

The Wrath of Jesus, Part 2

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John 2:18-22

Okay, so I don't know if it's just me, but is it the 21st century, America at least, becomes so full of spin and lies that we just are jaded now, cynical, untrusting of just about everything? That'd be kind of true. No matter where we turn, someone's trying to convince us of something, and it's near impossible to determine whether or not they're telling us the truth. Truth has become so hard to come by because no one is neutral. Everyone's biased. And because of that, we have a hard time trusting people, especially people who've been given the responsibility to report the facts in a way that's unbiased. So, we just end up listening to people who share our bias. Right? We just assume they're right, because they agree with us. So, there you go. And whenever we meet someone who's from a different ideological universe than the one that we live in, the battle is on. Right? We're going to prove who's right and who's not.

When Jesus cleaned out the temple complex of a marketplace, that was the size of a football field that the Jewish authorities had set up there, you can imagine that caused quite a stir. They didn't like it. The merchants didn't like it. The money changers, they're not happy. Jesus is showing though His deep displeasure with false religion, and especially using His name and His house and His people to get rich, fleecing the flock, causes the wrath of Jesus, the subtle disapproval to come out. This wasn't a fly off the handle, out of control, rage monster. That's not what was going on on that day.

This is a settled, measured, perfectly righteous, angry response to blasphemy without even a hint of sin. We see this wrath in Jesus' actions when He cleans out the temple, both at the beginning of his ministry that's here in John 2, and at the end, which we see in the Synoptic Gospels, the other three. He does it at the beginning and at the end. I mean, He does it at the temple and He does it at Passover, which makes sense for the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And it's interesting that as you follow the flow of the Book of John, if you think about it, you have this introduction, that is this proclamation of all these incredible truths about Jesus. That He's the Word made, He's the eternal God, and yet He becomes a man. And the glory of God is housed in Him and then He's the son of God, and He's the Christ, and He's the teacher, and He's the Messiah. There's all of these proclamations of who He is. And then, this incredible person enters chapter 2, and you see this dichotomy. In one place, you have Him entering a real-life wedding, and He's the king who cares.

He's compassionate and kind to this groom and a bride and two families and a whole bunch of guests who run out of wine, and He secretly turns water into wine, so the reception can keep going without embarrassment. He cares about these little, tiny things about like wine at a wedding. And yet, a week later, here He is publicly in front of tens of thousands of people displaying his zeal for God and His wrath, His fury against those who dishonor Him. You got mercy on the one side and you got justice on the other side for those who reject Him. And it's all in the same chapter. It's like here is the greatness and the glory of God, Himself, becoming a man. And this is the response to every kind of person on the planet, mercy or justice.

Even to this day, His ministry has the same two components, mercy and justice. You can imagine the religious authorities; they weren't very happy with Jesus after He cleans out their temple. This is a no name guy. This is just a face in the crowd. He's got a massive entourage of five or six people. And He effectively stops the sacrifices, stops the flow of money into their bank accounts. He shames them proclaiming God's displeasure of their leadership. So, for the people in charge of the temple, they don't know who Jesus is. They have no idea. This is their introduction to him. So, they have a question, verse 18, "What sign do You show us for doing these things?" They asked for a sign because He's acting like the Messiah. He's doing something the Messiah would do. Malachi 3 says, when the Messiah comes, He will, "Suddenly come to His temple and He will sit as a refiner and purifier."

And that's what He does, right? He comes and He refines and He purifies all the false worship and the blasphemy and the marketing and the merchandising of God. He gets rid of all of that. Notice 2:16, He also calls God, His Father. So, they're saying, "Prove it. Prove it that God gave You the permission to do what You just did. Because by the way, we have permission, here in this temple from the Bible to do what we do, because we're the priests, we're the authorities and You're not. So tell us, why do You have the authority? How do You have the authority to go do this?" And they're told, Deuteronomy 13, Deuteronomy 18, to test people who claim to be acting for God, and to not just accept them because they say so.

