Transcript 040421

PASTOR DAVE'S SERMON: "I HAVE SEEN THE LORD."

>> Pastor Dave: HAPPY EASTER, EVERYONE!

HE HAS RISEN.

HE HAS RISEN, INDEED!

HALLELUJAH.

WE'RE ACTUALLY MEETING IN THE SANCTUARY FOR THIS EASTER SERVICE, UNLIKE LAST YEAR AT EASTER WHERE WE ONLY HAD THIS ONLINE OPTION AVAILABLE.

BUT WE ARE MEETING AT 1370 EUCLID AVENUE, 8:30 A.M. TRADITIONAL, 11:00 A.M. CONTEMPORARY SERVICE.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU COME OUT AND JOIN AS WE CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTED LORD.

AND WE'LL ALSO BE LIVESTREAMING IT AT THE 11:00 SERVICE.

SO IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO FOLLOW LIVESTREAM, YOU MAY GO TO YouTube AND THEN SEARCH FOR OUR REDEEMER OF SAN DIEGO, AND THE LIVESTREAM WILL COME UP.

AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT EXACTLY AT 11:00, IT WILL BE DURING THAT TIME, AND IT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE FUTURE, IF YOU'D LIKE TO JOIN US FOR THE WHOLE WORSHIP SERVICE.

SO THAT'S AN OPTION.

LET'S BEGIN WITH THE PRAYER.

HEAVENLY FATHER, WE GIVE YOU THANKS THAT YOUR SON JESUS CHRIST WAS, IN FACT, THE LAMB OF GOD THAT TOOK AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD, AND HE HAS TAKEN AWAY MY SIN.

HE HAS TAKEN AWAY YOUR SIN.

HE HAS TAKEN AWAY OUR SIN.

AND THAT YOU RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, SHOWING YOUR APPROVAL OF HIS PERFECT SACRIFICE.

AND WHEN HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, HE LEFT THE DOOR OPEN FOR US SO WE CAN BE ASSURED OF LIFE ETERNAL, FOR NOW AND FOR ALL TIME.

HELP US TO FIND THE JOY IN THE EMPTY TOMB THAT WHERE WE HAVE HOPE, WHERE WE NEVER COULD HAVE IT BEFORE, IN THE RESURRECTED JESUS CHRIST.

WE HAVE VICTORY OVER SIN, DEATH, AND THE POWER OF THE DEVIL.

AMEN.

ALL RIGHT.

TODAY'S READING FOR EASTER IS FROM THE GOSPEL -- IN FACT ALL FOUR GOSPELS HAVE THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IN THEM.

THEY ALL HAVE A LITTLE DIFFERENT ANGLE ON THEM, BUT WE'RE GOING TO BE READING FROM THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN 20:1-18, SO YOU MIGHT WANT TO BE OPENING YOUR BIBLES UP TO THAT.

BUT BEFORE WE GET INTO THAT, LET'S REMEMBER HOW WE GOT TO WHERE WE ARE NOW.

LAST WEEK WE TALKED ABOUT PALM SUNDAY.

PALM SUNDAY IS WHEN JESUS CAME IN, RIDING ON A DONKEY, SYMBOLIZING THAT HE WAS THE KING OF ISRAEL, BUT HE WAS NOT COMING TO OVERCOME THE OPPONENTS OF GOD THROUGH FORCE BUT THROUGH THE FORCE OF LOVE.

