

Good morning, happy Easter, He is alive and we're so thankful to get the opportunity to join with you. Thank you for jumping on to celebrate Resurrection Sunday, to celebrate Easter together, and we just pray that in this moment in your home that you're going to have joy. I get it, I've been told by so many of you, this is getting a little bit long. What's going on in your house is starting to get a little tense at moments and you're just wishing you could have a break from it all. So here's what I'm going to invite you to do—just take a break for the next few moments and just take a moment and focus in on Jesus. Really, at the end of the day that's exactly how we get through these moments; put our focus in on Jesus and the joy of the resurrection and the life that we have through Jesus. We want you to meet Jesus today. We want you to experience Him. We want you to have the blessing of Him.

I want to introduce you to our service right now. A lot of people put a lot of work into making this happen and we want you to sit back, take a deep breath, and have a great experience. Let me pray us in.

Jesus,



Use this time, use this to refresh us, to encourage us, and right now we want to just thank You for what You did for us and that You did come out of that grave and that You are alive right now. And because You're alive we can be alive.

We thank You in Jesus' Name. Amen.

[MUSIC]

Happy Easter! Thanks so much for joining us! We just want to say this together this morning and if you'll say it where you're sitting: He's alive! He's alive! Hey, listen, if you have kids in the house, bring them into the room, they will pick up on this. If you're connected with someone else in the country, text them right now and say, "Join me at Calvary Fellowship live.com.¹ I'm watching church, watch it with me." They'll do it. If you can, even just go down to the bottom left-hand side of this screen, probably that side of the screen [*points to his right*], and press Share. You'll be surprised how many people might jump on.



Anyhow, I've got to read to you the story as God tells us about it in the New Testament. Mark Chapter 16 is one of the places where the story is told and this is a piece of the story. Let me read it to you, it's awesome. Matthew Chapter, uh, Mark – okay, got it? I'll slow down. Mark Chapter 16, verse 1. Is that better? Okay, thanks, church [*he laughs*]. I appreciate you working with me. Mark 16:1:

¹ When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.

— this is what the guy says, he's an angel —

⁶ And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen;

– MARK 16:1-6a (ESV)

¹ URL <https://cfdowningtown.churchonline.org/>

Hey, would you cheer right now wherever you're at? He is risen! Come on, cheer and shout it out. Come on, make some noise where you're at. You're all too dead in the room there. I mean, this is a celebration morning. You should get excited, get loosened up a little bit. All right? Can you say it again one more time? He is risen! He is risen! Okay. It's a great thing. Hey, here's what we also need to do. We need to – just because we're online – we gotta press that little heart button a little bit and just make some hearts go up, so we as a church can shout out, "He is risen!" That's what we're here together for today. This is what everything in the church is based on, even the book that we're studying this week, 1st Peter, was written all based on the fact that Jesus is alive. In fact, you've got to read the next thing that the angel says. He says:

he is not here. See the place where they laid him.

— they look, he's right, He's not there. And this is what the angel says:

⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter

– MARK 16:6b-7a (ESV)

I have a question for you: Why Peter? Why do you think the angel said go tell the disciples *and* Peter? Why Peter? Go ahead and write right there if you're able to correspond with everyone on here, just write it there on the right side. Why Peter? Why do you think Peter was called out in this? Let me tell you a few things about Peter.

In John Chapter 20 it tells us where Peter was when this was happening, he's locked up in a room. And so when Mary has to go tell Peter she finds him locked up, and John 20 says he was locked up there for fear of the Jews. Fearful. I mean, you can imagine; these are the ones that just hung Jesus on the cross and crucified Him and he knows I'm connected, I'm connected with Jesus, and so he's locked in scared out his mind. When he hears Jesus is alive, that the tomb is empty, you know, forget the locked doors. Out of the door, jets down the path, I mean, running at full speed, doesn't even stop when he arrives at the tomb, straight in to see that tomb empty.

Let me tell you another story because this next one's heavy. Here's what I want you to think about and it's important. The story is before Jesus was crucified; they're taking Jesus and they're beating Him, and I mean, it's an ugly, ugly scene. And the text tells us this that Peter is following at a distance. So, he doesn't want to be connected with this Jesus, is following way back there, and as he's following at a distance he comes into this courtyard. And I can picture the scene.

