

We Have Seen the Lord!

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[0 : 0 0] to Sunday. Two things that Jesus promised all through his life that rising from the dead would mean. It means that Jesus is our judge and Jesus is our life giver. First of all, Jesus is our judge.

The Bible says this, God has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead. So Jesus said that one day he will judge everyone. He said a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out. Those who have done good will rise to life and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. And now that Jesus is alive again, we know that what he said was true.

One day Jesus is going to judge everybody. We'll all stand before him, everyone who's ever lived, and he'll judge us. I wonder if you could just have a think whether you've ever said these words.

It's not fair. Have any of you ever said those words? Maybe even the last week some of you have said there's some nods of heads. Maybe you could think about the times when you really think it's not fair. Maybe in the playground if someone's being mean or maybe the way that a parent treats you that wasn't how they said they'd treat you. It's not fair. And that's because we long for things to be fair, for things to be right. And you know what? When you get older, grown-ups, that feeling doesn't go away. We long for a world where there's justice. Just think about what's been in the news over the last couple of weeks. It's not fair. We've heard about that chemical attack in Syria, and then you have different world leaders saying completely different things about what happened.

Yesterday, another major bomb in Syria. BBC News saying that our country has dropped, I think they said over 200 bombs this year. The United States have authorized this bomb that people said was the mother of all bombs on a country that's not theirs, Afghanistan. They're sending an armada to North Korea. Now, why are they doing that? And why does our country drop bombs?

[2 : 0 9] Whether or not we agree with what they're doing, they do it because they think it's not fair what's happening. There's injustice. And they feel the best way to deal with that is with action to try and bring justice. And people who don't agree with them for dropping the bombs say, it's not fair. It's not just. We all want the same thing. We want justice in our world, and we can't bring it. And so how wonderful to hear that Jesus is alive. That in a real place outside Jerusalem, there's an empty tomb.

Jesus is alive, and one day he will put everything right. And all the fake news and all the lies will be exposed and shown for what they are, and there'll be truth, and all the wrong will be put right. People will be held to account. It's great news. But the problem is that Jesus is perfect, and he's going to judge all of us. And the Bible is clear that none of us have treated God as we should. So if we're not somebody who has let God be God of every bit of our lives all the time, he will give us what we've chosen, and we'll be shut out from God and his goodness forever. If we've not said, thy will be done, but my will be done, he'll give us what we want, and we'll be left without him forever. So how can we escape from that justice, that judgment that's coming? Well, our second bit of great news about Jesus, he's the judge, but secondly, he's the life giver, and we know that from him being alive himself. You see, he promised this. He said, I tell you the truth, whoever hears my words and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned. He has crossed over from death to life just by hearing his words and believing.

So Jesus is alive to give us life that starts now, knowing God, and lasts forever. All we have to do is trust him to believe. When I take funerals for people, I get to say these words as I walk in behind the people carrying in the coffin. They're the words that Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live even though they die, and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this? It's an amazing promise, and we know it's true because Jesus is alive. So how can we believe that Jesus is alive? Well, we believe because of all that evidence that PC Plodd was finding it so hard to understand. The evidence about Mary and Peter and John who found the grave clothes, about the other disciples all seeing Jesus alive again.

And John, who wrote that account of all that happened, finishes by saying, Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. So we meet all kinds of people who believe all kinds of different things, don't we?

We meet people who have different religions and different ideas about God. But John says, believe that Jesus rose from the dead because all these people saw it happen and have told you their testimony so that you can trust. We've seen the evidence, we've heard that great promise of life, and the question for all of us is, will you believe it? It's the best news that we'll ever hear.

[5 : 48] Will you believe so that you can have life forever from Jesus? Let's say a prayer together. Let's put our hands in the air for a wow prayer as our church family. Wow. Thank you, Jesus, for giving us news today that changes our lives and changes the world. Thank you that you are alive again, that you've smashed death to bits, that you appeared to Mary, Peter, John, Thomas, all the disciples so that we can believe. We thank you that you promised justice for our broken world and life forever with you.

Jesus, we cannot wait for your new creation where you reign and there's nothing bad and no one sad. Please keep us believing today and every day and please come back soon and take us home. Amen.