I'VE HEARD IT SAID BEFORE THAT THERE WILL NOT BE PEACE UNTIL THE LOVE OF POWER IS DEFEATED BY THE POWER OF LOVE.
THE POWER OF LOVE ALWAYS HAS TO BE FIRST AND FOREMOST IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.
SO HE COMES IN.
THERE IS A TIME ON MAUNDY THURSDAY THAT WE CELEBRATED -- WE CELEBRATED THIS LAST THURSDAY -- THAT JESUS GAVE US A NEW COMMANDMENT, THAT WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS JESUS HIMSELF HAS LOVED US.
AND THEN HE MORPHED THE SADAR MEAL INTO WHAT WE KNOW AS THE LORD'S SUPPER, THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST.
AND THEN HE PROMISED AFTER HIS ASCENSION, THROUGH HIS SPIRIT HE WOULD BE WITH US IN THE BREAD AND IN THE WINE, IN THE VERY PHYSICAL SENSE, THAT HE WOULD BE WITH US, PHYSICALLY PRESENT.
SO THAT WHEN WE ATE THE BREAD AND WE DRANK THE WINE, THAT CHRIST WOULD BE GOING ALL THROUGH OUR BODY THROUGH THE POWER OF THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM.
IT IS AMAZING, ISN'T IT, THAT GOD LOVES US THAT MUCH.
AND THEN WE HAVE GOOD FRIDAY.
NOT SO GOOD FOR JESUS, BUT IT WAS ACCOMPLISHING HIS PURPOSE.
GOOD FOR US.
WHEN HE HUNG ON THE CROSS AND HE DIED.
I WANT TO LOOK AT A FEW THINGS THERE SO WE CAN REALLY APPRECIATE THE RESURRECTION.
SO WHEN JESUS HUNG ON THE CROSS, HE CRIED OUT: "I AM THIRSTY."
THEY WENT AND THEY GOT -- THERE WAS A BUCKET WITH SOME VINEGAR WINE, AND THEY SOAKED A SPONGE IN IT, PUT IT ON A POLE AND PUT IT UP TO JESUS' LIPS TO DRINK.
AND HE DRANK IT.
NOW, I BRING THAT UP BECAUSE THERE IS SIGNIFICANCE TO THAT.
IN MATTHEW 26:29, JESUS SAID, "I WILL NOT DRINK OF THIS FRUIT OF THE VINE AGAIN WITH YOU UNTIL I COME INTO MY GLORY."
SO HERE HE IS DRINKING FROM THE FRUIT OF THE VINE, SHOWING THAT IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, ANYWAY, JESUS COMES INTO HIS GLORY AS HE IS BEING CRUCIFIED.
THEN AFTER THEY GIVE HIM THE WINE, HE SAYS, "IT IS FINISHED."
NOW, WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THIS WORD BECAUSE IF WE HEAR "IT IS FINISHED," IT MIGHT SEEM LIKE IT IS JUST OVER.
BUT THE GREEK WORD IS "TETELESTAI" -- I LOVE THAT WORD.
IT MEANS IT IS COMPLETELY PAID FOR.
FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU WERE TO BUY A CAR ON A FOUR-YEAR PAYMENT PLAN, AND YOU PAID YOUR 48th PAYMENT, IT'S ALL PAID IN FULL.
THEY WOULD STAMP ON THAT BOOK "TETELESTAI," PAID IN FULL.
IF I EVER GET A TATTOO, IT IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE THAT, RIGHT HERE ON MY FOREARM, TETELESTAI, PAID IN FULL.
I AM NOT MY OWN.
I HAVE BEEN BOUGHT BY THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST.
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, THE BATTLE IS FINISHED.
I BELONG TO JESUS.