So maybe, that's part of what they're doing. Maybe give them the benefit of the doubt, just a little bit at least, but just a little bit, because notice that there's no owning that what Jesus did when He cleaned out that temple was right. There's no owning that, there's no like, "You know what, You're right. This whole thing is not what God wants and He doesn't want this place where non-Jewish people are meant to come and worship. You don't want that filled with a bunch of animals. You're right, this doesn't honor God and we do need to clean this out." There's no owning that at all. Just the opposite; they are concerned with permission. They're not concerned with honoring God. They're not concerned with the purity of their worship. They're just concerned with "Hey, hey, do you have the authority to do that because we do."

Now, did God give Jesus the authority over the temple that He just showed? They demand, "Prove it. Prove You're acting in God's name. Do something that only God can do. When the Messiah comes, He'll do miracles. So, why don't You do a miracle, too?" They want proof. And so, he says, verse 19, "Okay. Here's your proof, destroy the temple, and in three days, I'll raise it up." There you go. Jesus doesn't play that game. He's happy to give them a sign. Just destroy this temple, tear it down to the very foundations and I will raise it in three days. You hear that right now, and it's like, "Okay, that's insane. That's crazy." And that's exactly what Jesus wants them to experience in that moment. He speaks to them in a riddle because they're blind. And He intends for them not to get it.

See, we think about parables as, "Oh, this is really cool illustration of truth," and uses earthy, like everyday language and everyday imagery in order to make sense of spiritual truths, but that's not what parables were. Go back and read Matthew chapter... Actually, it's 11:50, so let's just turn to Matthew chapter 13 today. Matthew chapter 13, Jesus tells The Parable of the Sower. You remember that one? Here's this guy who's throwing seed on the ground and the same seed falls on different kinds of soil. And I want you to understand, so in chapter 13, verse 8, "Other seed fell on the ground, on good soil and produced grain, some hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some 30. He who has an ear, let him hear," and he just walks away.

If you were there in the crowd, you'd be like, "What in the heck was that? What is he even saying?" It's not until notice. Then, the disciples came to Him and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" So here they are, according to the book of Mark, private meeting, not to the public. He doesn't say, "Hey, public, this is what I'm talking about. The soils are different kind of hearts. And the seed is the Word of God. And the Word of God hits different kind of people differently," like that. No, He says that to a small group of His disciples. Why? Because, verse 13, "This is why I speak to them in parables. Because seeing, they do not see and hearing, they do not hear, nor do they understand." Translation, "My parables are meant to keep them blind to the truth because they've already rejected Me."

And He does the same thing here in John 2. Turn back to that. This is the same thing with this riddle, "Their God." Think about it. Why would he do that? Because, their God, the God of the temple, the God of the temple they served in, the God of the temple they have authority over, the God that they sacrificed to, that God came to His temple, and they missed Him completely. They were blind to the sign that he just performed cleaning out the temple at least in partial fulfillment of Malachi chapter 3, and with obvious authority to command tens of thousands of people in that place, with all the animals and all the money and all that commands, all of it, so that's empty, and He does it with a little rope. That is divine power on display. They had enough in His actions to know this. And they were blind, they totally missed the sign He gave. And He wasn't about to give them another one.

And what this text does is it gives us insight into something many Christians do a lot. Now, I'm not going to ask for a show of hands. But, when we need proof for something, when they need to know something from God, what do many Christians do? They do the same thing here. They ask God to give them a sign. When we should, point number one, assume God refuses requests for signs. Assume God refuses requests for signs. We should not ask for signs when we want to know things like who to marry, what job to take, what school to go to, or what to do in any decision that we have ever.

God is not in the business of giving signs, telling us through feelings or circumstances or coincidences, "Here's what I want you to do or I'm real, here I am." That's not how God works. Why? First, because signs, like you see in John, are given at special pivotal moments in biblical history, not all the time and not for everyday decisions. So, think about it. Signs are these life-defining, eternity-altering kinds of things, like the Exodus from Egypt, okay, or the Son of God, Himself, walking the earth. Yes, signs are appropriate there.

