



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

I. INTRODUCTION

Easter is the time that we celebrate the one most significant event in the history of Christianity: the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

A. The Resurrection

1. It is the foundation of our Christian faith.
 - a. Not only that Jesus died for our sin, but He arose.
 - b. The resurrection separates Christianity from all other religions. We serve a LIVING SAVIOR.

2. It is victory over death.
 - a. Not only that Jesus achieved victory over physical death—defying death and arising from the tomb on the third day—but He achieved victory over spiritual death for all.
 - b. We are no longer dead in our sins.
 - c. **Ephesians 2:1**
NKJV “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins”

II. SPECIFIC EVENTS WE REVISIT AT EASTER

If you were to attend an Easter drama, you would revisit specific things that occurred during what is known as Holy Week.

A. The Passover Meal with the Disciples

1. Every Easter program that I have watched always includes Jesus at the last Passover with the disciples, sometimes portrayed in art as “The Last Supper”.

2. The blood painted upon the doorpost would serve as a protective barrier against judgement and death that would pass through the land of Egypt on that night.

3. When death passed through the land that night, it had to PASSOVER every place that the blood was applied.



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

4. On the night that Jesus partook of the PASSOVER meal with the disciples, He did something different.
 - a. **Luke 22:19 -20**

NKJV “And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.’”
 - b. On that night, Jesus established a NEW COVENANT.
 - Something different than Passover.
 - Passover was real—a real deliverance from slavery.
 - But it also was a type, a foreshadowing of something to come.

PASTOR’S NOTE: *The type and shadow that the first Passover represented was what Jesus—the Messiah—would do when He came. Jesus was that Messiah and, at that last Passover with the disciples, something changed when He passed the bread and the cup, which represented the NEW COVENANT in His blood.*

- *Jesus’ blood serves as a protective and delivering force that works on behalf of every person that applies it to their life by faith.*
- *Jesus’ blood delivers us from the slavery of sin, just as Israel was delivered from the slavery to the Egyptians.*
- *The blood alone serves as our deliverance, just as the blood alone protected and delivered Israel on that night in Egypt.*
- ***You can’t bypass this night and rush ahead to the resurrection.***

B. Jesus’ Prayer in the Garden

1. Luke 22:39-44

NKJV “Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. When He came to the place, He said to them, ‘Pray that you may not enter into temptation.’ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, ‘Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven,



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

2. Two things regarding this experience of prayer in the Garden:
 - a. His sweat became as great drops of blood.
 - The agony that He faced that night was fierce.
 - All opposition was coming at Him spiritually to STOP His redemption for mankind that would occur through His death on the cross.
 - Physical suffering—mental suffering—spiritual suffering
 - b. His prayer of consecration.
 - “Not My will, but Thine be done”—even unto DEATH.
 - **Philippians 2:8**
AMPC “And after He had appeared in human form, He abased *and* humbled Himself [still further] and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross!”

C. His Crucifixion

1. Crucifixion in the ancient world—especially under the Roman Empire—was typically reserved for the lowest and most serious offenders. It wasn’t used for ordinary citizens.
2. Crucifixion was designed to be:
 - a. Extremely painful and slow.
 - b. Public and humiliating.
 - c. A warning to others not to defy Roman rule.

D. The Tomb

1. Most Easter dramas include these scenes and more, including the whipping scene, the betrayal, the arrest, and the trial.
2. Once the crucifixion occurs, Jesus is taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb. Someone sings a nice song. Then Jesus appears as the stone is rolled away, and the resurrection is celebrated.



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

3. This leaves us thinking that His body was intombed for three days, yet nothing was occurring. The work had been done through His death and His suffering on the cross. HOWEVER, this is an incomplete portrayal.
4. There were NECESSARY things occurring “BEYOND THE CROSS.”

III. FINISHED BUT UNFINISHED

Yes, the persecution, suffering, and pain—the physical price that had to be paid at the cross—was finished, but there were other things going on beyond the cross. Once His body was dead, Jesus was still alive. But where was He? What was He doing for these three days?