SO LET'S TAKE A LOOK, WITHOUT ANY FURTHER ADIEU, AS I HAVE ALREADY GONE ALMOST SIX MINUTES HERE BEFORE WE EVEN GET TO THE TEXT.
BUT LET'S LOOK AT OUR TEXT NOW.
JOHN 20:1-19.
"EARLY ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK" -- THAT WOULD BE THE SUNDAY, WHICH IS WHY WE CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE THE SABBATH ON SUNDAY THESE DAYS BECAUSE IT WAS THE DAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS --
"WHILE IT WAS STILL DARK, MARY MAGDALENE WENT TO THE TOMB AND SAW THAT THE STONE HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM THE ENTRANCE.
SO SHE CAME RUNNING TO SIMON PETER AND THE OTHER DISCIPLE, THE ONE THAT JESUS LOVED" -- THAT WOULD BE THE AUTHOR OF THIS GOSPEL, JOHN.
"THEY'VE TAKEN THE LORD OUT OF THE TOMB, AND WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY HAVE PUT HIM.
SO PETER AND THE OTHER DISCIPLES STARTED FOR THE TOMB.
BOTH WERE RUNNING, BUT THE OTHER DISCIPLE OUTRAN PETER AND REACHED THE TOMB FIRST.
HE BENT OVER AND LOOKED.
IN IT THE SCRIPTS OF LINEN LAY THERE, BUT HE DID NOT GO IN.
THEN SIMON PETER, WHO WAS BEHIND HIM, ARRIVED AND WENT INTO THE TOMB.
HE SAW THE SCRIPTS OF LINEN LYING THERE, AS WELL AS THE BURIAL CLOTH THAT HAD BEEN WRAPPED AROUND JESUS' HEAD.
THE CLOTH WAS FOLDED UP BY ITSELF, SEPARATE FROM THE LINEN.
FINALLY, THE OTHER DISCIPLE, WHO HAD REACHED THE TOMB FIRST, ALSO WENT INSIDE.
HE SAW AND BELIEVED."
THEY STILL DID NOT UNDERSTAND FROM SCRIPTURE THAT JESUS HAD TO RISE FROM THE DEAD.
"THEN THE DISCIPLES WENT BACK TO THEIR HOMES.
BUT MARY STOOD OUTSIDE THE TOMB CRYING.
AS SHE WEPT, SHE BENT OVER TO LOOK INTO THE TOMB.
AND SHE SAW TWO ANGELS IN WHITE, SEATED WHERE THE LORD'S BODY HAD BEEN, ONE AT THE HEAD AND THE OTHER AT THE FOOT.
THEY ASKED HER: WOMAN, WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
THEY HAVE TAKEN MY LORD AWAY, SHE SAID, AND I DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY PUT HIM.
AT THIS SHE TURNED AROUND AND SAW JESUS STANDING THERE, BUT SHE DID NOT REALIZE IT WAS JESUS.
WOMAN, HE SAID, WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
WHO IS IT THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR?
THINKING IT WAS THE GARDENER, SHE SAID, SIR, IF YOU HAVE CARRIED HIM AWAY, TELL ME WHERE YOU HAVE PUT HIM AND I WILL GO GET HIM.
JESUS SAID TO HER, MARY.
SHE TURNED TOWARDS HIM AND CRIED OUT TO HIM IN ARAMAIC, RABBONI," WHICH MEANS TEACHER.
"JESUS SAID, DON'T HOLD ON TO ME FOR I HAVE NOT YET RETURNED TO THE FATHER.

GO INSTEAD TO MY BROTHERS AND TELL THEM I AM RETURNING TO MY FATHER AND YOUR FATHER, TO MY GOD AND YOUR GOD.
MARY MAGDALENE WENT TO THE DISCIPLES WITH THE NEWS: I HAVE SEEN THE LORD.
AND SHE TOLD THEM THAT HE HAD SAID THESE THINGS TO HER."
THIS IS THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD.
SO OUR TEXT TELLS US THAT JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON FRIDAY, SATURDAY HE WAS IN THE TOMB DURING THE SABBATH, ALL DAY LONG.
SUNDAY MORNING MARY MAGDALENE -- WE'RE TOLD ALSO THAT AFTER JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED, JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA WENT TO THE ROMAN GUARDS, TO PILATE AND ARRANGED TO TAKE JESUS' BODY OFF THE CROSS BECAUSE IT WAS GETTING TO BE THE SABBATH, AND THEY DIDN'T WANT THE BODIES HANGING ON THE CROSS.
SO THE TWO CRIMINALS HAD NOT YET DIED, SO THEY BROKE THEIR LEGS.
SEE, WHEN YOU'RE CRUCIFIED, YOU'RE HANGING ON THE CROSS, YOU REALLY DIE FROM ASPHYXIATION.
YOU'RE NOT ABLE TO EXHALE.
AND IF YOU CAN'T PUSH UP ON THE CROSS TO TAKE THE WEIGHT OFF YOUR CHEST, YOUR LUNGS CAN'T TAKE IN OXYGEN.
BUT WHEN THEY CAME TO JESUS, HE WAS ALREADY DEAD.
BUT TO MAKE SURE, THE ROMANS, WHO ARE EXPERTS IN KILLING, RAN JESUS THROUGH TO THE SIDE, UP THROUGH HIS LUNGS, AND INTO HIS HEART, TO MAKE SURE HE WAS DEAD.
SO JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA -- NICODEMUS -- WE REMEMBER NICODEMUS FROM JOHN 3, WHEN HE CAME TO JESUS AT NIGHT AND HAD SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT BEING BORN AGAIN AND WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?
IS THERE MORE THAN THE LAW?
SO HE WAS HAVING A HARD TIME BELIEVING AT THAT TIME.
BUT APPARENTLY IT SEEMS LIKE HE WAS COMING AROUND BECAUSE HE WAS WITH JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.
THEY TOOK JESUS' BODY DOWN AND OFF THE CROSS, AND BROUGHT HIM TO A GARDEN THAT WAS CLOSE BY.
IN THAT GARDEN WAS A TOMB THAT NO ONE HAD EVER BEEN IN BEFORE,
THAT JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA HAD, AND THEY PUT HIM IN THERE AND THEN THEY ROLLED THE STONE IN FRONT.
I USED TO THINK THAT THE STONE WAS THIS BIG, HUGE, ROUND BOLDER THAT THEY SHOVED DOWN A HILL AND IT, BOOM, CLOSED THE DOOR.
BUT VISITING ISRAEL, I SAW THAT THESE STONES ARE ACTUALLY LIKE WHEELS.
THEY'RE ABOUT FIVE FEET IN DIAMETER, MAYBE EIGHT TO 12 INCHES THICK, AND THEY ROLL.
NOW, THEY'RE NOT TOTALLY SMOOTH LIKE A WHEEL, SO IT IS HARD TO MOVE THEM.
AND THEY'RE ALWAYS ON AN INCLINE.
SO WHEN THEY ROLL IT DOWN, IT HITS A LITTLE STOP RIGHT WHEN IT IS SEATED PROPERLY.
SO TO UNDO THAT, YOU'VE GOT TO BE ABLE TO PUSH THAT BIG STONE UP THE HILL, AND IT'S VERY HEAVY, AND IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DO.
AND SO MARY MUST HAVE BEEN WONDERING, HOW IS THAT GOING TO HAPPEN.
BUT WHEN SHE GETS THERE, SHE SEES THE STONE IS REMOVED.
AND JESUS ISN'T THERE.