Second, the signs we have in the Bible weren't given to help people make decisions. Signs are given to prove that someone is speaking or acting on behalf of God. So, Moses did signs and wonders. God did them through him to prove that his ministry was from God, and that his God was God over all the gods of Egypt, which idols and really nothing. Think about it, Jesus does miracles. Why? To prove that He really is the Son of God. That's what we see in the Book of John. These signs, these miracles are meant to prove that He's the Christ, He's the son of God, and that you should believe in Him and have eternal life.

And third, if God gives a sign of His existence or His will, when we ask, what kind of God is that? He gives you a sign just to keep you committed to Him. He gives you a sign just to let you know that He's real or, "Here's my will, for your life." Kind of jumps through our hoops. He does a little trick for us, so that we'll give Him the treat of our obedience, you give Him the treat of our worship or give Him give the treat of becoming to do what you do your will now. And does

God answer prayer? Of course, He does, but God is not our lackey. He doesn't perform for us. He's not a carnival sideshow, hoping we'll toss Him obedience or give Him a little bit of worship so that He'll continue to act for us.

If you think about it, it's insulting to ask God to prove that he's God or to show you, here's what I want you to do with your life. Why? Because where does He say that He's real? Where does He say, "This is what I want you to do with your life"? Where does He say that? Right here, right? In His word. His word says that he's with us. His word gives us His will. The better we know His word, the better we know His will for us. I know we want it to be more complicated. And maybe, we want there to be a little taste of the supernatural, But God in His grace made it a lot simpler than that. He just says no into my word. He doesn't get feelings or do tricks. Like you know you're praying, "Oh, God, I don't know what You want me to do. Give me a sign," and you get in your car and you're in traffic and there's that bumper sticker. And you're like, "There's a sign from the Lord, that bumper sticker says," like, "Here's what I should do." Seriously, the God of the universe does that? Or like, "God give me a sign. I don't know what to do. Okay, God." Oh, come, let us take our fill of love until morning. Let us delight ourselves with love. "Okay, Lord, so that means you want me to quit my job? I think. Because I don't love it and You tell me to fill my heart with loves." Seriously, the God of the Bible does that nonsense?

That's actually paganism. That is tree worshiping paganism. That is not Christianity at all. God doesn't use signs, like when we hide something from our kids, and we want to mess with them. And so, they're looking for it, and you're like, "Oh, you're getting hotter, hotter, hotter. Oh, oh, blazing on the sun. Oh, no, getting colder, colder, North Pole, North Pole." Could you imagine God doing that? Do we really think that He would do that? Like He hides His will from us? He's like, "Angels come over here. Watch this knucklehead. I put My will right here. And here they are, they're not going to get it. They're not even going to get close. I'm going to have to give them a sign. I might have to put a message on a bumper sticker in their commute and then they're going to find it." Seriously? Seriously.

God doesn't hide His will from us and expect to ask Him for a sign to know what He wants. If you think about it, it's not just silly, it's insulting. It is just so far beneath the honor and glory of God Almighty and the Lord of the universe, Jesus Christ. Let's not look for signs. God refuses requests for signs. And maybe, me saying this right now, maybe that just freed someone from anger towards God for not giving you a sign when you asked for one, or anger towards God for thinking something was a sign when it really wasn't but you thought it was, and so you followed it and it was horrible. And you're like, "God, why did you give me that sign to do this horrible thing?" and God's, "Yeah, that wasn't me. You just interpreted something as a sign and you thought that was me. And it didn't turn out, now you're mad at me for that?" No, God refuses that. He doesn't jump through our hoops.

We have no right to be angry at God for not giving us a sign when He refuses those requests. It's not how He works. "God, are you with me?" "Yes, because my word says I will never leave you or forsake you." "God, are you with me?" "Yes, I will be with you always to the end of the age." I mean, He didn't give you that thing you thought it was a sign from Him, when it really wasn't. Things didn't go how you hoped after thinking whatever you saw or heard was a sign when it really wasn't him. So, let's not treat God like some carnival monkey, you know just doing tricks for treats to prove that He's with us or actively leading our lives, when His word already says, "I'm with you. I'm actively leading your life."