A. Three Not So Silent Days

1. Jesus was **NOT** in heaven.
 - a. **Matthew 12:40**
NKJV “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, **so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**”
 - b. While Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, he wasn’t inactive. He was very much alive and aware of his surroundings.
 - c. “...so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth...”. The “heart of the earth” isn’t referencing heaven.
 - d. When Jesus told the thief that he would be with Him in paradise, He wasn’t referencing heaven. Yes, he would eventually be with Him in heaven, but not this day.
 - e. Many people believe that “the heart of the earth” was simply the GRAVE.
 - f. This isn’t the case. Jesus was in the heart of the earth, the abode of the dead, the place where the dead went prior to redemption.
2. Further proof that Jesus wasn’t in heaven for the three days while His body was in the tomb.
 - a. **John 20:16-17**
NKJV “Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to Him, ‘Rabboni!’ (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”

TPT “Jesus cautioned her, ‘Mary, don’t cling to me, for I haven’t yet ascended to God, my Father. And he’s not only my Father and God, but now he’s your Father and your God! Now go to my brothers and tell them what I’ve told you, that I am ascending to my Father—and your Father, to my God—and your God!’”

- b. On **Resurrection Day**—3 days after His body was placed in the tomb—Jesus makes it clear to Mary that He hasn’t yet ascended to the Father. He had not been in heaven.
- c. He was **on His way TO** heaven on Resurrection Day.
- d. So, where **HAD** He spent the last three days?

B. The Abode of the Dead

Where did the dead go prior to Jesus making the way for us to go to heaven?

1. Paradise

a. **Luke 23:43**

NKJV “And Jesus said unto him, ‘Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.’”

b. Two significant meanings of this word:

- The part of Hades which was thought by the Jews to be the abode of the souls of the pious until resurrection.
- Heaven

c. Both definitions would be true if you consider the timing!

2. Hades (Old Testament) / Sheol (New Testament)

- a. Prior to Jesus making entry into heaven possible, the Old Testament saints went into this place, waiting on Christ to come. They were still awaiting the coming of the Jewish Messiah.



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

- **Hebrews 11:13**

NKJV “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

b. Two places in Hades:

- There was the place of the righteous dead: Abraham’s bosom.
- And a place of imprisonment for the unrighteous dead.

- **Luke 16:22**

NKJV “So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

PASTOR’S NOTE: *Notice these two men went to into this place of holding until the coming of Jesus, BUT they were in DIFFERENT AREAS.*

- *One (the beggar) was in Abraham’s bosom—a type of paradise, a place for those of faith—until Christ paved the way into heaven with His own blood.*
- *The other (the rich man) went into a place of imprisonment, awaiting final judgement.*

IV. WHERE DID JESUS GO WHEN HE DIED?

Jesus showed up in both places: Paradise / Abrahams’s bosom and also in the prison of the unrighteous dead.

A. Jesus was Numbered with the Transgressors

1. Isaiah 53:12

NKJV “Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.”

TPT “So I, *Yahweh*, will assign him a portion among a great multitude, *and he will triumph* and divide the spoils of victory with *his* mighty ones—all because



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

he poured out his life-blood to death. He was counted among the worst of sinners, yet he carried sin's burden for many and intercedes for those who are rebels."

ISV "Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong; because he poured out his life to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet **he carried the sins of many**, and made intercession for their transgressions."

PASTOR'S NOTE: *When Jesus died, He was carrying my sins, your sins, ALL sins. Our sins gave death access to Him. Because He was carrying OUR sins, He didn't die numbered with the righteous. He died numbered with the transgressors (or sinners). He died the death of a sinner—ME.*

2. Because of His being numbered with the transgressors, the first place He showed up wasn't Paradise (or Abraham's bosom). He first appeared in the underworld as a sinner, carrying my sins and yours.

3. But because He never sinned, something happened that Satan and every demon did not anticipate.

a. When they crucified Him and He showed up in their abode, HE TOOK ACTION.

b. **1 Corinthians 2:8**

KJV "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

c. **Colossians 2:15**

NKJV "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."

TPT "Then Jesus made a public spectacle of all the powers and principalities of darkness, stripping away from them every weapon and all their spiritual authority and power to accuse us. And by the power of the cross, Jesus led them around as prisoners in a procession of triumph. He was not their prisoner; they were his!"



