

“ONLY JESUS” - A Holy Week Series

The Only Hope (Easter)

Pastor Jason Dennett's Teaching Notes

[There was a man who worked his whole life and saved up all of his money and he was a stingy, selfish miser.](#) He never liked to spend his money and so his wife never got any of the things she could have had. And while he was on his deathbed, this miser said to his wife, "**Honey, when I die I want to make sure that you take all of my money and bury it with me. I want all of that money for the next life, in my afterlife.**" Well she was in tears, she was highly emotional and so through her tears she made the promise, "**I'll do it.**" Well he died and he was there stretched out in his casket and the funeral was about over and the undertaker was about ready to close the casket. And the widow up in the front, his wife, said, "**Just one moment.**" And she walked forward with a metal box, placed it in the casket. Her friend next to her, once she sat down said, "**Don't tell me you just put that money in his casket, did you?**" She said, "**Yes I did, I made a promise to him and I kept my promise.**" And her friend persisted, "**Tell me you weren't foolish enough to put all of his money in that casket with him.**" And she said, "**I fulfilled my promise to my husband, and gave him all his money, just as he requested. This is how I did it: I took all of his money, put it in my account and wrote him a check.**" And then she said, "**If he can cash it, he can spend it.**" That's a very clever wife. She understood a few things. She understood, number one, you can't take it with you. Number two, always keep your promises. And number three, it's wise to be practical about your future, which she was. I want to talk to you about that this morning briefly. **It's time for you to be practical about your future!**

NKJV - "**And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.'**"

I. Jesus Achieved Victory over FEAR! (v.17)

II. Jesus Achieved Victory over DEATH! (v.18a)

III. Jesus Achieved Victory over SATAN! (v.18b)

I. Jesus Achieved Victory over FEAR! (v.17)

"And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.'"

- **Fear was a very real issue for the 1st century Christians:**
 - In 96A.D. Emperor Domitian was on the throne, and was unleashing the 2nd great wave of State-sponsored persecution against all Christians in the empire: beatings, burnings, crucifixions, arena executions...

- **Fear is a very real issue for the 21st century world as well:**
 - Economy, banks, gas prices, oil industry, job losses...
 - **NY Times:** "*The economy and the fear of what's going to happen is having a huge effect. People are exhibiting severe anxiety, or more marital strife, or domestic violence, in some cases substance abuse.*"
 - **National Sleep Foundation:** "*Twenty-seven percent of people surveyed had sleepless nights because of economic anxiety.*"
 - **One magazine** asked, "*What is the most common reason that people are afraid?*" Three answers were given:
 - 1) *The possibility of a nuclear attack on our soil.*
 - 2) *That a spouse or a child would come down with a terminal illness.*
 - 3) *That you yourself would come down with a terminal illness.*

- **We can either choose to live by FAITH or by FEAR - they're mutually exclusive!**

- **David** had a choice to look at his Goliath... or **his GOD!** (1 Sam 17)
- **Peter** had a choice to look at the storm... or **the SAVIOR!** (Matt 14)
- This could be called the **"Power of Perspective"** in our lives!

- For John, the basis of **FAITH** instead of FEAR is based upon Who is talking with John: **Jesus!!**
 - **"I AM the First and the Last."** - a statement of Divinity, that Jesus is God, the Son!
 - **Revelation 1:12-16 NLT** - *"When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lamp-stands. And standing in the middle of the lamp-stands was someone like the Son of Man. He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hair were **white like wool**, as white as snow. And his eyes were like **flames of fire**. His feet were **like polished bronze** refined in a furnace, and his voice thundered **like mighty ocean waves**. He held seven stars **in his right hand**, and a **sharp two-edged sword** came from his mouth. And his face was **like the sun** in all its brilliance."*

- The New Testament clearly teaches us that **Jesus Christ is fully God, and fully Man** - the "God-Man":
 - **John 1:1-2: 1:14** - He is **the Word** made flesh!
 - **John 8:24,58** - He is the Great **"I AM"**
 - **John 11:25** - He is the **"Resurrection and the Life"**
 - **Revelation 1:17** - He is the **"First and the Last"**

- However, if you're **NOT** a follower of Jesus today, then you should be **VERY AFRAID!**
 - **Luke 11:23** - *"He who is not with Me **is against Me**."*
 - **John 3:18** - *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but **he who does not believe is condemned** already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

II. Jesus Achieved Victory over DEATH! (v. 18a)

"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen."

- **Death** causes us so much pain and sadness in our lives...
 - Cancer, Aids, Disease, Terrorism, Persecution, Old Age,...

- **Death** came into the human race through Adam, thru his sin:
 - **Romans 5:12** - *"When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned."*

- But **Jesus conquered DEATH** when He PAID for the sins of the world, and ROSE from the dead! This means that, as a Christian, you **don't need to fear DEATH** anymore!
 - Father and son...with a bee in their car. - **"I have taken the sting for you!"**
 - **"LONG LIVE THE KING" - a Poem that first tells the story of the Death of Christ, continues and says:** *"..but this King is not gone forever; the story has not ended. The story has a twist; a third act; there is a third day. And on that third day, the King **stripped Death** of it's power, and **extinguished the sting of Hades!** This King is **NOT** defeated; this King is **NOT** destroyed! This King is **the Resurrection**; He is **the Life**; He is **the Alpha and Omega**; the **Beginning and the End!** The King has **RETURNED**, leaving **Death behind**, **defeating Hades**, inviting us all to live in His **VICTORY**, in His **KINGDOM**, in His **PEACE!** Yes, the King is risen! **LONG LIVE THE KING!!***

- **Romans 8:37-39** - *"Yet in all these things **we are more than conquerors through Him** who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

- However, if you're not a follower of Jesus Christ today, then you should be **VERY AFRAID OF DEATH!**
 - **Heb 9:22** - *Man lives once, and after this come the judgement!*
 - **Luke 16** - *Hell is a real place of physical punishment for sin and rejection of Christ!*
 - **Rev 20** - *The Lake of Fire is the eternal destiny of those who refuse God's love and forgiveness!*

III. Jesus Achieved Victory over SATAN! (v. 18b) **"And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."**

- **Keys are symbolic of AUTHORITY and POWER in the Scriptures!**
 - Car keys, House keys, City keys...
 - Jesus has the power of **ACCESS** and **AUTHORITY** over Hell, Death, and your Eternal Destiny!
- **But Jesus is called the "Last Adam" in the Bible, and He has conquered where the 1st Adam has failed!**
 - **John 12:31** - *"..now the ruler of this world will be cast out.."*
 - **John 16:11** - *"..the ruler of this world is judged."*
 - **1 John 3:8 NLT** - *"The Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil."*
 - *WWII...the Atom Bomb...V-day...still some confused Japanese soldiers fighting on!*
 - *Captain Philips illustration....satan is defeated and surrounded!*
- **There is a silly MYTH in our modern society:** *"All you have to do get to Heaven...is just die!" Even though the person never spoke of Jesus, never worshiped Jesus, never was forgiven by Jesus...they go to Heaven?? **No!!***
- **Going to Heaven is not AUTOMATIC,** it must be **INTENTIONAL**, it must be a deliberate, considered **CHOICE** that is made by a person. John said **"YES"** to Jesus...have you???

In today's world, if you look around you'll be **DISTRESSED**; if you look to yourself, you'll be **DEPRESSED**; but if you look to Jesus, you will be **BLESSED** and **AT REST!**