Now, from the riddle, this puzzle that see the confusion, the perplexity that this causes in verse 20, "The Jews then said, 'It's taken 46 years to build this temple. And will you raise it up in three days?'" Now in case you're wondering, that's not a real question, right? We should read this question like a joke mixed with sarcasm and contempt. And I think that because the emphasis in the text is on that word, you. It's like that word should be underlined and circled and bolded and all caps, because what they're saying is this, "It's taken 46 years to build this temple and will you, no name guy, will you, peasant, will you, who's not authorized to do what you just did, will you raise it up in three days? Please." Reading this question with a mocking tone of disrespect for Jesus and absurdity in their voice. That's the way we should read, verse 20. You see, they not only wanted to reject Him, but they wanted to make Him feel the shame of their rejection for even suggesting He can build a temple in three days that's taken 46 years up to that moment and another 15 after that moment to be finally finished.

They take Jesus' words literally and listen, He knew they would. That wasn't a surprise to Him. That's why He said what He did with notice, no explanation. It's not like they asked the question and he's like, "Guys, guys, I wasn't talking about that temple. I'm talking about this temple right here. So, let me explain this to you, guys. You, your brother, whoever, you're going to kill me and I'm going to raise my body up in three days. That's what I'm saying." Notice the text just ends. It just ends. He leaves them in their ignorance. That's God's wrath by the way. And a person's heart is hard against Him and He leaves that person in their ignorance, that's God's wrath.

Now, the readers, we know who He is. We know that He's really God because we have from chapter 1, verse 1 all the way up to this moment. So, they're asking a question we know the answer to. We know that three days is too long for Him to raise that temple, three seconds is too long. He could do it instantly because He's God. They just need to get to work tearing it down, but He knew they wouldn't tear it down. That's a capital crime actually. They'd be executed for doing anything like that. You can't do that to a temple; Roman law forbid that. Jesus knows that. He wants to leave them in their ignorance, laughing at Him for something they don't understand, and something the reader, us, we don't understand what He's saying until we get to verse 21.

What in the world does that mean? Yeah, we're going to be saying, that's a crazy statement. What does that mean? But he was speaking about the temple of His body. So, John interrupts his retelling of this historical account in order to let us in on what the Jews didn't know, that Jesus was talking about the temple being His body, it being destroyed on the cross, and it being raised at His resurrection. Remember, He is the Word made flesh, the eternal God becoming a human, and dwelling among us. And that word in John 1:14 means the tabernacle, it means that the glory of God housed in a human body, living a human life.

It's Colossians 2:9, "Jesus, in Him, the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily." So, Jesus didn't become a God through His obedience. He's always been God. John 1:1, "He's the eternal God." He knows all things, because He's God, including the future. So, He knew what would happen to Him two to three years after this event. Which means, that though they laughed at Him that day, He got the last laugh when they did destroy His body, but three days later, notice verse 19, "He rose Himself from the dead."

So, in their confusion, their perplexity, we see a general rule about people which is this, point number two, anticipate people misunderstanding Jesus. Anticipate people misunderstanding Jesus. Anticipate it, expect it. It shouldn't surprise us when people misunderstand. When people

are perplexed, they don't understand Jesus. They don't understand why you're following Him. They just don't get it. They think it's crazy and weird, foolishness. You should actually be surprised when people start to get it, actually.

Why? Because, apart from Christ, the Word of God's been in our lives, non-Christians, according to Romans 1:28, have minds that are depraved, which means rejecting truth, rationality, and what's right. The evil is good and good is evil because their minds are depraved. Ephesians 4, their minds are futile, which means, fixated on the useless, on the things that are empty, that have no eternal value at all. Understanding of God is darkened because it says, they're alienated from Him with minds that are dominated by an anti-God tendency called the flesh according to Colossians 2.

