

# Resurrection Responsibilities

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[ 0 : 00 ] So yeah, the title for the message today is Resurrection Responsibilities.! One of the kind of shortcuts, I think, to understanding what God is saying through a particular passage! is to just look for the stuff in that passage that surprises you.

Look for the stuff that stands out, that looks unusual or unexpected. And I think in John 20, there are two surprises, besides the fact that Jesus has risen from the dead, there are two surprises. The one is that Mary Magdalene is chosen to be the first witness of the resurrection, and the second is something like this.

No sooner had the disciples realized Jesus had risen than Jesus gave them a bunch of work to do. And we're going to see both of those things in our passage today. First of all, let's start by reading John 20, verse 1 and 2.

Now, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, they have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

[ 1 : 17 ] So the first surprise, as I mentioned, and you're reading John 20, is why did God choose a woman who in that current time was not able to give valid testimony in a court of law?

Why did God choose a woman to be the first witness of his resurrection? And I think the question probably needs to be a little bit more narrow. Why did God choose this woman to be the witness, the first witness to the resurrection?

As some have said that in this, God is raising up the status of women in a particular culture. I think that's possible. A couple things to think about in addition to that.

One, all of the men were almost certainly to be arrested if they were wandering around Jerusalem, because they were part of what the uprising, the uprising of Jesus, and the women simply had more liberty at this particular moment.

The men were hunted down, and the women were more free to kind of fly under the radar. But I think there's a deep theological reason why God chose Mary Magdalene to be the first witness to the empty tomb.

[ 2 : 28 ] And that is because Mary Magdalene personifies the work of Jesus Christ in freeing a person from the devil and setting them into service to the Lord.

Mary Magdalene has a uniquely potent demonstration. She's a trophy of God's transformation in a very unique way. All we really know about Mary comes from Luke 8, 1 through 3.

I'll read that to you here. Soon afterward, he went on through cities and villages to Jesus, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the 12 were with him, and also some women, who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities.

Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out. Joanna, the wife of Cusa, Herod's household manager in Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their means.

That's what we know about Mary. She was possessed by seven demons, released from this satanic captivity, and set free to do what? To serve Jesus.

[ 3 : 43 ] To join with a tribe of other disciples and taking care in particular of the practical needs that Jesus had. I honestly can't imagine what it would have been like to have been possessed by seven demons.

All of the chaos inside, all of the despair, almost certainly all the suicidal ideation. It's possible that she was actually a prostitute.

That's a possibility given what the word Magdalene means. We don't know that for certain. But just to consider what it must be like to be possessed by seven demons, I just can't imagine.

I have been following, and some of you will laugh at this because you know I have a little secret passion. I have been following something that's been happening in the world of mental health, specifically related to the ketogenic diet.

It turns out that schizophrenics are experiencing radical transformation once they undergo, undertake the ketogenic diet.

[ 4 : 48 ] I read about one woman, a 70-year-old woman diagnosed with schizophrenia at age 17, daily experiencing treatment-resistant symptoms, including auditory and visual hallucinations.

She would see skeletons, hear voices, urging self-harm, multiple suicide attempts. And one of her doctors said, you know, if nothing else, you ought to lose a little weight. She was quite a bit overweight.

And so she went on, at 70, went on the ketogenic diet, and immediately all of her psychotropic symptoms were resolved, all of her hallucinations, all of her suicidal ideation.

And this is becoming kind of a well-known thing now that there appears to be something going on in the gut biome, most likely, also something possibly related to insulin resistance. And it's causing what is manifested often as schizophrenia.

And so you're seeing cases all over the country, even right now, of people with treatment-resistant schizophrenia just eating a lot more meat and a lot less sugar and carbs and experiencing, like, a complete release of those symptoms.

[ 5 : 52 ] She lost 120 pounds. All of her hallucinations stopped. All of her suicidal ideations stopped. And it's just like, boom. And I thought of that when I was trying to, like, grasp what Mary experienced.