It's a bit dark, there's like fire going on in the center, it's sort of that warmish-coolish time of the day and, I mean, he's sitting there just sort of laying back, sort of blending in watching what's going on down there as Jesus is being tortured. And a servant girl comes up to him and says, "You were the one that was with Jesus." He denies it. Happens a second time, he denies it. Happens a third time and all of a sudden Peter just starts cursing at the girl. I mean, it's not what you would expect to see in the Bible but it's exactly what takes place, and it's at that moment he realizes what he's done, he's failed Jesus. He starts weeping uncontrollably. The pain is huge. I mean, you can just imagine even as over the next couple of days he's processing that and thinking about that—what do you do?

And for you and me when we're in human relationships, which is what we deal with every day, so many relationships are so volatile



And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept. – MARK 14:72b

and can be so easily ruined forever, and we get it how that happens. And what's fascinating, what's fascinating when we just read that from Mark Chapter 16, and remember, Mark was told a lot of what took place by Peter himself because Peter really trained up Mark. When you read what Mark said in Mark 16, the angel said, "**go, tell his disciples and Peter**" – because God Himself, that's who Jesus is, has a way of caring about you and you matter.

And here's what's fascinating. When Peter sits down to write down what he wanted a group of people that were going through a really tough time to know, he grounds what he's saying on this very experience. That moment when he's locked up, scared out of his mind because people had freaked him out, and life circumstances had scared the daylights out of him and nothing looked like it was ever going to be the same again, and everything was unknown and everything was uncertain. And a guy who had left his career now sitting there unemployed going, *Now what? I had staked everything on this and now what? I have to run. I have to be in fear, is my life going to be taken?* And he writes to a group of people who in a similar way had been dispersed to towns all over the place, that's what the first two verses of 1st Peter tells us about, and when he writes this little, just writes this little document to talk to these people, call it a letter, you know what happens? He bases what he says on the resurrection.

In fact, I'm going to turn to 1st Peter, 1st Peter Chapter 1, and he says this:

² . . . ***May grace and peace be multiplied to you.***

— and then in verse 3 says:

³ ***Blessed be***

— which another translation says, "Praise be" —

the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy,

— and that word mercy speaks to the relief given to a group of people that had been swamped by life circumstances. Oh! Feel like that? You feel like that person? Need a little mercy from God? Do you feel like we have been swamped by uncontrollable circumstances around us? He says this:

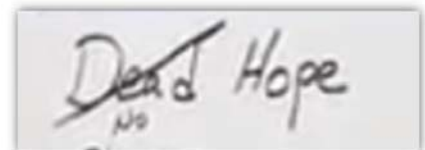
has caused us to be born again to a living hope.

–1 PETER 1:2b-3a (ESV)

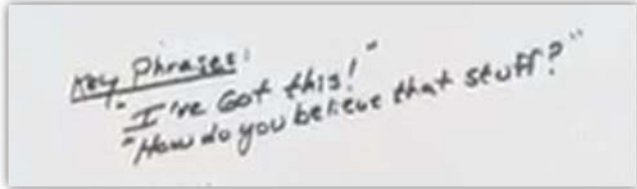
We might we might say that word *born again*, another way of saying that is we have been saved. We've been saved from what we once were in, darkness, separation away from God. We have been born again. We have been born again into a new life. We've been born again into a new reality. He calls it here born again into a living hope.



I'd like to demonstrate that to you. I want to show it to you. I wrote some stuff down because I thought it would explain it to you as easy as just about anything I could explain to you. And I wrote down the word, it's sort of the opposite of a living hope, I wrote down *Dead Hope*, and then I just crossed out the word *Dead* and put here *No Hope*. So people that don't have a living hope, in other words, their hope is not in Jesus, they haven't been born again, they haven't been saved from darkness, their hope is not living, their hope is dead. They have no hope.



