



# SERMON OF THE WEEK

## First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu at Ko'olau

### March 31 2013 (Easter)

### "He lives in You, He Lives in Me"

### The Rev. Dr. Dan Chun

(Prior to the sermon, there were two drama presentations: *Lonely at the Top* and *These Parts*.)

#### SERMON PART ONE:

We have come here to First Prez for Easter. But to be honest, some of us here may not want to be here. Maybe we were told, "You have to be at the Easter service because I'm your mom or dad and and I say you go," or, "You have to be at the service because this is family time."

Or maybe you are here because a friend said, "I think something will happen today. God might show up and have something for you. He might speak in your heart, mind, soul."

To be honest, in that previous drama we might have identified with someone up on stage. There is a doubting scientist or scholar in all of us, or maybe there is a part of us that might question miracles and the supernatural. But the fact is we are at an Easter service where the basis of the Christian faith is the belief in the supernatural.

There is a truth greater than this earth – God actually came. He performed miracles. He taught people how to love. He died, and He rose again on Easter morning!

The foundation of the Christian faith is God's great love

for us. He wants to be involved in our lives, so much so that He sent His Son Jesus to this earth in the form of man, the only one who was fully human and yet fully divine. Jesus said, "If you follow Me, I will call you friend. Not a servant or a slave, but friend."

Can it be that God of the universe would love us so much that He would come down to this speck of a planet in the Milky Way to say – I want to be your friend. Yes, friendship with God is possible. It's what God wants with us. That's incredible. He wants to be our friend. He says He can help us in our life.

God wants to be part of every area of our lives. It's people, and maybe us sometimes, who think we can manage without Him, so we turn a deaf ear to Him. As a result, we, our children, and our children's children get into things that are far from what God believes is good for us.

And yet He continually loves and helps us. He hovers over us trying to talk to us, like today, to tell us that He loves us and that He is for us.

(A drama entitled *Everything* was presented.)

#### SERMON PART TWO:

Jesus is the Light who desires to pierce the darkness in

our lives. Jesus died for us because we thought we could save ourselves from our sins, but we can't. In spite of our tendency to do wrong, our weakness toward temptations, our pride, our self-centeredness, our addictions or patterns of bad behavior, and our limited knowledge, we somehow think we don't need God's supernatural help.

Jesus died for us because we needed to be saved. The cost of our sin, our selfishness, and pride is so immense that it put a curse on us--not for a 30-day suspension, or a one-year jail term, or a 20-year term but for eternity! That's how the justice system of heaven works!

Just as we say when someone commits something wrong, "Look at what that person did; someone has to pay for that," there is a law of the universe that says that, too. Someone must pay.

The penalty for sin is beyond enormous! There can be no sin in the presence of God, which means we cannot be with God in heaven because there's sin in our lives. It's just not possible unless someone pays the penalty for our sin.

But God, being incredibly gracious and loving beyond our wildest imaginations, said, "I will take on your sin and the sins of every person from the past, the present, and the future, and I will pay the price."

I will take the punches and stabbings caused by your foolish choices and selfish decisions. I will also take on all of your illnesses and addictions, smash them and pulverize them and bear them on my crucified body so that you may be forgiven and have a life with God in heaven, eternally. All I ask is that you dedicate your life to Me.”

So you see, no matter how much we have messed up here on earth, God will still forgive us IF WE ASK HIM. Then He gives us the assurance of heaven if we choose to follow Him and dedicate our lives to Him.

What kind of God is this that would die for us? What kind of God tries to hold at bay the demons that harass us? What kind of God steps down from His mighty throne in heaven to come to earth and be born in a stable and grow up to be a common carpenter? What kind of God is this who would hang out with lepers, adulterers, embezzlers, and other immoral people who did detestable things as they pleased?

What kind of God is this who would then allow Himself to go on a cross, made from the trunks of a tree, to be tortured for more than six hours, for a crown of thorns to be thrust into His temples, to be whipped, beaten while blindfolded, and then have His wrists, ankles nailed to a wooden cross, left to hang till He died, and then laid in a borrowed burial tomb because His family couldn't afford His own grave?