The life of isolation, the life of darkness, the life of despair that must take place if you're full of seven demons, and then transformation.

And what does that transformation look like? Most fundamentally, what's going on here is this girl who had no friends, who was living on the outskirts of society, who's filled with despair, is suddenly released from all that toxic, satanic poison, and she's free, but not only that, she has friends.

And most importantly, she has purpose. Someone said the purpose of life is a life of purpose. You know, that's a little generic. I would want to tighten that up a little bit, but I feel incredibly happy for Mary, not just because she was released of these demons, but that she moved from one way of living to an entirely different.

She got to experience the joy. And it is a joy, my friends, of following Jesus and serving him. As 1 John says, his commandments are not burdensome.

[ 7 : 13 ] And that's the main takeaway if I lose you at any point today, which is entirely possible. The main takeaway is simply this. You must never think that when Jesus gives you a job to do, that that's a bad thing.

When Jesus gives you a job to do, he's giving you an opportunity to experience and enjoy the work he has done. His saving work makes it possible for you to serve him.

So I think that the most likely reason for Mary being brought to the empty tomb, first and foremost, is in part because she personifies this transformation.

She was working for one team, right? And then she started working for the other team. And this is actually how the Bible talks about the gospel this way a lot.

For instance, 1 Peter 2.9, that Christians are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may proclaim, there's our job, the praises of him who called you out of darkness and into light.

[ 8 : 14 ] That's Mary, right? That's Mary's story. Mary really is the poster child of Ephesians 2. I won't read the whole thing, but listen to a couple verses in Ephesians 2. Here's Mary before Jesus, Ephesians 2.1-2.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

Just to be super clear, there really are only two teams. And you don't have to be possessed by a devil to serve him. That's kind of what this is saying. Like that's one way you might wind up serving

the devil, but it doesn't have to be that way.

If you're not explicitly serving Jesus, you're serving the devil. The Bible's super clear about this. So Mary before Christ is in that column, and then we move down to verse 8 of Ephesians 2.

We see Mary after Christ. For by grace you've been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing. It is the gift of God, not a result of work, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.

[ 9 : 29 ] Why were you created in Christ Jesus? For good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. And that's Mary after Jesus, right? She was walking in the darkness, following the prince, the power, the Satan.

She was following him, and she was set free from all that. And now she's able to be, when the grace of God appeared, as we read in Titus 2, to say a person now zealous for good works. You know, she just didn't see, she wouldn't have seen this new life she had as any kind of burden at all. Yes, she had to leave her home and follow Jesus around. Yeah, she probably gave of her resources.

Tradition is, is that she probably actually came from money, as a number of these women in this list did. So she probably had to follow him around and give of her resources. Honestly, she probably took care of the cooking, the securing of provisions for the people and so forth.

And boy, I'll tell you, I've heard plenty of women grumble about all these things. But you know, when you realize you're serving Jesus, and you realize what the alternative is, his commands are not burdensome.

[ 10 : 38 ] So that's the angle we're going to take today. Somehow, after we encounter Jesus, he gives us work to do. And that seems counterintuitive to a lot of us, because we were all told that we were saved by grace.

It's like, well, yeah, you were saved by grace, but if you're not working for Jesus, you're not probably saved. We see right away, as Mary is processing the resurrection of Jesus, in verse 11, John 20, we see, but Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept, she stooped to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

And they said to her, woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, they've taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they have laid him. Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? Supposing him to be the gardener, she told him, sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you've laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus said to her, Mary, and she turned and said to him in Aramaic, Rabbanai, which means teacher, Jesus said to her, listen to this, there's another surprise in the text.

[ 11 : 58 ] Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that he had said these things to her. Here's the second surprise, this idea of resurrection responsibility.

She's just barely processed that he's alive, and he's already giving her work to do. He's already giving her another assignment. Do not cling to me, but go and tell my brothers.

