

Activated
Bridgeway Easter 2023
April 8-9, 2023

“Either the resurrection is infinitely more than a beautiful story or else it is infinitely less. If it is true, then it is the supreme fact of history; and to fail to adjust one’s life to its implications means irreparable loss. If it is not true, if Christ has not risen, then Christianity is all a fraud foisted on the world by consummate liars – or, at best, deluded simpletons.”
J.N.D. Anderson¹

“God seeks to fuse his life with ours, so we may truly live. His love started the greatest chain reaction the universe has ever seen.” Todd Pugh

Theme: “it set off a chain reaction” idea. The Cross led to resurrection, led to Ascension, led to Pentecost, led to Launch with full power. Like the instrument panel and prep for a fighter jet.

Introduction

- **How a Car Starts** – Almost everyone in this room came here today in a vehicle. Most of us own cars. We take for granted that when we walk out in the morning to go to work that we will sit down turn the key (or hit the button) and off we go. But have you ever tried to start your car and it didn’t work? What’s the first thing you think is wrong? The Battery is dead. Right. Why do we think that? Because we know how chain reactions work, right? Maybe.
 - **There are 5 major steps a car goes through to get you to work and it does so through two different systems: Electrical (battery) and Mechanical (combustion).**
 1. **Electrical Power** – yep, it all starts with a battery. It’s job is to do 2 things: 1.) give enough power to fire up your starter & 2.) provide the electricity for your spark plugs. When we turn our ignition, it closes the loop with the battery power and the starter motor.
 2. **The Starter** – the starter is a tiny electric motor, that spins a small starter gear. The key ignites the battery which ignites the starter, which engages this gear which can turn over a huge engine. It changes electrical energy to mechanical energy. Once it does it’s part it pulls back and shuts down.
 3. **Mechanical Power: The Flywheel** – the starter turns the flywheel in the engine. this is the heavy gear that turns the crankshaft, which fires up the pistons in the cylinder.
 4. **Gas & Fire** – when the engine starts to spin, the **fuel injectors spray a mist** of the perfect amount of gasoline into each cylinder, which the piston moves downward and sucks air in. When the fuel and air mix, the **spark plug** ignites a spark, which pushes down the piston, spins the crankshaft, then back up to do it again and again. The combustion engine creates 200 tiny explosions per second to keep it running.
 5. **Transmission for Motion** – when we put the car in drive, the transmission is engaged and turns the driveline and into the tires to make them move.
 - **The POINT: How it all starts – Energy & A Tiny Spark** - In other words, what your car needs to start is a tiny spark. Without that spark, the combustion cycle won’t begin and the cars as good as a heap of metal. But IF it happens, it sets off a chain reaction that allows the car to work and you to get to work.
- **My Personal Catalytic Story (add personal details & humility)** – I will never forget washing my hands in a restaurant bathroom at the age of 14. Why? Because I walked in there with my

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Dalrymple_Anderson

brother in law who I looked up to as the only spiritual role model I ever had and for whatever reason, on that day, there in the most unlikely place he said the words – ‘you know Lance, God is going to do great things through you.’ And in a moment, my mind flooded with images and vision, and I knew that what he said was true. God confirmed it in my spirit in a powerful way. I have been on a trajectory of fulfilling that prophetic statement ever since. Many of the visions have come to pass, some are still yet to come. That catalytic moment, set off a chain reaction in me that has had reverberating effects ever since. I live differently today because of that day.

- **Have you had a catalytic moment in your life?** – a moment when things started to change for you and you understood God in a whole new way? If you haven’t...
 - **Maybe today you will be catalyzed** - I’m going to tell you the story of Jesus Christ and His resurrection. For some of us, God is going to confirm that what I say is not only true, but it is critically true and in your spirit you will never be the same.
 - **Catalytic Story of the Early Church = Easter Story**
- **The Summation of the Easter Story – beyond Good Friday**
 - Jesus is in the tomb, it’s the sabbath
 - Early on Sunday a group of women go to the tomb
 - At the tomb an earthquake hits and an angel rolls the rock back, guards pass out
 - Mary Magdalene runs ahead and sees the rock rolled away
 - She runs to tell Peter and John
 - The other women walk up and see an open tomb and angels tell them he has risen. They run to tell the disciples too.
 - Peter and John run to the tomb and see it empty
 - Mary runs up after they are gone and is crying there – Jesus shows up and talks to her.
 - He reveals Himself to the rest of the disciples in groups.
 - He gives them instructions – the Great Commission
 - The Ascension
- **Core Christian Principle - If He Died, We Died. If He Rose, We Rise**
 - *Ro 6:5–8 – “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”*

The Resurrection ACTIVATES Our New Life²

- **Beyond Life/Death** - It’s not just physical life and death but it’s also being set free from the power of sin and that allows new opportunities and possibilities for us that enrich our lives here and now.
 - **What DEACTIVATES us today?** Anger, polarization, isolation, insecurity, etc.
 - **What could ACTIVATE us today?** Fresh hope, fresh vision, grace, etc.