Maybe I can best explain it to you by the words that they might say, the phrases that they might use. So key phrases: *I've got this!* is the story of their lives. It's the story of the life for most people we come into contact with. And when we're not focusing on Jesus, that's our story. And when we're disappointed in Jesus, that's our story. And when we're scared and we want to take control back, that's our story. *I've got this! I can handle this! Evidently God's failed me.* It's weird how we go there. But most of society is like that. We hear them say it and they even tell us in these self-help type talks that we've been

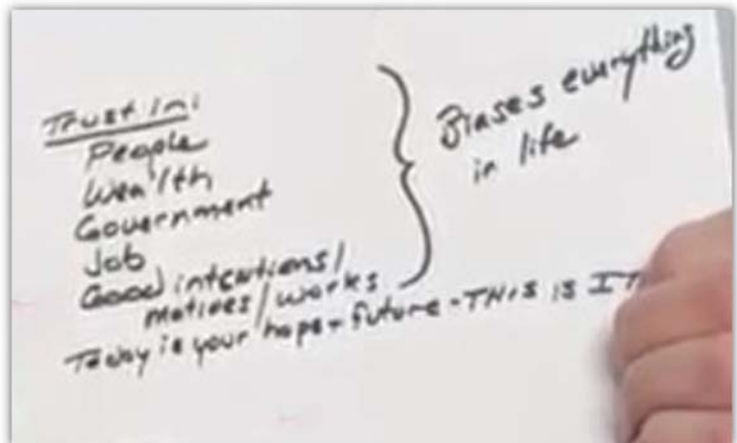


hearing so many of recently, "You've got this. You can do this." And it seems so positive and it seems so right. But then I wrote down these words because this is what I've been hearing from people that I tell about Jesus in this time, because I tell people about Jesus right now and I tell them, "You've gotta trust in Jesus. You've gotta believe in

Jesus, that's the only option that we have right now." And this is what they say is: How do you believe that stuff?

In their mind there is no way that you can believe that someone who died on a cross 2,000 years ago, who said He rose from the dead, that that can transform your life today. And so they just quickly go from there and this is what they trust in.

They trust in people. If I just meet the right people—this is what they're telling you in these seminars—if I just meet the right people and get in front of them and I make the presentation right and I have the best EQ and – you know the line. You can do this. I've got this!



The second one being my wealth. I mean, after all, haven't we been a people that have been used to when something's not working out we pull out our debit card, and when the debit card can't pull anything more we pull out the credit card and we swipe the credit card. And if that doesn't work anymore, we go apply for another and we transfer – you know the whole line.

The other things we trust in: Government. Oh, isn't that the case? The government can fix this . . . *maybe* if they pass another bill for another trillion or two trillion or ten trillion or whatever, eventually we can fix all of this. Or we trust in our job, and yet in the last couple weeks a whole bunch of people, a lot of people, unfortunately—I'm so sorry if you're one of them—found out I can't trust in my job. This next one I think is huge and so commonplace, we trust in our good intentions.

You know, Peter had this moment and the story goes like this and you can find it in the New Testament of your Bible, but he tries to tell Jesus quit talking about this cross thing. It's so dark. And, I mean, in that time the cross, I mean, we wear them around our neck, it's pretty, it's nice. We have Him hanging in front of our churches and on our signs and all that kind of stuff. But the cross was THE worst instrument of torture that the Roman government had created. It was the worst that any society had ever created, the world had ever known. And so Jesus keeps on talking about a cross and Peter rebukes Jesus.² Can you imagine? *Jesus, Jesus, just a little word of advice from me*, you know. By the way,

² See Matthew 16:21-23 & Mark 8:31-33

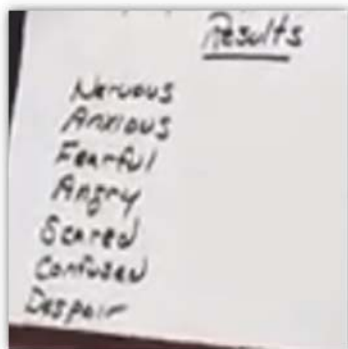
good intentions. *Jesus, quit talking about that. This isn't the time to go dark. People don't respond well to that. People don't like that. They want happy talk and this isn't happy talk.*

And do you remember what Jesus looks at him, "**Get behind me, Satan!**"³ Say that to someone that you're sitting with right now. Yeah [*shakes his head, puts his hand up*], don't, don't, don't, don't, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop. No, seriously, I mean, that freaked, that freaks you out someone says, "Get behind you, Satan!" That's what Jesus says to Peter in that time.