AND SO SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT THE RESPONSE IS.
SHE STILL IS NOT THINKING HE IS ALIVE.
BUT SHE IS THINKING ALL OF A SUDDEN THINGS HAVE GOTTEN WORSE.
MY MASTER, WHO FREED ME FROM SEVEN DEMONS, HIS BODY HAS BEEN STOLEN.
HOW CAN IT GET ANY WORSE?
SHE RUNS TO THE DISCIPLES.
HERE COMES PETER AND JOHN.
THEY START OUT TROTTING, AND PRETTY SOON THEY'RE RACING BECAUSE THEY'RE COMPETITORS, RIGHT?
PETER IS ONE OF THE MAIN SPOKESPERSONS FOR THE DISCIPLES, AND JOHN IS THE ONE THAT HAD THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS, THE ONE WHOM JESUS LOVED.
SO THERE MUST HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THAT TENSION AND THAT COMPETITION BETWEEN THEM.
SO THEY START OFF RUNNING AND PRETTY SOON THEY'RE SPRINTING, AND PRETTY SOON THEY'RE ALL-OUT RUNNING, AND JOHN GETS THERE FIRST.
NOW, WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT THAT JOHN GETS THERE FIRST?
WELL, I THINK THAT IT IS NOT JUST COMPETITION.
I THINK IT IS NOT JUST THE EXCITEMENT, BUT THAT JOHN HAD SOMETHING FAR MORE PROFOUND TO TELL US ABOUT THAT.
BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T KNOW IT YET, BUT THEY WERE RUNNING TO THE FUTURE, TOWARDS THE RESURRECTION, TOWARDS A RADICAL NEW WAY OF LIFE.
WHEN THEY STARTED THEIR RACE, THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE PUPILS OF THE DEAD TEACHER.
BUT BY THE TIME THE RUNNING IS DONE, THEY WILL BE DISCIPLES OF A LIVING AND RISEN CHRIST.
SO JOHN GETS THERE FIRST.
HE LOOKS -- AND IT'S INTERESTING THE WAY THAT THESE VERBS IN GREEK ARE FOR "LOOK."
IT SAYS IN VERSE FIVE THAT HE BENT OVER -- PETER BENT OVER AND LOOKED.
THE GREEK WORD FOR THAT IS "BLEPPO," AND IT MEANS JUST A CASUAL GLANCE.
JOHN LOOKED BUT DID NOT GO IN.
AND THEN SIMON PETER WENT INTO THE TOMB, AND HE SAW -- THE GREEK WORD FOR SAW IS "THEAREO," WHICH WE GET THE WORD THEATER FROM.
IT MEANS TO GAZE INTENTLY.
SO HE GAZED INTENTLY AT THE SCRIPTS OF LINEN LYING THERE.
AND FINALLY IN VERSE EIGHT, JOHN GOES IN AND HE SAW AND BELIEVED.
THE GREEK WORD FOR THAT IS "IDON," WHICH TALKED ABOUT AN INWARD PERCEPTION, THAT YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT SPARKS KNOWLEDGE.
SO SOMETHING IN THAT SPARKED KNOWLEDGE IN JOHN, AND HE BELIEVED THAT JESUS HAD RAISED FROM THE DEAD.
AND THE BIBLE GOES ON TO SAY THAT IT WASN'T SOMETHING THAT THEY KNEW FROM PRIOR SCRIPTURE BECAUSE THE BIBLE SAYS THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND YET THAT THESE THINGS HAD TO BE FULFILLED FROM SCRIPTURE.
SO WHAT'S THE BIG ISSUE HERE?
WHY DOES JOHN MAKE SUCH A BIG DEAL OF TELLING US ALL OF THESE THINGS, THIS FOOT RACE, THAT MARY RUNS TO THE DISCIPLES.

