

Thursday, April 9

The Easter message this past week issued a challenge: We are to share Christ's defining moment of a victorious life every time we see beyond a tragedy to a triumph. This past Lent we considered many enemies of Jesus, from Satan to the Religious Leaders of Jesus' time to the occupying forces of the Roman Empire. A theme of our Lenten Messages has been how those who opposed and challenged Jesus help to shape his mission, message and ministry. Jesus' parables, teachings and confrontations illustrate the effect Jesus' enemies had upon him.

What enemies of Jesus and events in the scriptures help to define your life? How does the resurrection define your life? Write your thoughts here and pray for wisdom to learn from our scriptures the lesson of God's mercy and forgiveness.

Friday, April 10

Read John 20:1-18. Pastor Jack concluded the message by sharing ways in which our actions can become the defining moments of our lives. We can proclaim God's love for humanity as we seek to love others. We can offer forgiveness as the very nature of our merciful creator and the way Jesus gaps our separation from God. Any time we build up the lives of others, we can provide new possibilities and defining moments consistent with our faith and daily living.

Sharing our faith means simply that we are to share the defining moments of our faith and what those moments mean to each of us. Those defining moments are unique to each of us and therefore sharing our faith means simply that we share what we know best – our own life story. What are your greatest defining moments? Write your thoughts here and consider sharing them with others. We are the champions of the world. Now go and proclaim it!

Message Notes – April 5, 2026

*Christ: Challenged The Final Enemy!**

- I. It's good to be the best; to be a _____ and recognized as such.
 - A. Being a _____, victorious, can become a truly _____ moment; one in which a person is inspired toward further greatness and higher standards.
 - B. Certainly that was and is the case for our risen Lord and Savior Jesus, as we recognize that he emerged victorious over _____ and the grave.
 - C. On Easter morning we celebrate the fact that Jesus *came through* on his promise of _____ over sin and death as he emerged from the tomb where he was laid to rest two days earlier.

- II. In the rest of the Gospel message Jesus appears to the eleven disciples and to others and he shares the resurrection victory with them, giving to those before whom he appeared, final _____, commissioning and empowerment.
 - A. In other words, Jesus doesn't claim victory over the grave just for himself, but for _____!
 1. Did you notice the change in the _____?
 - a. _____ *paid my dues.* _____ *done my sentence.*
 - b. But that language quickly changes to _____: _____ *are the champions my friends and we'll keep on fighting till the end.*
 2. Jesus rose victorious over the grave but he _____ that victory; he claimed the victory for each of us.
 - B. A defining moment is, in fact, not just one moment but representative of many moments which help to define a person's _____.
 1. The fact is Jesus died. And it was a _____ event really.
 2. Certainly not what _____ might describe as a generational defining moment.

* John 20:1-18

- III. Sociologist, Manheim, would say that our nation is still being defined by the _____ of 9/11.
- A. The defining moment cannot be the tragedy itself but our _____ to it.
 - B. It's not the tragedy that defines us, but the _____ over the tragedy that defines us.
 - C. Jesus died. Yes he did, but his _____ was not a defining moment.
 1. Jesus wouldn't let his death be a defining moment, he _____ the bond of death and _____ through the confines of the grave.
 2. Jesus' resurrection was a defining moment because it was an incredibly significant moment in a _____ of many life-giving, life-affirming, life-celebrating moments!
 3. As Jesus' _____, when we see beyond the tragedy to the triumph, then we are part of that defining moment.
 4. Jesus won out over tragedy and death and claimed that _____ for you and for me.
 5. We are the champions of the world. Now go and _____ it!

Daily Meditations and Study Guide

The following is a daily meditation and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, April 6

Read John 20:1-18. Think for a moment about the introduction to the Easter message. Using a sports analogy, Pastor Jack spoke of being a champion which provides a platform from which to influence others and the possibility to do good for others.

Certainly that was and is the case for our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus, as we recognize that he emerged victorious over death and the grave. What does Jesus Christ's victory over the grave mean to you personally? How is your life different because Jesus rose

from the tomb? Write your thoughts here and give thanks to God who gives us the victory of life over death!

Tuesday, April 7

Author and pastor, Adam Hamilton, writes, "We cannot really appreciate Easter until we have been to the cross. The power of this day lies beyond our comprehension until we have journeyed through hell itself, immersed in the darkest of places." We have all experienced painful moments in our lives that cause us to appreciate better times and brighter days!

Easter is the pinnacle of our Christian faith. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith and validates all that Jesus taught and lived. While the resurrection is an incredible event in its own right, it is a sweeter victory given what Christ went through for each of us. How has the events of Holy Week made Easter even a greater event for the world? For you? Meditate about Christ sacrifice for you, celebrate his resurrection and write your thoughts here.

Wednesday, April 8

Atonement refers to the restoration of the broken relationship between God and humanity that was accomplished in the life and death of Jesus Christ. One view of the Atonement is called the *Christus Victor*.

This view recognizes that Jesus has conquered all things – even death and we share in Christ's victory through our faith in him. Jesus shared with us the victorious life that we can be set free from the power of evil, sin, and death; and then live with hope, freedom and love. Christ shares his victory over death with each of us that we may live eternally! Pray a prayer of thanksgiving thanking God for this indescribable gift!