He went through all these just because He loves you. Dare we not turn a deaf ear or an apathetic attitude towards Him of who cares?

Oh, yes, there may be the scholar, the scientist, or the

pragmatist in us just like in the drama we saw earlier who says, “I don't believe.” But if you were there when they crucified the Lord, you would think otherwise.

(Leon Williams sang *Were You There*.)

### SERMON PART THREE:

Oh, can it be that as final proof that Jesus was God—after being laid in that borrowed grave—He would rise from the dead three days later? Incredible! Stunning! It was the final proof that He wasn't just a great moral teacher; He wasn't just a historical figure of a man; no, He was actually God.

God came on this earth and He spoke the language of the people He was born into—Aramaic and Hebrew. He became human, like one of us. He was humble. He didn't lord it over us even though He was the Lord. Hallelujah!

So what does it mean for you and me today? It means that if we say with our lips and hearts that we want to follow Jesus in all the areas of our lives, Jesus and God's Holy Spirit will live in us.

It doesn't mean though that we won't have sorrow, trouble, or even tragedy in our life. No one is exempt from that, not even followers of Jesus. If anyone says following Jesus will mean no more pain or trauma, that person is lying and trying to sell you a false bill of goods.

Jesus on the other hand said, “In the world you shall have tribulation...you will have trouble... there is pain in this stage of life on earth. But He also says, “In Me, you MIGHT have peace. So be of good cheer for I have overcome the world.”

Why the word *might*?

Because we will only have peace if we follow Him. All other forms of promises of peace, whether self-help or pure self-motivation, won't work; nor will our achievements, trophies, awards, or our stock portfolio. Actually all these things mean nothing in this world in the long run and certainly not in the next world.

But in Jesus Christ, we can have peace today. It means we can have peace and even joy in the midst of your pain. Jesus doesn't promise you will go around the pain, but He does fervently promise that He will get you THROUGH the pain.

We may be scared, but He is with us. We may be anxious, but He says, “Do not worry, for I am there.” We may worry about the future, but He says, “I am with you always.”

And if even if we do suffer, there will be benefits as it says in the Bible in a letter to the Roman Christians who were being persecuted:

*Romans 5:3 But we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,*

*Romans 5:4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,*

*Romans 5:5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.*

God bless His word!

We suffer but God's love pours into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Why wouldn't we want that?

**W**hen our parents are splitting or fighting, we can turn to God. When our business is going south or we feel waves of depression, we can find refuge in God. When the tides of illness overwhelm us or when tragedy is drowning us, we can grab the hand of our Lord and friend Jesus Christ.

Jesus is risen today! And we can know the Lord of the Universe, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords and have Him in us, living in us with His Spirit!

All we need to do to start that journey is to say basically four words: *sorry, thank you, and please.*

*Sorry* for what I am have done and for forgetting You.

*Thank you* for forgiving me.

*Please*, Lord, come into my heart right now and send Your Holy Spirit.

If on this Easter weekend that is your prayer, let's do it now to join the rest of us who have come before to declare our love and allegiance to the Risen One Jesus Christ.  
Let's pray.

Lord, more than two thousand will be worshipping here this weekend and hundreds are here right now. There are some who want to start their friendship with You and express their desire to follow You for the rest of their lives. And so on their behalf, we're saying this prayer together silently some for the first time, some as a re-commitment:

Jesus, I'm SORRY for neglecting You, forgetting You, or

not knowing you. Sorry for all of the things I should not have done.

THANK YOU for forgiving my sins.

And now, PLEASE come into my heart right now. I want to follow You all the time, and know You as friend, Lord, and Savior. Please send Your Holy Spirit into me. And thank you for what YOU have done—dying and suffering for me, and protecting me all these years without me knowing.

Thank you Lord, my new Friend. Thank you. For now I know, that because of the prayer I have said, that you Lord you live in me! You live in me! You live in me! Your Holy Spirit, Your presence, now lives in Me in a new way!  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! For He is risen! Amen!

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