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

4. Because Jesus entered their abode carrying sin and numbered as a transgressor, they thought: “We have Him now. We will imprison Him just like every other transgressor that has shown up here.”
 - a. What they didn’t realize is that He had no sin of His own. He was only carrying **ours**.
 - b. They thought they would imprison Him. Instead, He imprisoned **them!**
 - c. **Revelation 1:18**
NKJV “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.”
 - d. The first place Jesus had to go was to the prison of the unrighteous to deal with the kingdom of darkness and overthrow their powers and authority. He took their keys!

B. Abraham’s Bosom

1. Jesus now showed up in Paradise (Abraham’s bosom), the abode of the righteous Old Testament saints, those waiting on salvation from the Old Covenant to be completed.
 - a. The Old Covenant had run its course and the New had begun.
 - b. Jesus could now lead those awaiting salvation onward and release them to heaven.
2. Many were waiting.
 - a. Abraham was waiting.
 - **Hebrews 11:8-10**
NKJV “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”
 - **Jesus:** “Abraham, what are you doing here?”
 - **Abraham:** “I am still looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”
 - **Jesus:** “Let’s go!”



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

- b. John the Baptist was waiting.
- c. The prophets of the OT were waiting.
- d. David was waiting.
- e. Moses and others were waiting.

C. The Triumphal Procession of Old Testament Saints to Heaven

1. When Jesus came to Paradise (Abraham's bosom) and found the Old Testament saints who had been awaiting the Messiah, He led them forth from Hades (the realm of the dead) and on to heaven.
 - a. However, He made a stop along the way.
 - b. He stopped by the tomb on the third day to get His body!
2. The spirits of the Old Testament saints were traveling with Him, and something amazing happened.
 - a. **Matthew 22:52-53**
NKJV "...and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many."

MSG "What's more, tombs were opened up, and many bodies of believers asleep in their graves were raised. (After Jesus' resurrection, they left the tombs, entered the holy city, and appeared to many.)"

NLT "The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. They left the cemetery after Jesus' resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people."
 - b. When Jesus left Hades, He brought the Old Testament saints with Him on His way back to the Father.
 - c. As He stopped by the tomb, and His body was resurrected from the dead, some of these Old Testament saints revisited their tombs, too. And their bodies were also raised from the dead, and they appeared unto many in the city of Jerusalem!
 - d. Why? As a sign.



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

D. No, The Three Days in the Tomb Were NOT Silent

1. While His body rested in the tomb, His spirit was actively defeating the power of death.
2. By entering the realm of the dead as a SINLESS man, Jesus essentially broke its power from inside out, making resurrection power available to everyone.
3. In short, He wasn't asleep. He was on a divine mission to finalize His victory over every realm of existence.

V. THE RESURRECTION

- The three days in the tomb were not silent.
- After finishing everything on the other side, Jesus arose.
- **Psalm 16:9-11**

NKJV "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In Your presence *is* fullness of joy; At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore."

TPT "My heart and soul explode with joy—full of glory! Even my body will rest confident and secure. For you will not abandon me to the realm of death, nor will you allow your Faithful One to experience corruption. Because of you, I know the path of life as I taste the fullness of joy in your presence. At your right side I experience *divine* pleasures forevermore!"

PASTOR'S NOTE: *Hades / Sheol / the realm of the dead could not hold Him! The tomb / the grave could not hold Him. On the third day, He arose!*

- *"Up from the grave He arose, With a mighty triumph o'er His foes, He arose a Victor from the dark domain, And He lives forever, With His saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"*



EASTER • 2026

Beyond the Cross

Pastor Dale Campbell

VI. HIS RESURRECTION – OUR RESURRECTION

- **Galatians 2:20** “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”
- **Romans 8:1-2** “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.”
- **1 Peter 1:3-4** “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”

PASTOR’S NOTE: *Jesus died, defeated Hell and all that stood against us, and arose to bring us into NEW LIFE!*

- **Hebrews 2:3**
NLT “So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak?”
- *Jesus did **EVERYTHING** needed for us to be saved from sin.*
- *Jesus did **EVERYTHING** needed to give us a new life.*
- *Jesus did **EVERYTHING** needed for us to be reconciled to God and to be redeemed and restored to what God intended for us.*
- **THE CHOICE IS OURS.**