

WHAT DOES EASTER PROVE?

Sermon by Todd Lester

April 16, 2017

EASTER PROVES WHO JESUS WAS

Romans 1:4, John 8:25, Mark 10:34, 1 Corinthians 15:6

HE DEFEATED HIS ENEMIES

1. THE _____

Acts 2:22-23

2. _____

Acts 2:24, Matthew 27:62-64a

3. THE _____

1 Peter 3:21-22, John 10:10

HE DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE

1. I CAN KNOW GOD _____

John 14:21, 23

2. I CAN BE _____ AND _____

Colossians 2:14

3. I CAN _____

1 Peter 1:3-4

EASTER WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

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E	T	H	R	E	E	D	A	Y	S	S	I	C	L	K	F	I	H	O	V	I	E	J	C	F	A	G	W	A	N
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ANGELS
 APOSTLES
 BETRAYAL
 BLOOD
 CALVARY
 CROSS
 CROWN OF THORNS
 CRUCIFIXION
 DARKNESS
 DEATH
 EARTHQUAKE
 EASTER
 GOLGOTHA
 HIGH PRIEST
 JESUS CHRIST
 JOSEPH
 JUDAS ISCARIOT
 KING
 LAMB

MARY
 NAILS
 PASSOVER
 PIECES OF SILVER
 PIERCED
 PILATE
 RESURRECTION
 ROBE
 ROMANS
 SACRIFICE
 SIMON OF CYRENE
 SOLDIERS
 SON OF GOD
 SPEAR
 STONE
 TEMPLE
 THIEVES
 THREE DAYS
 TOMB

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EASTER PROVES WHO JESUS WAS

Romans 1:4 He was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 8:25 "Who are you?" they demanded. Jesus replied, "The one I have always claimed to be..."

Mark 10:34 They will mock (me), spit on (me), flog (me) with a whip, and kill (me), but after three days (I) will rise again.

HE DEFEATED HIS ENEMIES

1. THE DOUBTERS

Acts 2:22-23 God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him.

Matthew 28:16-17 Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted!

2. DEATH

Acts 2:24 But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.

Matthew 27:62-64a The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. They told him, "Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise from the dead.' So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent his disciples from coming and stealing his body and then telling everyone he was raised from the dead!"

3. THE DEVIL

1 Peter 3:21-22 ... It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Now Christ has gone to heaven. He is seated in the place of honour next to God, and all the angels and authorities and powers accept his authority.

John 10:10 "The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."

HE DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE

1. I CAN KNOW GOD PERSONALLY

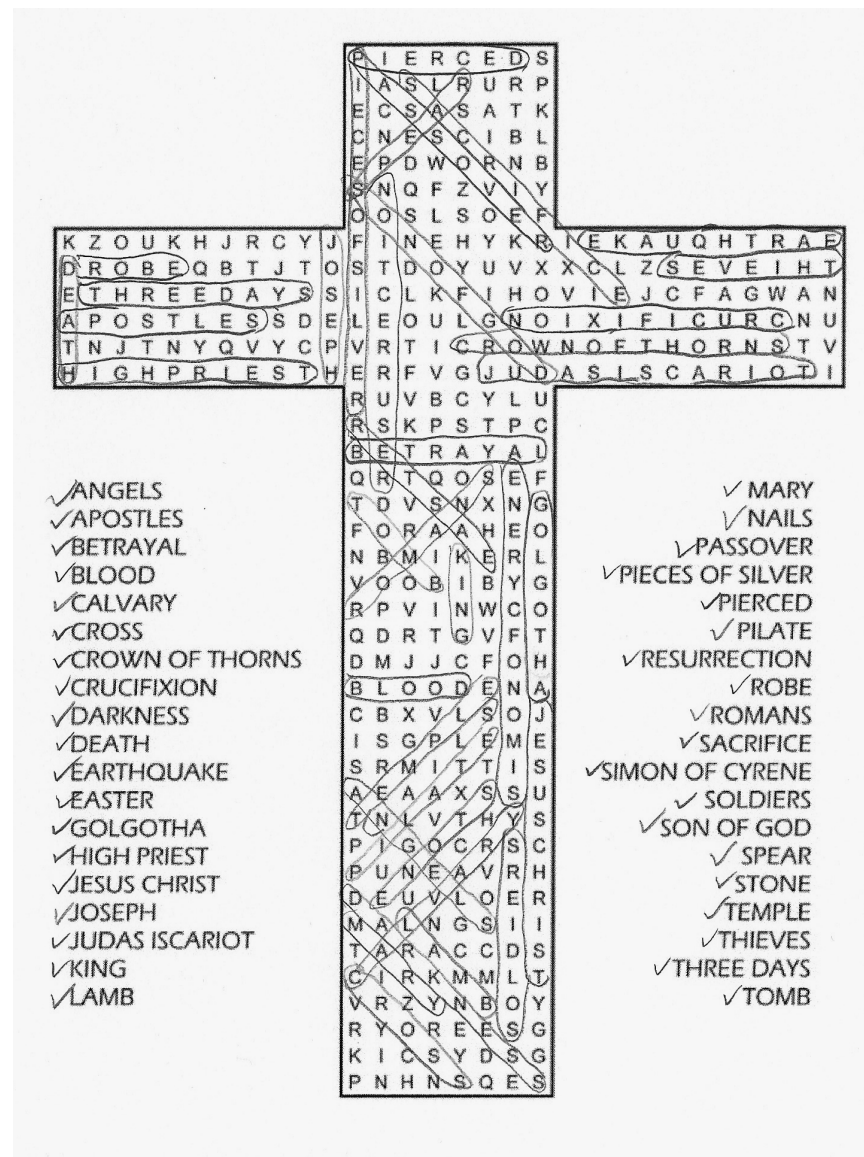
John 14:21, 23 "Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them ... My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them."