² Ga 2:20 – “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

- **Cause & Effect** - The Matthew & Mark Resurrection Accounts are followed by the Great Commission for a Reason – **if Jesus is alive then we GET to live differently. If that moment occurred, all other moments are now different.**

Lesson

- **The Power of the Resurrection** – turn with me to...
 - Col 2:13–15 – “*And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.*”
 - **The Supreme Fact of History** - J. Anderson the theologian calls the resurrection the “**Supreme FACT of History**”, and I agree.
 - **Inseparably Bound** – it’s impossible to separate the cross from the resurrection and the resurrection from the cross. **What one did to save, the other did to activate.** What one did to reveal, the other did to initiate.
 - **Many Self-Proclaimed Messiah’s Died** – **but only One got up** and enforced what He said He did.
 - **The Bigger Picture: God created YOU to be alive** – our sin killed us – we were dead and useless – but **Jesus** did something about it. He made a way for us to become Alive.
 - **It ushered in a New Reality** – things are different now. For those who cried out His name and sought His salvation, **FREEDOM and LIFE are REAL.**
 - Ro 8:1–2 – “*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.*”³
- **God is a God of Process**⁴ – one thing leads to another.
 - **How Human Beings Grow** – Humans are born so tiny and fragile. They grow into toddlers, then children, then teens, then adults. Right? So before you can become an independent adult, something far back at the beginning needed to catalyze. Right? If we chase the chain back to the first link there was something that God did that started it all. And once the cells began to divide, one change after another follows and we have an adult.
 - **We Can’t Jump the Process** - **Toddlers** with car keys and tweens with mortgages. **We still need a catalytic start and then we can go THROUGH the process.**
 - **How Believers Grow**
 - **God has always matured us through processes.** It would be great if we got saved and suddenly knew everything and understood everything (not annoying), but that’s not how it works.
 - **Examples** – over and over Bible leaders tell us that we begin in one way, but we need to keep growing, keep embracing our new reality, keep striving for all that God has.

³ Ro 8:3–4 – “*For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*”

⁴ Php 1:6 – “*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*”

- **Paul Talks about how** (Romans 5) – suffering – endurance – character – hope – God’s love in the HS
- **James tells us** (James 1) – trials – testing faith – steadfastness – perfect and complete
- **Peter encourages us to** (2 Peter 1) – build on our faith – add virtue – knowledge – self-control – steadfastness – godliness – brotherly affection – love = effective & fruitful
- **But it all has to begin somewhere.**
- **That Catalytic Moment = The Resurrection**
 - **When Jesus rose from the grave**, that was that climactic moment, that catalytic moment that sent **shockwaves** around the world and into all reality.
 - **He showed the devil** that He was taking back His throne in this world. He was **taking YOU back**, His kiddo! He refused to allow Satan to take His kids.
 - He showed us that **He is victorious** in all things and that it’s time to march under His banner. **That we get to WIN**. To defeat sin, brokenness and even death!
 - He proclaimed to nature that the **King of creation** was rising back to His throne and there was going to come a renewal (e.g. earthquake).
 - **He showed Israel** that the Man they killed was indeed the **Messiah** they had been waiting for.
- **BEYOND the Catalytic Moment (the ripple effect)** – Jesus didn’t rise simply to stun us into paralyzed awe. He rose to bring us a new reality, a new quality of life, a new way of doing things. **Catalytic moments are just to get it started. But it has to be more than just a MOMENT, it needs to become a MOVEMENT.**
 - **The Chain Reaction** – the Love of God led to the Sending of the Son of God, which led to the Birth of Christ, which led to the Perfect Life of Christ, which led to the Death of Christ for our sins, which led to the Resurrection of Christ, which led to the Coming of the Holy Spirit and Power at Pentecost, which led to the launch of the Early Christian Church with fire, which leads us to today.
 - **The Implications of the Resurrection⁵ – BECAUSE Jesus rose again, it means:⁶**
 - *...that Jesus is who He said He is and will do what He said He will do.*
 - *...that we need Him, every day and in every way.*
 - *...that fear no longer gets to rule our life*
 - *...that our God is a Jealous God and He does not tolerate sin in our lives. He died and rose to set us free from sin’s power.*
 - *...that we will be bold and confident in sharing our faith, knowing that our God lives.*
 - *...that Jesus is coming at any time, and expects to find us working for Him and ready to go.*

⁵ 1 Co 15:13–14 – “...if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.”

If the almighty God can raise Himself from the dead and is the Master of the Universe, Created all things, conquered death, and is watching and waiting to take us home and meanwhile is sustaining and governing everything in our life, how then can we not fully be His?

⁶ Part of my 1999 Easter Message

- *...that our most powerful Jesus loves us so strongly that He would die, and is so powerful that nothing will stop Him from chasing His children down and loving those that are His into His kingdom.*
- *...that no matter where you've been or what you've done, your life can be activated today as you make Jesus your Lord and begin to follow Him.*

Conclusion

- **INVITE UP KEYBOARDIST**
- **Altar Call** - *Salvation ignites us to become all that God designed YOU to be.* It's like a robot being plugged into a socket and all the systems come alive.
 - *Ro 10:9–11 – "...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."*
- **INVITE THE BAND UP FOR ONE LAST SONG**