THE DISCIPLES RUN TO THE TOMB.
THEN THEY GO HOME.
BUT JOHN BELIEVES.
I THINK IT IS BECAUSE JOHN WANTS US TO KNOW THAT HE WAS THE FIRST ONE TO BELIEVE, THE WAY THAT YOU AND I HAVE TO BELIEVE.
CHECK IT OUT.
MARY WILL BELIEVE, RIGHT?
MARY WILL BELIEVE, BUT NOT RIGHT OFF THE BAT.
SHE WAS DISTRAUGHT.
SHE THOUGHT JESUS WAS THE GARDENER.
SHE CAME LOOKING FOR A DEAD TEACHER.
IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE, THE ANGELS DIRECTLY ASK HER, WHY DO YOU LOOK FOR THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD?
SHE WAS LOOKING FOR THE DEAD.
BUT JESUS HAD BEEN RISEN.
HE IS ALIVE.
CHRIST IS RISEN.
HE IS RISEN, INDEED.
HALLELUJAH!
WE'VE GOT TO WORK THAT IN NOW AND THEN.
SO JESUS IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.
MARY STILL DOESN'T GET IT.
AND THE GARDENER SAYS, WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?
IF WE'VE TAKEN THE BODY, LET ME KNOW, I'LL GO GET IT.
WHAT IS THIS WOMAN GOING TO DO WITH A DEAD BODY?
SHE WASN'T THINKING IT OUT VERY WELL.
BUT JESUS CALLS HER NAME, MARY.
MARY THEN BELIEVED.
THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT PIECE OF INFORMATION BECAUSE JESUS SAYS, DON'T HOLD ON TO ME YET.
BECAUSE RIGHT NOW HE IS A PHYSICAL PERSON.
BUT HE NEEDS TO ASCEND INTO HEAVEN WHERE HE CAN DISPATCH THE HOLY SPIRIT.
BECAUSE WHERE JESUS COULD ONLY BE AT ONE PLACE AT ONE TIME, NOW THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE PERSON OF CHRIST THAT CONTINUES HIS MINISTRY HERE ON EARTH, CAN BE IN EVERY SINGLE SPOT IN THE UNIVERSE ALL AT ONCE.
SO HE CAN BE AT EVERY COMMUNION TABLE.
HE CAN BE AT EVERY BREAD AND WINE.
HE CAN BE AT EVERY BAPTISM.
HE CAN BE AT EVERY CHURCH SERVICE EVERYWHERE AROUND THE WORLD.
SO MARY BELIEVED AFTER JESUS CALLED HER NAME.
THE DISCIPLES APPARENTLY STILL DIDN'T GET IT BECAUSE THEY'RE HIDING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