Have you noticed the kind of increasing inactivity among Christians? It's all related to this idea of quietism, let go and let God, as somehow if the real key is to cling to Jesus, and Jesus is saying, well, actually, the real key is to do the stuff I tell you to do.

So in the moment of emotional, I suppose you could say relief and beauty and glory, she's just wanting to hug Jesus, and Jesus is like, no, go get to work.

[ 13 : 08 ] You've got a job to do, girl. Here again, I would really like to talk longer than I will about the dangerously low expectations that many Christian churches have toward women.

And what we see here is, is that Jesus sees her as, you know, not an equal ontologically, but he sees her as an equal in this sense. He says, I'm ascending to my father and your father, to my God and your God.

So put your big girl pants on and go do the work. It's a really interesting thing that happens after the resurrection it doesn't just happen to Mary.

In fact, I did an extensive study of all of the resurrection references in the New Testament over the last few weeks. I think I put a list up on the slides for you to see. I don't think that this is really all of them, but it's a lot of them.

And you'd be surprised how few of these come without any kind of obligation. Most of these passages come with some sort of, now God has done this, so you must go do that.

[14:19] It isn't just Mary who gets tasked immediately upon hearing about the resurrection of Jesus. If you're still in John 20, continue into verse 19.

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, Peace be with you. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side, and then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

And Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so, I'm sending you. Work to do right away. Work to do right away.

Serve me. You've seen me. Now serve me. Now is Jesus just some kind of taskmaster? Or is Jesus so incapable of getting his own work accomplished that he immediately has to send out his army of hapless followers who have only recently even processed the reality of the resurrection?

No. Jesus' commands to do stuff are his way of giving you the full experience of what you've gained in Christ.

[15:32] Jesus' commands to serve him and to obey him, to risk for him, to suffer for him, it's just his way of saying, I've given you the keys to the kingdom. Go out and be more than conquerors, as Paul says in Romans 8.

Later on in verse 30 of John 20, this is all about doing stuff. John 20 verse 30. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ.

This is your first job. Believe. I've assembled the signs. I've assembled the evidence. Now believe. Later on in chapter 21, as Jesus is reconciling with Peter who had betrayed him three times, what does the nature of that reconciliation look like?

Does anyone remember? He's tasked. He's sent three times. For each of the three denials, Peter says, feed, or Jesus says, feed my sheep.

We've really got to make sure we understand that his commandments are not burdensome. They're a blessing. And they're actually the way that we experience all that Jesus has done for us.

[16:49] So I showed you that list a second ago of all these passages, and I could just tell you that there's more than six, but at least six responsibilities that come with the reality of the resurrection.

We'll probably get through four of them today, but let me give you all six. Number one, take responsibility for his death. Number two, repent and believe in Jesus.

Number three, be baptized. Number four, assume the center. I'll explain what that means in a minute. Number five, endure suffering with hope.

Number six, face death with confidence. Let me just touch on number five since we won't get to it in the message. Friends, if there's grumbling in your suffering, apply the medicine of the resurrection.

The Bible's pretty clear on that. That the way that we're able to endure hardship and suffering and uncertainty and loss in a way that is full of joy and hope is we look to the cross and resurrection.

[17:48] We look to the sufferings of Jesus and see how it came out. And we say, if we share in Jesus, his suffering, so too we will share in his resurrection. So let's just go through the first four of these this morning, these responsibilities that come to us in light of the resurrection.

And the first one is, is we must take responsibility for his death. Now, when I said I looked through the New Testament for all of these examples of kind of, Jesus has done this, therefore you must do this.

I went in sequence from Acts forward. And so you're going to hear a lot of Acts today because I don't need to go through every verse that I read to you. One of the first obligations that arises out of the empty tomb is you need to own why there was a tomb in the first place.

You need to own why a tomb existed. Acts 3.15, you killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead.

