

This is Love

Experience The Resurrection That Changes Everything

Excerpt of Easter Sunday Sermon: "Love That Forgives Our Sin"

I. CONNECTION/TENSION

Good morning! A very happy Easter to all of you today!

He is risen! [Audience: He is risen indeed!]

The resurrection changed everything.

Because of the resurrection, we know what the cross was all about. Because of Easter, we understand the meaning of Good Friday.

At the cross, Jesus died in our place for our sins; Jesus entered into our pain and our shame; Jesus came and took the weight of Evil itself—so that its power could be broken.

And because Jesus didn't stay in the grave, we see that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is God in His love freeing us from sin . . . God in His love overcoming death . . . God in His love announcing that one day a new creation will come.

Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we see the love of God. When we look at Jesus, we can say, "*This is love.*"

I want to talk to you today about the first part of that—about God in His love freeing us from sin. “Sin” is not a popular word and, actually, “sin” can be a confusing word. So let me tell you a story.

[Insert your own story here if needed.]

I woke up when I heard the crash. Not a loud crash, but a crash nonetheless. Before I could peel myself out of bed, I heard the pitter patter of little feet running up the stairs.

“Dad,” my little 5-year-old said in her most innocent, sweet voice, “will you make us breakfast?”

“Um, sure. What happened just now?” I asked groggily.

“Well, we were starving and so we tried to make ourselves some oatmeal.”

I guessed the rest. Jane and her older brother Jonas had successfully gotten oatmeal into a bowl, filled it with water, and put it in the microwave. But they had misjudged how hot the bowl would be when the oatmeal was ready. And dropping a hot bowl is just human reflex.

I wasn’t mad about the bowl. It was old or inexpensive, or both.

But I was puzzled.

They had tried to clean up the mess of oatmeal and broken pottery with a mop, unsuccessfully. And now a mop was ruined too.

“Why didn’t you guys just ask for help? I would’ve come and helped you clean this up.”

Before they could respond, the answer became apparent: It’s hard enough to ask for help, but it’s even harder when you have to ask for help to clean up a mess of your own making.

That's how we are as adults, isn't it? We don't want to ask God for help. We want to try on our own. We want to take matters into our own hands. And when a mess ensues, we resist asking for help again—this time because we're embarrassed or ashamed.

Asking for help to resolve a mess we've made means admitting we're at fault. And we don't want to admit guilt. Guilt is an uncomfortable feeling, and "sorry" is an uncomfortable word.

We'd rather deny it, ignore it, recover on our own, or even justify our actions. But admitting it is painful.

And yet . . . it won't go away. The feeling that we've fallen short, that we've failed, eats away at us.

[end of excerpt – full sermon is 2,500 words]

This Is Love is a 3-service church campaign for Easter Sunday and Beyond.
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