Don't, don't, don't, don't, stop, stop, stop, stop

Another thing we oftentimes trust in is our own works, our own motives. After all, weren't Peter's motives good? He just wanted to help Jesus out. He loved Jesus, he liked Him, he was with Him around. And here's how it wraps up: Today is your hope and your future. That's what everyone's telling you. *Hey, capitalize on today. Make today your best day. Today is going to develop your future. Everything's going to be all about today.* And here's why: This is it. That's when you find out there is no hope.



And here's how that ends up, here's the results of that, here's how this works out for you and I see it all the time. There's this nervousness that people feel. There's this anxiety. There's fearfulness. There is this anger that is just at the just the tip and at the top. People are scared, they're confused, they're in despair.

Let me put that up against something different and I'm just gonna put them right on top of each other right now. So, this passage here in 1st Peter Chapter 1 talks about a living hope. This is a hope that is alive and the key phrase was written right in the sentence before this – "**grace and peace be multiplied to you.**" Grace is when you don't get what you deserved. You know we deserved? We deserved death. We deserved an eternity separated from God because of our sin. And when we trust in Jesus, He exchanges the punishment for our sin that He'd take on Himself and He gives us His righteousness. So that's grace.

Peace is this, it's an old Hebrew word *Shalom* and, you know, you talk about peace in this world, I mean, physical peace, you look around and it seems like even when everyone ought to be united there's not. And you just think of all the things people would do to be put back right with each other again. Not just to stop wars, and yet – doesn't matter, North Korea is still lobbing stuff into the ocean and saying things that make us very upset. Grace and peace be multiplied — can you imagine having peace in your family? Peace with your spouse? Peace with your kids? Peace with your employer? Can you imagine just having an internal peace?

So when Peter speaks to these people he says here's what I'm gonna tell you, if you have a living hope you're going to have what you didn't deserve, you're going to have peace and it's going to come from Jesus and it's a game-changer. And he says this is what you're gonna have to focus on, this is gonna be the bottom line, it's gonna come as a result of the resurrection. And everything in this Book is—he'll tell you this—is made possible by the resurrection. How are you gonna get through trials, how are you gonna get through tough times—because that's what he likes to talk about—you're going to have to focus back and look back to the resurrection. So that's why today is so incredibly important. It's why when we say "He's alive!" it's more than a cool statement, it's more than a



³ Matthew 16:23 & Mark 8:33

rah-rah thing, it is the foundation of everything we believe. And so He is alive, this is one of our key phrases.

So let me give you the facts real quick and those facts can be put up against the facts or the things that someone who has no hope trusts in. But the facts are this, at that time they were going through massive persecution, they were in fear, they were in despair, and they were very, very much dispersed or displaced. If you looked at these first couple verses in 1st Peter Chapter 1, you found a list of all these cities they once were all together and when the persecution came they were all displaced throughout the whole northern part of the Roman Empire and it was a scary time for them. They didn't know what to expect for the day. They didn't know what the future was gonna bring and they were scared.

Let's talk about right now, this might be very similar. Right now if you read the news here's the headline that I saw numerous times this week — THE NEXT TWO WEEKS and then there were words behind it — are going to be rough, are going to be hard, are going to be full of death. Talk about ominous. And many of us get that, the next two weeks. Here's what they're highlighting when they say that and they may or may not be right, I don't know, they're highlighting fear. They're highlighting the unknown. Oh, and then right into that same conversation comes conversations about finances, and then it just switches right back to health and there's this big back-and-forth that we're hearing right now between is it our health, is it our finances, is it our health, is it our finances. And the finances or the health all come back to death; death of an economic system, death of a physical life. Yeah, when you get to it and you think about it for a moment, let's be serious, at the end all die.