We are witnesses of this. Acts 4.10, then know this, you and all the people of Israel, it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

[ 19 : 02 ] Acts 5.30, the God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead, whom you killed, by hanging him on a cross. The very first responsibility that comes in light of the resurrection is we need to, we need to own our part in the cross.

We need to own our part in the necessity of Jesus' death. In his great book, *The Cross of Christ*, John Stott writes, before we can begin to see the cross as something done for us, leading us to faith and worship, we have to see it as something done by us, leading us to repentance.

Indeed, only the man who was prepared to own his share in the guilt of the cross may claim his share in its grace.

For some of you, friends, this might just be the first point of the sermon is the last point you need to pay attention to. For some of you, the whole thing would transform if you stop viewing Christianity as an option on a menu and you begin to realize, Jesus Christ was put to death because I am a sinner.

The holy one, the just one, the kind one, the gracious one, the perfect one, died because of me.

That's where this all starts. It's the first responsibility one must take in light of the resurrection.

[ 20 : 25 ] A second responsibility is to repent and receive the salvation he has secured for us. It will do no good for you to be torn to the heart as it says in Acts, claiming some ownership of Jesus' death unless you also then claim ownership of the outcome of his death, which is grace, undeserved grace.

Acts 3.17 And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. But what God foretold by the mouth of the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, thus he fulfilled, repent, therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed to you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things which God spoke by his mouth of his holy prophets long ago.

Skip to verse 26. God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.

Second responsibility that comes from the resurrection is to repent of your sins and believe in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5.15 says, And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again.

See, all these verses about resurrection and like something I'm supposed to do. Here's one, I'm not supposed to live for myself anymore. By the way, that's not a suggestion.

[ 22 : 04 ] There's a new sheriff in town, the risen one, Jesus Christ, and he sets the terms of our existence, and he has called us to take ownership for his death and take benefit of his death by repenting of our sins and placing our faith in him.

Number three, we must be baptized. This is relevant because a number of you are considering baptism, and I didn't just throw it in there because of this, I actually found it the honest way looking through the various prescriptive commands related to the resurrection.

The baptism is, young Christian, baptism is the public invisible declaration of your participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

When we baptize someone, we lower them down, and as we lower them down, this is fairly athletic for pastors, there's a lot of hand-eye brain coordination, you know. As we lower them down, we say buried with Christ in baptism.

They are buried under the water, and then as we raise them up, we say risen to walk in newness of life. One of the responsibilities we have after the resurrection is to visibly join in this sacrament that declares the principles of our faith, that we die with Christ and are raised with him again.

[ 23 : 22 ] There's a number of verses for that, one of them is Colossians 2.12, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead.

Romans 6.4, we were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead, through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. So one of our responsibilities is to be baptized.

So number four, the fourth responsibility, which I have said is assuming the center. that's going to need to be unpacked a little bit. Assuming the center refers to the idea of grabbing hold of an idea or a narrative or an ideology and making it your sort of positioning it to all the world as the most

reasonable of all possible positions, the most reasonable and logical of all possible positions. That's what assuming the center is. You're shaping the Overton window, you're saying this is now the center. If you deviate here, if you deviate here, whatever. But this is reality, this is truth, this is the center.

[ 24 : 45 ] And that is really the Christian's responsibility in a post-resurrection world. We are not standing on the periphery making suggestions or giving people an option for meaning.

We are standing in the center of the entire spectrum of reality and saying this happened and therefore you, whole world, have certain responsibilities.

We need to stop as Christians making winsome suggestions about possible therapeutic cures to people's unhappiness and we need to stand on the street corner in our own homes and at the dinner table and declare God sent his son to die and on the third day he rose again from the dead because death was unable to hold him and that same God who rose Jesus from the dead will judge you when you die and you will stand before him and give an account first and foremost for what you did in this post-resurrection reality.