2. I CAN BE FORGIVEN AND START OVER

Colossians 2:14 He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

3. I CAN GO TO HEAVEN WHEN I DIE

1 Peter 1:3-4 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay.



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Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'Easter Word Search Puzzle' activity is just a simple and fun review of some important words from the Bible story. Give as much time as you think appropriate, consider working in partners or as a whole group to speed solving. (answer key on Scriptures page)

EASTER PROVES WHO JESUS WAS

Focuses on [Romans 1:4](#), [John 8:25](#), [Mark 10:34](#), [1 Corinthians 15:6](#)

Read [John 8:25](#). Recall some of the claims Todd said that Jesus made. (perfect, saviour, only way to heaven, that he was God) Do you think the argument that 'Jesus was either a liar, lunatic or the Lord' is an effective one? Why do you think so many unbelievers want to focus on Jesus being a 'good teacher'?

Discuss the idea that the resurrection of Jesus was 'common news' in Jerusalem. Is that a new idea for you? Does it seem plausible? What are some reasons to think this might be true? (Todd pointed to the number of people who would have heard of it or seen it, including 500 people at one time - see [1 Corinthians 15:6](#))

HE DEFEATED HIS ENEMIES

1. THE DOUBTERS

Focuses on [Acts 2:22-23](#)

Are there certain times when you doubt (more than other times)? Do you have doubts about specific things? (about Jesus, the Bible, life or God)

Does it surprise you to hear that people in Jesus' time doubted him even when they saw him perform miracles? What about those who still doubted when seeing him after his resurrection (see [Matthew 28:16-17](#))

Discuss Todd's statement that because of the resurrection we can have a faith attitude that says 'nothing is impossible with God'? Why do you think many theologians point to the dramatic change in the disciples as strong evidence for the truth of the resurrection?

2. DEATH

Focuses on [Acts 2:24](#), [Matthew 27:62-64a](#)

Discuss Todd's statement that when you don't fear death then you can enjoy life a whole lot more. Do you think people fear death or just ignore it (Todd called it society's 'last taboo') or both?

Todd shared a few humorous quotes from children about death and later said that on Easter Sunday we can laugh about death. Do you think it is okay to joke about death?

Todd said that because of the resurrection of Jesus death no longer has the final word. When you think of death, and Jesus' resurrection, what words come to mind? (hope, confidence, peace, heaven, ...)

3. THE DEVIL

Focuses on [1 Peter 3:21-22](#), [John 10:10](#)

C.S. Lewis said that there are 2 mistakes we make about the devil - to not believe in him or to believe with an excess interest. Where do you fit into this - do you tend to ignore the idea of the devil or do you give him quite a bit (too much?) credit?

Read [John 10:10](#). Todd said that Jesus has come to give us a 'super-abundant life'. In what ways has God blessed you? It also says the devil's purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy - have you experienced this?

HE DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE

1. I CAN KNOW GOD PERSONALLY

Focuses on [John 14:21, 23](#)

In what ways is your relationship with God at this time personal? What are some ways to make it more personal?

Todd said that God is interested in every area of your life. Do you find that easy or challenging to accept?

2. I CAN BE FORGIVEN AND START OVER

Focuses on [Colossians 2:14](#)

Do you agree with Todd's statement that we all carry guilt around? Why might that be the case? Is it different today from say 50 years ago? What are some ways people try to deal with their guilt?

Todd said that if God has forgiven something then I can forget about it (like a cancelled or paid off debt). How easy/difficult have you found it to live this out (ie. forgetting/starting over)?

3. I CAN GO TO HEAVEN WHEN I DIE

Focuses on [1 Peter 1:3-4](#)

How do you imagine heaven? What are some ways you would describe it? What do you base these ideas on?

Would you agree that new life in Christ can be as great a miracle as Jesus' resurrection?

Todd said that there are many benefits we receive from the resurrection and that he mentioned the 3 above. What would be some other results of this event? (eg. becoming part of God's kingdom here on earth, enjoying community with other believers, having a renewed purpose,...)