They opposed the truth because their mind is corrupted. It's broken, it's twisted, it's tainted, according to 2 Timothy 3:8. All of which is why, in their rebellion, they believed that the rebellion is actually the way to life, but Proverbs 14:12 says, "There's a way that seems right to a man. A way that seems right to a woman, but it's at its destination. They think it's awesome. They think it's great, but it's really on its way to death." This is the truth, the reality, the actual state of every mind, of every person that has ever lived apart from Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Apart from being born again, every non-Christian mind, though able to do great, wonderful, amazing things that helped millions of people as we see all the time, but when it comes to God, their natural mind is depraved, futile, fleshly corrupt. Which means, my whole point in saying that is that nobody just gets it. No unbeliever is going to get it. If they just had more knowledge, we just had more conversations, if they just memorized more Bible, have more Bible in their lives, then they would get it. No. This isn't an intellectual thing at all. The nonbelievers interrogating Jesus that day knew the Bible better than most Christians ever.

And when God came to their real lives in a real temple, in a real place, they missed Him completely. Bible knowledge doesn't mean salvation, right? Satan knows the Bible the best and Satan is not now nor ever will he be saved. Now, in saying that, it's only by God's Spirit, working through His word, that enlightens the mind and makes people alive so that they turn from their sins and trust in Christ, that's why faith comes from hearing the word of Christ, Romans 10:17.

So, instead of maybe hoping our friends or family or spouse or kids or grandkids will just get it one day, let's realize that they can't get it without God's work in their life. And so instead, let's pray that they get it. Let's pray that God works in their hearts and their minds so that they get it instead of being frustrated that they don't get it when they can't get it. And I say that on purpose, 1 Corinthians 2:14 puts it this way, says, the natural man, 1 Corinthians 2:14, the natural man, meaning the person without God's work in their life, just naturally on their own, "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for their folly to him." So, here's the God of the universe, omniscience, all knowledge, all wisdom, and they go, "All of that is foolishness. I don't accept that."

And then he says, "Why?" He is not able to understand them. He doesn't have the ability in and of himself because he's apart from the spirit. He's natural. Apart from that, he's not able to understand the things of God because they're spiritually discerned and they don't have the Spirits work in their lives. You're getting frustrated in what seems like, "Why don't you get this whole Jesus thing?" It's like being frustrated with a paraplegic who can't keep up with you while you're on a walk with them. They just can't. So, let's make sure that we anticipate people

misunderstanding who Jesus is. They misunderstand it all the time. That's the normal state of human beings.

Now, from the puzzle that we saw there, that the perplexity, let's finish with the prophecy in verse 22; "When therefore, He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this." Said what He did in verse 19, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. So, not only did these religious authorities not get it, but neither did Jesus' disciples. That doesn't mean they weren't saved, they were saved, but this truth just didn't make sense to them. Like, probably for all of us, many things in the Bible that don't make sense to us yet. It didn't make sense that is until what? What does the text say? Until Jesus what? Until He rose from the dead. And notice, that includes the author, right? John was there. He was there that day, he heard Jesus say that, and he's like, "I didn't even get it. Two to three years roaming around in my head. What in the world did that mean? Destroy this temple. Three days. What?" He rises from the dead, he's like, "Got it. I know exactly what that means."

And when you look back at the text and read it again, you realize this whole text is about the resurrection, right? The puzzle that causes their confusion was because while Jesus points them to the temple, because they're standing in the temple complex, and they just assumed that He's talking about the physical temple. It says that He was really talking about His own body as the temple. And the proof they were looking for, He does give them, but two to three years after this event, when they would destroy His body, and three days later, that same body would be raised; this is the 2.0 version. Which means this text is a prophecy from God who knows the future and knows the future about the greatest event that's happened on this planet, which is the resurrection of the Son of God, which I think helps us, point number three, acknowledge Jesus' resurrection as Christianity's great proof.