Did you understand that Jesus Christ coming and dying, that God taking on flesh, dying and raising again is the new rule that you must respond to?

in the Christian world, the real champion of assuming the center has been a man named Douglas Wilson and in one article explaining this concept, he writes, my argument has been that Christians have needed for several centuries to assume the center again.

[ 26 : 10 ] There have been notable periods in history when the Christians have done just that and the results have been pretty exciting but there have also been times like our own when Christians have been content to assume their assigned place in the periphery.

He continues to write, we are on a threshold of a new era. We are alive during a time in which the Christian church is faced with a striking dilemma. We must either assume the center or we will die but because we know from the prophets that we will not die, it follows that we will once again assume the center and right now would be a most excellent time for that.

Now, he wrote this I think more than a year ago friends, all over the United States in particular young men are coming to faith in Jesus.

Baptism tanks that hadn't been used in years are now being filled frequently. People are turning to Christ and you know why that's happening?

Humanly speaking ultimately speaking God is good that's why that's happening. Humanly speaking the old center the old liberal order the old post-war consensus feminism all these things all the centers have revealed themselves to be stinking piles of garbage and undeniably so and everyone in society can smell the garbage and Christians have become emboldened to say you know what that can't be the center the landfill can't be the center the cemetery can't be the center and Christians just like you are assuming the center again and saying no the reality is this it is the most reasonable of all ways to live to respond to the cataclysmic event of God walking on earth dying and being raised again the most reasonable thing the centrist thing not the peripheral thing not the weird thing not the exception the central thing the centered thing the normal thing would be to follow

[ 28 : 16 ] Jesus and friends if you will go out into your lives into all of your relationships and start acting like that I promise you when you stop treating Jesus like a cafeteria option and you say no this is the way life goes when we assume the center glorious things indeed do happen this is exactly what Jesus is doing in the great commission he's telling the disciples all authority has been given to me you don't need to go out apologetically you don't need to go out offering alternatives simply go out he says to all the nations and baptize them in the name of the father and the son the holy spirit teaching them to observe all that I have commanded!

you and behold I am with you always to the end of the age one of the great gifts that my mother gave me when I was a kid what she said Chris here's the deal almost no one ever knows what they're really doing it's like almost all of it is an illusion almost everybody is wondering all the time what they should be about and if you will go out to people and tell them what they should do in the name of Christ a lot of they're just looking for an answer with an illusion of having one so friends be bold assume the center the resurrection requires that of you this does the early disciples go out there and tell people hey this is the way the life is now all the big stuff has already happened God came he died he rose again take your share of the cross repent of your sins and believe in him be baptized great commission stuff

I really want to emphasize this in your conscience I think the Lord is doing this in the church at large in America so I want to read another passage to you Romans 1 1-6 this is the entry to the book of Romans and I don't know about you but sometimes I tend to skip over the hi hi it's me Paul section there's so much wealth there to be an apostle set apart for the gospel of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets and the holy scriptures concerning his son who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead Jesus Christ our Lord through whom we have received grace and apostleship!

Listen to this phrase to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among the nations see Paul doesn't see the gospel as an option he sees it as a law he sees it as the new law of all the land of all the nations and everyone if they are to obey this law must place their faith in Jesus Christ to bring about the obedience of faith Paul is essentially going out as a herald as was common in that day and announcing there's a new king in charge and here are his rules he does that again when he tells the Athenians in Acts 17 verse 31 the Athenians the wise the learned the impressive the scholarly he calls them ignorant he says the times of ignorance God has overlooked but now since Jesus has raised from the dead he commands all people everywhere to repent how many people all people where are these people everywhere he commands all people everywhere to repent because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed and of this he has given full assurance to all by raising him from the dead so we get back to

John 20 where John says in verse 30 now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name I want you to understand the Greek grammatical construction here it's very important when John says I have written these things so that you may believe the way he's saying that would be similar to me saying I have given you \$50 arranged let's pick a person here no no we'll pick John Alyssa John Alyssa I've given you \$50 arranged a baby none of this is real by the way arranged a babysitter set your clothes out gassed up your car made a reservation so that you can go out to dinner that's what [ 33 : 22 ] John is saying he's saying I have given you all that you need to do the thing I'm asking you to do he's saying I have given you all the evidence all the information you need so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ and in believing have life in his name that's how we assume!