WE FIND OUT IN THE VERSES THAT FOLLOW OUR GOSPEL READING FOR TODAY THAT JESUS CAME TO THEM AND SHOWED THEM HIS HANDS AND HIS SIDE AND SAID, GIVE ME SOMETHING TO EAT.
AND THEY BELIEVED, ALL EXCEPT FOR THOMAS, WHO WASN'T THERE.
AND THOMAS SAYS, UNLESS I SEE WITH MY EYES AND PUT MY FINGER WHERE THE NAILS WERE AND MY HAND IN HIS SIDE, I WILL IN NO WAY, NO HOW BELIEVE.
AND SO JESUS SHOWS UP TO THOMAS, AND SAYS, THOMAS, STOP UNBELIEVING AND BELIEVE.
BUT JOHN PERSONIFIES THE WHOLE POINT OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.
THE GOSPEL OF JOHN TELLS US THIS: JESUS DID MANY OTHER THINGS.
HE DID MANY OTHER THINGS THAT ARE NOT WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK, BUT THESE THINGS ARE WRITTEN THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, AND THAT BY BELIEVING YOU MAY HAVE LIFE IN HIS NAME.
AND THEN AFTER JESUS SHOWED HIMSELF TO THOMAS, HE SAID, YOU BELIEVE BECAUSE YOU SEE.
BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE ALTHOUGH THEY DON'T SEE.
AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THIS ACCOUNT IS TELLING US HAPPENED TO JOHN, THE DISCIPLE THAT JESUS LOVED.
HE RAN INTO THE TOMB.
HE LOOKED AROUND AND HE BELIEVED AFTER SEEING NOTHING.
THERE WAS NO VOICE.
THERE WAS NO HANDS OR SIDE.
THERE WAS NO PERSON OF JESUS.
HE LOOKED AND HE BELIEVED AND HE SAW NOTHING.
JUST THE SAME WAY THAT YOU AND I BELIEVE.
WE BELIEVE BECAUSE OF THE WORD OF GOD, BECAUSE OF THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
JESUS DIDN'T SHOW HIMSELF TO JOHN.
HE WAS ABSENT AT THAT TIME.
BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE WITHOUT SEEING.
SO WHY DO I BELIEVE?
WHY DO I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION?
WELL, FIRST OF ALL, JUST LIKE THE DISCIPLES WERE TOLD BY MARY, I HAVE SEEN THE LORD.
SOMEONE TOLD THEM.
JESUS TOLD MARY, MARY TOLD THE DISCIPLES, AND THE DISCIPLES TOLD A BUNCH OF OTHER PEOPLE.
AND THAT'S THE WAY IT HAS BEEN.
NOW, YOU MIGHT THINK THAT IS REALLY WEAK EVIDENCE BECAUSE A LOT OF PEOPLE TELL YOU A LOT OF THINGS.
I DON'T BELIEVE ONE-TENTH OF MOST OF THE THINGS THAT PEOPLE TELL ME.
HOW CAN YOU SINGLE THAT OUT?
BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN CONSISTENT THROUGHOUT HISTORY.
THAT'S THE SECOND THING: IT STOOD THE TEST OF TIME.
WE'RE GOING TO KIND OF COMBINE THOSE FIRST TWO THINGS TOGETHER, ALL OF THE HISTORY THAT WE LEARNED.
LIKE, DID COLUMBUS REALLY SAIL THE OCEAN BLUE IN