Acknowledge Jesus' resurrection as Christianity's great proof. The sign, the proof that Jesus is the Son of God, that He is the promised Messiah, that He is the Savior of the world. He said He rose from the dead. Notice, verse 22, again, His resurrection was the proof that His words were true. And the resurrection, according to Paul, 1 Corinthians 15, is the proof that Christianity is true. Listen to how he put it. He says, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain. It's empty, it's worthless, it's of no worth at all if Jesus didn't rise from the dead. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, it's worthless, and you are still in your sins."

In fact, not only is the resurrection the proof that Jesus is the eternal God in a body, and that He had authority to clean out the temple that day. But notice, verse 22, how His resurrection was what convinced His disciples that the Bible and His words were true. Look at verse 22, again, "When, therefore, He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said, 'Destroy this temple in three days, I'll raise it up.'" And they believed the scripture and the word Jesus had spoken. So notice, scriptures and Jesus words are on the same level. Notice that. And then you got to ask yourself, "Okay, what scripture that came to mind as like, 'I see the scripture now in a new way that I didn't see before, after He rose from the dead'?"

Well maybe, it's prophecies of Jesus' resurrection, like Isaiah 53:10. Seven hundred years before Jesus is even born, says that, after his death, God will, "prolong his days." To hear he dies, but His days are prolonged, how is that? Resurrection. Psalm 16, verses 8-11, which says, "Jesus, a thousand years before He was born, He says that God would not abandon His soul in the grave." Well, it's not going to be abandoned in the grave. It's because He's in the grave. He's not going to

let Him experience corruption. But instead, God would see them at His right hand, which is where Jesus ascended to. When? After His resurrection. It's where He is now.

So notice, because of the resurrection, the disciples believed the scriptures, and notice, because of the resurrection, they believed, "the word that Jesus had spoken," which is likely 2:19, "Destroy this temple and in three days, I'll raise it up." He's predicting His own resurrection, which He does. If you go back through the Gospels, again, I've found 13 times where His resurrection is specifically predicted by Him; "I'm going to die. And then three days later, I'm going to raise from the dead."

Thirteen times in the New Testament, where He predicts His own resurrection. Now, let's think about that for a second. It's one thing for me to predict like the sun will come up tomorrow. And nobody would be like, "Dude, how do you do that? That was amazing. Right on, that was awesome." But you predict you're going to die and you're going to rise from the dead and you pick the day it's going to happen, three days later, and you pulled it off, probably should listen to Him. Probably should give your life to Him. Probably should stop rejecting Him.

Over and over, He told His followers that He'd die and rise again. Over and over, they didn't get it. In fact, when He died, His disciples weren't going, "Hey, guys, three days, let's just hang out here for a second. Three days, He's going to be back. It's going to be awesome." No, they're like, "Let's go fishing. The guy's not the guy. He must be someone else. Let's go." But what did it take for them to come back? And what did it take for them to not only come back, but to come back on fire with a passion to preach Jesus everywhere and even bring them to a martyr's death for preaching Jesus. What was it that brought them back? One event, the resurrection of Jesus. They lived their lives and gave their lives because Jesus rose from the dead. The resurrection, it's the great proof, the smoking gun, the open and shut case, the silver bullet evidence that Jesus is the Son of God. Romans 1:4, "He is declared the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead." And it is the evidence Christianity is true.

God doesn't give a sign, a personal feeling to determine whether or not this whole thing is true. He gives an undeniable fact of history. Jesus rose from the dead. He actually, really, truly, factually rose from the dead. This proof, by the way, is independent of our feelings, our opinions, our preferences, and even our existence. This proof is something any one of us can read about, think about, research, see for ourselves, in His word, whether or not it's true. One man did that, his name was Simon Greenleaf. We don't know him now. It's many, many centuries ago, but he was a great lawyer, one of the founders of Harvard Law School. His three-volume work, *Treatise on the Law of Evidences*, remains a classic to this very day, still read.