So there's a given moment where we have to ask ourselves the question, you know, who or what is it that we're really focusing in on? And you think about the relationships that you're dealing with right now, and let me read this phrase because you'll remember a moment ago I read right here that today is your hope and future. So today is all that you have. Let me read this to you, with under a living hope you have a hope and a future. This is not it. This economy is not your hope. This economy is not your future. This health right now or lack thereof is not your future. A living hope is not dependent on an economy. A living hope is not dependent on my health. It's dependent on something very different. Let me read this again:



³ . . . According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope

— and here's what it says that living hope is focused on:

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

— and then in verse 4 it tells us that that resurrection brings about an inheritance that is imperishable:

⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

– 1 PETER 1:3b-7 (ESV)

In other words, because of the resurrection I can have a living hope, something that doesn't die, won't die, can't die. Listen to this, it's undefiled [verse 4], you can't defile it. You can't mess it up. It says it's unfading. I have a picture, I love the picture, it's old and yet it's not sharp like it used to be, it's just fading like crazy. Hey, listen, this life is fading. Things that once were sharp, things that looked bright, you looked young, you looked perky, you had energy, there was something different, you had hope, and there's something about that that is fading.

An Inheritance kept in heaven for you

He says hey, listen, this inheritance, this thing that God's giving you through the resurrection, you know, it's not going to perish. It's not going to be defiled. It's not going to be faded. And it's certainly not going to be taken away. Hey, this resurrection is all based on something that took place first that had to happen; Jesus

went to that cross, the very cross that Peter tried to talk to Him out of, aren't you glad he didn't talk Him out of it? Aren't you glad that this whole positive thinking and positive talk and happy talk thing didn't get through to Him—because God knew that the only way to assuage His wrath was for a perfect sacrifice to take our place and Jesus was that. And Jesus came to this earth and lived a perfect life so that He could die and take on Himself that wrath of God, and He could exchange it and give to us His righteousness. Let that sink into your mind a moment. Jesus the perfect one taking on all the punishment for our sins – us the sinful ones taking on all of Jesus' righteousness. But that's what he's telling you here and he's saying hey, that's not going to perish, that's not going to be defiled, you're not gonna lose that, it's not gonna fade, it's not going to go away.

So the cross satisfies God's wrath and the empty tomb shouts this out: Jesus is alive! And because He's alive, He gives you His Spirit. Do you know that means? His Spirit will live within you and now you have that life in you. And so now all of a sudden you're not walking around as a dead person, you remember what it said here, you were born again. You were in death, you were part of the no hope program, you were part of darkness, and then you became born again to new life. That's the best news that I can tell you today. And here's what I want to tell you and I think it's really important. In the first list it said this: All these things we trust in—people, works and motives, and finances, and systems, this kind of stuff—those things were biasing everything in our lives. Everything in our life was biased by that, and so it all maps back to those things. And so those were the things we were counting on and yet those were the things that failed us. And if there's ever a time to grasp that those things failed us it is in April of 2020. Those things all failed us including our health, including the systems of this world, including our money, those things all failed us.

And here's what Peter wants to say to another group of people who were being failed by all of that stuff, to these people back in that time, and what he is saying to those of us in this time: The resurrection transformed him. When he was locked in his room, when he – yeah, I don't even know, you don't want to say quarantined, I mean, it was a self-quarantine, it was a self-lockup that he had put himself in, but they told us we're not forced into our homes either, so we may be self-locked up right now. And we may be fearful right now just like he was, fearful of our government just like he was. I mean, who knows what we're fearful of. Fearful of losing our money. I've been fearful of losing our reputation, fearful of losing our jobs and our careers. I mean, all of those things are legit. He probably was fearful of all those things, you're probably fearful of all those things, and he says to me, he says to you, right here in this text, the thing that transformed him and changed him was the resurrection. That's why we get together to celebrate today because the thing that will transform you and change you is the resurrection.