1492?
I WASN'T THERE.
SOMEBODY HAS TOLD US ABOUT IT.
THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, AND THEY'VE STOOD THE TEST OF TIME.
MORE AND MORE PEOPLE COME TO BELIEVE.
THEY HAVE NOT BEEN DISPROVED.
THE MORE ARCHEOLOGICAL DIGS THAT COME UP SUPPORT IT BECAUSE IT IS TRUE.
SCIENCE SUPPORTS IT BECAUSE IT IS TRUE.
BUT YOU CAN'T PROVE IT.
THAT'S WHY THERE ARE MANY VERY INTELLIGENT PEOPLE THAT DON'T BELIEVE IN JESUS' RESURRECTION, AND MANY VERY INTELLIGENT PEOPLE WHO DO BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.
AND THE MAIN REASON THAT I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS THAT I HAVE EXPERIENCED IT MYSELF.
I KNOW THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTED JESUS.
AND THE PROOF IS IN HOW THE DISCIPLES BEHAVED AFTER THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.
THEY WENT FROM A SCARED, UNBELIEVING, SHIVERING BUNCH OF PEOPLE, HIDING BEHIND THESE LOCKED DOORS BECAUSE THEY WERE AFRAID THAT THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES WERE GOING TO COME AND TAKE THEM INTO CUSTODY AND HAVE THEM CRUCIFIED BY ROME AS WELL.
THEY'RE HIDING OUT.
BUT AFTER THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, THESE PEOPLE WERE BOLD WITH THEIR PROCLAMATION.
THEY WENT OUT AND PREACHED THE GOSPEL AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR LIFE.
ALL OF THE DISCIPLES WERE KILLED, EXCEPT FOR THE DISCIPLE THAT JESUS LOVED, JOHN.
JOHN WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT WASN'T MARTYRED.
THE MARTYR -- "MARTYRIO" IS A GREEK WORD FOR WITNESS.
SO THEY WERE MARTYRED, THEY WERE KILLED, FOR THEIR WITNESS.
NOW SOMETIMES WE GET A LITTLE NERVOUS IN SHARING JESUS, IN SHARING THAT I HAVE SEEN THE LORD.
BUT LET ME ASK YOU, AS WE CONSIDER THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN THE LORD IN TODAY'S WORLD?
I'VE SEEN THE LORD IN BEAUTIFUL SUNRISES AND BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS.
I'VE SEEN THE LORD IN DOCTORS' AND NURSES' HANDS AS THEY HAVE HELPED STABILIZE SOMEONE AND SAVE A LIFE.
I'VE SEEN THE LORD IN POLICE OFFICERS' AND FIREMEN'S EYES AS THEY HAVE SERVED THE COMMUNITY.
I'VE SEEN THE LORD IN CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER.
I'VE SEEN THE LORD IN THE BEAUTIFUL BLUE SKY AND THE CLEANSING RAIN THAT FALLS.
I SEE THE LORD IN EVERY SINGLE FACE THAT I MEET, WHETHER IT IS A HOMELESS PERSON STANDING ON AN ISLAND BEGGING FOR MONEY OR THE PERSON SITTING NEXT TO ME IN CHURCH BECAUSE CHRIST IS IN ALL OF US.
I HAVE SEEN THE LORD.

WE DON'T HAVE TO LOOK TOO FAR, DO WE, PEOPLE OF GOD?
SO TO CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, HOW ABOUT WE DO THIS: WE COUNT THE PLACES WHERE WE HAVE SEEN THE LORD.
AMEN?
LET'S PRAY.
WE REJOICE, O LORD, IN THE GLAD DAY OF RESURRECTION. THE JOY AND HOPE IN OUR HEARTS HAVE COME ALIVE.
AS ALL OF NATURE HAS AWAKENED IN THESE DAYS OF SPRING, SO WOULD WE INDIVIDUALLY AND AS A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS ARISE FROM OUR WINTER'S SLEEP TO THE LIVES OF JOYFUL AND CREATIVE SERVICE.
MAY WE LOOK FOR YOUR FACE IN ALL OF CREATION.
LET US NOT BE BLINDED BY PAST ASSUMPTIONS, PREJUDICES, FEARS, OR ANGER.
LEST WE, LIKE MANY, NOT RECOGNIZE YOU AS YOU PASS BY.
SPEAK OUR NAMES, EVEN IN THIS MOMENT, O LORD, AND GIVE US MINDS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE ARE TO DO, EYES TO SEE, AND WILLS TO CHOOSE TO ACT.
ENABLE US TO ANSWER: HERE I AM, LORD, SEND ME.
MAY ALL OF OUR LIVES BE A TESTIMONY THAT SHOUTS: I HAVE SEEN THE LORD!
AND HE IS ALIVE AND LIVING IN ME.
IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN.
AND MAY THE PEACE OF GOD THAT SURPASSES ALL HUMAN UNDERSTANDING GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.
HAPPY EASTER, EVERYONE.
HE IS RISEN.
HE IS RISEN, INDEED.
HALLELUJAH!