Even my thirsty streams,
Even in my dreams

[Chorus] I am restless, I am restless
I am restless, looking for you
I am restless, I run like the ocean to find your shore
I’m looking for you

I am the thorn stuck in your side,
I am the one that you left behind,
I am the dried up doubting eyes
Looking for the well that won't run dry

Running hard for the other side
The world that I've always been denied
Running hard for the infinite
With the tears of the saints and hypocrites

Oh blood of black and white and gray
Death and life and night and day
One by one by one
We let our rivers run

[Chorus]

I can hear you breathing,
I can hear you leading
More than just a feeling
More than just a feeling
I can feel you reaching
Pushing through the ceiling
'til the final healing
I'm looking for you

Until the sea of glass we meet
At last completed and complete
The tide of tear and pain subside
Laughter drinks them dry

I'll be waiting
Anticipating
All that I aim for
What I was made for
With every heartbeat
All of my blood bleeds
Running inside me
Looking for you

[Chorus]

Songwriters: Jon Foreman
Restless lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, The Bicycle Music Company

One Day by Matt Redman at 8:30 and 11

One day You'll make everything new, Jesus
One day You will bind every wound
The former things shall all pass away
No more tears

One day You'll make sense of it all, Jesus
One day every question resolved
Every anxious thought left behind
No more fear

[Chorus] When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout the victory

One day we will see face to face, Jesus
Is there a greater vision of grace
And in a moment, we shall be changed
On that day

And one day we'll be free, free indeed, Jesus
One day all this struggle will cease
And we will see Your glory revealed
On that day

[Chorus]

Yes, one day we will see face to face, Jesus
Is there a greater vision of grace?
And in a moment, we shall be changed
Yes, in a moment, we shall be changed
In a moment, we shall be changed
On that day

Songwriters: Matt Redman / Beth Redman / Leonard Jarman
One Day (When We All Get To Heaven) lyrics © Capitol Christian Music Group

You can look all over this world for something or someone to satisfy your restlessness. But if you and I aren't aware or can't name our deepest longing and hope, we will always settle for less-than-helpful substitutes. If we look to anyone and anything other than the One who is stronger than death itself, we will not find the LIFE that is LIFE ITSELF; the life we crave.

Because Jesus defeated sin and death – because He really rose from the dead – I can tell you this Good News: The Risen Jesus has made it possible that **One Day** you will see Him face to face. And, in His presence, the restlessness and longing will dissipate . . . and that One Day when you see Him face to face will lead to another day . . . and another day . . . and another day after that. And it will go on day after day after day . . . for endless days!

Until then, my prayer is that every one of us will find life in the Risen Jesus. May we never accept or pursue any substitutes. And may the restlessness of our hearts find their rest in Him.