I want to invite you to let the resurrection change you so that you're no longer hoping on a dead hope, a thing that's gonna fail you, so that you're hoping in on Jesus who's alive, who loves you. It's transformed

my life. It's helped me through the hardest times. It's helping me through this time. He'll help you through this time. I want to invite you to Jesus right now. If you want to come to Jesus, I don't know that there's some special formula, the formula is clear – He died for you and He died to forgive you of your sins, and your answer is: Will I accept that? Will I believe that? And I believe that maybe the best way to respond to that right now is to say yes Jesus, I believe. In your heart, bow your head, pray and just say: *Jesus, I believe I'm a sinner. I've been depending on myself, it's not working and I'm discouraged, I'm frustrated, I'm mad, anxious, all that kind of stuff, and I just want to trust You.* And if you're praying that prayer right now say: *I'm trusting You, Jesus, alone for my salvation. I believe in your resurrection and I know because You're alive You'll give me that life and I want that life, Jesus. I want that life so much, Jesus.*

I just want to congratulate you if you're saying that right now because you're making the best decision in your life. If you made that decision right now, would you just tell Jesus, "I love you"? If you made that long time ago, would you just out loud you in the room right now say, "I love you, Jesus." Maybe right there on the screen that you can type onto write on there, "I love you, Jesus." Shout it out to everyone. If you love, Jesus press that thumbs up or the heart on your screen right now. Let's shout it out to the world I love Jesus. Let's tell everyone we love Jesus right now. And if you're doing that and you just put your trust in Jesus for the first time today, would you go right up there above this screen that you're seeing there if you're on our Calvary Fellowship Live and just press that Yes to Jesus⁴ there and tell us that you put your trust in Jesus today. We would love to know that, we would love to just celebrate with you right now because we know that was the best day of our life and now it's the best day of your life.



Listen, before you go I just want to say God bless you on this Easter. I just want to say the resurrection changed everything and I want to encourage you. Can I pray for you today?

Jesus,



We are like these people in 1st Peter that Peter was writing to; we've got some stuff on our minds, we've got questions and we could go real dark real fast. But this morning we come to You, the living one who rose from the dead and we put our trust in You, we grab on to You. And even in our families we grab on to each other and we just say we trust in Jesus. And so Jesus, thank You for coming out of the grave alive.

It's in the Name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

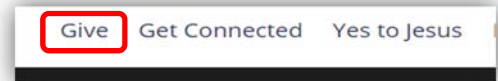
Oh, I want to thank you for being with us today. You guys are awesome. I just thank you for keeping your family together for this time and having the opportunity to talk to you. Have a Happy Easter. Jesus is alive. [INAUDIBLE] like it because it'll transform you. God bless you. Have a wonderful Sunday.

I'm really hoping that you've been ministered to in this last hour; that your family has been encouraged, that you're feeling excited because you know, you know what, there's something else to focus in on and there's something else to live for. And I just hope even this week you keep that focus going all week long – Jesus is alive. It doesn't matter what's going on here, this is all dead anyhow, but Jesus is alive and we get to live within what He's created for us to enjoy. So I just want to encourage you.

⁴ Yes to Jesus URL: <https://cfdowningtown.churchcenter.com/people/forms/114358>

Hey, listen, as you are finishing up with this service here today we would love to invite you to give back to Him for the work of His ministry, for the Gospel message, this very message that we've shared today, to continue to move forward here and around the world. And we're seeing more opportunity for the Gospel than we've seen for a long time and your faithfulness in giving really means a lot to us. We know some of you are struggling, we know that some of you have lost one income in your home, or some of you are completely unemployed in your home. But amidst that, if you're able to give today and you're still receiving an income, would you consider giving graciously and generously today? That generosity is something that I believe that God just blesses. I see it over and over in Scripture.

So if you're on our platform that has a button to give on, just press that button right now and give. If you'd like, just go to [cfdowntown.com](https://www.cfdowningtown.com) and you can give there, or you can just mail a check in this week.



The bottom line is we care about you and we know that when you give, when you're generous, that you are



<https://www.cfdowningtown.com/>

blessed and so we're just thankful for the opportunity to spend time with you. So thanks for sharing your living room with us today and may the Lord bless you this week. God bless you. And remember, He's alive! I'm excited about that! Aren't you? God bless you. Have a wonderful Sunday.

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KEYWORDS: fear, death, resurrection, alive, born again, living hope, inheritance, transformed



Calvary Fellowship website: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/watch>
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