So what really stands out again is the way that these fresh understanders of the resurrection were immediately put to work and that sense gets to one of the most basic philosophies at work in Providence and some of you will be attending a membership class in a little bit when we talk about every member as a minister or when we would say something like every conversion comes with a commission or every salvation is ascending what we're really doing is we're being clear that if you are in Christ you are responsible to serve him and make his name great in the world in your unique way according to your unique gifts and your unique abilities what we're really doing is we're distributing responsibility biblically rather than distribute responsibility unbiblically which winds up like six people in the church do all the stuff now this gets you know this gets blown up sometimes because oh those poor six people no no no no no no no no having been one of those six people before i'm never complained about it i'm happy that i get to experience the power of jesus in my life i'm happy that i get to experience the authority of jesus in my life as david livingston once that i've never made a sacrifice i i'm i'm glad i got a front row seat to the transformation of many people and institutions and so on and so forth and so no this is not when we talk about every member of minister we're not saying let's all spread the load what we're saying is you got to get into this this is this is the way this is the way that

God has designed you you're you're gonna serve somebody that's what mary mary knew that didn't she she knew you're gonna serve somebody that isn't a question there's no possibility of not serving somebody bob dylan the great the great bob dylan he he wrote a song called you gotta serve somebody and it's it's what's what's so disarming about this song is that first of all his voice is terrible on the recording as it often is but he throws in all of these cutesy little rhyme schemes but then he just drops this existential hammer at the end of every verse here's just one of like 12 verses that he wrote you may be an ambassador to England or France you may like to gamble you might like to dance you may be the heavyweight champion of the world you may be a socialite with a long string of pearls but you're going to have to serve somebody yes indeed you're going to have to

serve somebody it may be the devil or it may be the Lord but you're going to have to serve somebody Mary knew that she knew that is actually the only way for all of humanity it may be the devil or it may be the Lord but you're going to be serving somebody this song incidentally so infuriated John Lennon when he was at his peak brat phase that he wrote this terrible song called serve yourself and I actually can't read that song to you it's so full of rank blasphemy and cursings I can't read that song to you and his whole argument is no it's not the devil or the Lord it's you just serve yourself but when you read it it's just obvious that John Lennon is working for old Lucifer even in his attempt to rebut the situation he underlines the reality of what Dylan said and that's what Mary saw and so when she sees Jesus and Jesus says don't cling to me I got some work for you to do this is not the first time that Mary has experienced something like this a dramatic reversal of fortunes glory beauty and also work I'll end with the word I started with in Titus 2:11 for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all people training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in the present age waiting for our blessed hope the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works do you realize as we introduce communion that even this table gives it for you for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the [38:59] Lord's death until he comes well there are very few instances that I can think of where experiencing God doesn't include some kind of work even this sacramental opportunity set before you as Christians includes you by participating in it proclaiming the death of Jesus so his our duties that we get from Jesus are all delight his commandments are not burdensome and this is an example of that even as you partake to strengthen your own faith to remind yourself of God's faithfulness to you even as you do that you are also proclaiming the reality of Jesus death until he comes so let me pray for us and then you come and we will partake them corporately father God we praise your holy name that you don't treat us like lame can't do anything people you don't you believe that the power that you gave through Jesus means something to us you believe that our citizenship our sonship our daughtership like that means something and so you call us to be your fellow workers Lord thank you for the incredible privilege just as Mary experienced where we were set free from the domain of darkness and set into a new community of people whose thing they have in common is that they were set free and now they get to work together for Jesus that's the glory of the church where every member is a minister thank you Lord for building that church here at Providence may you continue to do so and even as amen