So, he decides, "I'm going to apply my approach to evidences. I'm going to take that. I'm going to seek to use that to disprove the claims of Jesus, especially that He rose from the dead." And so, he takes all of his knowledge and his skill as a lawyer with evidences, and he takes it to the New Testament, and came to the conclusion that the witnesses were so reliable that he had to accept them as fact in a court of law. His book, *The Testimony of the Evangelists*, remains unrefuted to this day. The justice jurors in a trial must, they should, they have a duty to believe sound evidence, the proof that is the resurrection shows us why we should all turn from our sins and should all give our lives to Jesus because he did not stay in the grave.

So, in a world now and then, that doesn't just believe something because someone says so. God as an act of mercy doesn't say, "Believe it, because I said so," though he could do that, because He's God, but what does He do? In His grace, His kindness towards us, He gives us proof. And

that proof is the resurrection. So, if you're not a Christian, unlike the Jewish authorities that day, Jesus has given you a sign. And you're here now to hear about the great sign which is Jesus' resurrection, which points beyond itself and screams, "Jesus is the Son of God, Christianity is true, Jesus' death pay the penalty for human sin and did it perfectly because God raised Him from the dead."

And that He actually rose from the dead is the central claim of Christianity that every person has to wrestle with, that every person has to come to grips with. And if you rose from the dead, it doesn't matter really, ultimately, if your parents forced you to go to church or forced you to live like a Christian, or... It doesn't matter if Christianity isn't what you would create if you were God, or doesn't matter if you like it, or if it makes you feel... None of that ultimately matters, right? Two plus two equals four, even if you hate math, right? Our opinions about things, our preference for what we think should be... Truth doesn't care about our feelings. In the same way, if Jesus rose from the dead, it's true. And our feelings, our preferences, our opinions, our desires, can't change that at all.

So, in this season of Christmas, don't forget that the baby grew up, became a man and cleaned out the temple that day as a preview of His wrath against all who would reject Him. Don't be like the people there that day who saw the truth with their own eyes, who heard the truth with their own ears, they saw the lips of the Son of God moving with their own eyes, and yet refused Him. Do not harden your hearts. If you hear His voice today, respond, come to Him to find rest, come to Him to be saved, come to Him and the truth will set you free forever. If you are a Christian, like the disciples that day, even though they're confused and didn't understand it, that's okay. Let the reality of Jesus' resurrection increase your trust in Him.

Let His resurrection give you hope and peace in the midst of pain, especially this time of year, when you remember all the people that aren't here now who've gone before you, went to heaven, take the resurrection and help you to process through some of that. Let Jesus' resurrection give you faith, not fear, even in the face of death. Why? 1 Corinthians 15, again, "If Jesus is raised, then all who trust in Him will be raised, too." It's a fact, a guarantee. If He did, then you will, too, if you belong to Him. And if He rose from the dead, if our resurrection is guaranteed because He rose from the dead, then let's stay committed to Him.

If there's a temptation, like, "I don't know if I want to keep doing this. That's all nonsense or whatever," you need to put your roots down here. But let's grow in our commitment to Jesus. Let's love Him and serve Him. Why? Because this whole thing is true. It's reality, it's fact. Let's live for Him and fight sin and be all in knowing that the moment we're raised and faith becomes sight, everything we did here will matter there. We will look in that moment and go, everything I did for Christ was not a waste of time at all. And if I could give 1,000 lifetimes, I would give it to Him because of what I'm seeing in this moment. I will never ever think on that day, this whole Jesus thing, "what a weird, like whatever." No, you will go like these disciples, "Everything makes sense now." Everything makes sense, and the guarantee of that is that He rose from the dead. Let's pray.

Jesus, it is appropriate for us to worship You. It is appropriate for us to bring You laud, bring You worship, because You not only paid the penalty we deserve for all of our sins on the cross, but that sacrifice satisfied the wrath of God and the proof of that is You rose from the dead. Everyone here and everyone watching, these truths are not meant to be admired. These truths are meant to drive us to respond. So please, however it is You want us to respond to this message,

please, please give us the grace that we need to do that. It's easy in this moment to get distracted, move on to other things or are we going to be distracting ourselves right now while we're here, but you can break through all of it. And I pray that you would do that, please. Do it for our good and do it for the glory of Your name. Amen.