



WORSHIP SERVICES

10:30 a.m.

**GRACE COMMUNION
INTERNATIONAL**

WARM WELCOME

APRIL 12, 2020

ORDER OF SERVICES

- 1) **Call to Worship**
- 2) **2 OPENING HYMNS**
- 3) **PRAYER**
- 4) **SPEAKING OF LIFE**
- 5) **ANNOUNCEMENT**
- 6) **SERMON**
- 7) **HYMN**
- 8) **BENEDICTION**

PORT
FLOWER

CALL TO WORSHIP

- ▶ **“1 ¶ Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!**
- ▶ **2 Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”” (Ps 118:1-2 ESV)**

PORT
FLOWER

**Christ Is Risen He Is Risen Indeed
Keith & Kristyn Getty**

CHRIST IS RISEN
HE IS RISEN INDEED

Bm7



OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE
POWER

Keith & Kristyn Getty



Rejoice! The Lord Is King!

4:9

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE
SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE

SPEAKING OF LIFE



ANNOUNCEMENTS





**OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL
MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE**

EASTER SUNDAY

KNOWING CHRIST AS CRUCIFIED

- ▶ **The Creator suffered at the hands of his creation. We can see here one of the greatest paradoxes of the Christian faith. So it deeply was the human race enmeshed with sin that they not only failed to recognize their Creator and Redeemer on his entry into his world, they put him to death using one of the most sadistic and humiliating forms of execution ever devised.**
- ▶ (From "KNOWING CHRIST" by Alister McGrath page 224)

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE

Jesus willingly suffered at the cross for us to restore our relationship with God the Father as he, Jesus, became incarnate in our sinful flesh. Jesus is God who broke into our world and lived his life perfectly in a sinful flesh similar to the one each one of us has.

He died brutally as a young man, in the prime of his age, at the hands of sinful humanity.

Reading about the death of Jesus in the Bible would be all the more tragic if we did not know the outcome.

Last week, during the sermon, I asked you to imagine or picture in your mind being present as one of the members of the crowd witnessing and I should add "participating in his crucifixion and contributing to his death on the cross".

At the end of the sermon, we briefly discussed and thought about the fact that when Jesus died on the cross, we died with Jesus. I died, you died with Jesus.

During today's service, although you know what the outcome of the story is, I would

ask all of us to put ourselves in the shoes of Peter, Mary Magdalene and of the apostle whom Jesus loved. We are not given his name.

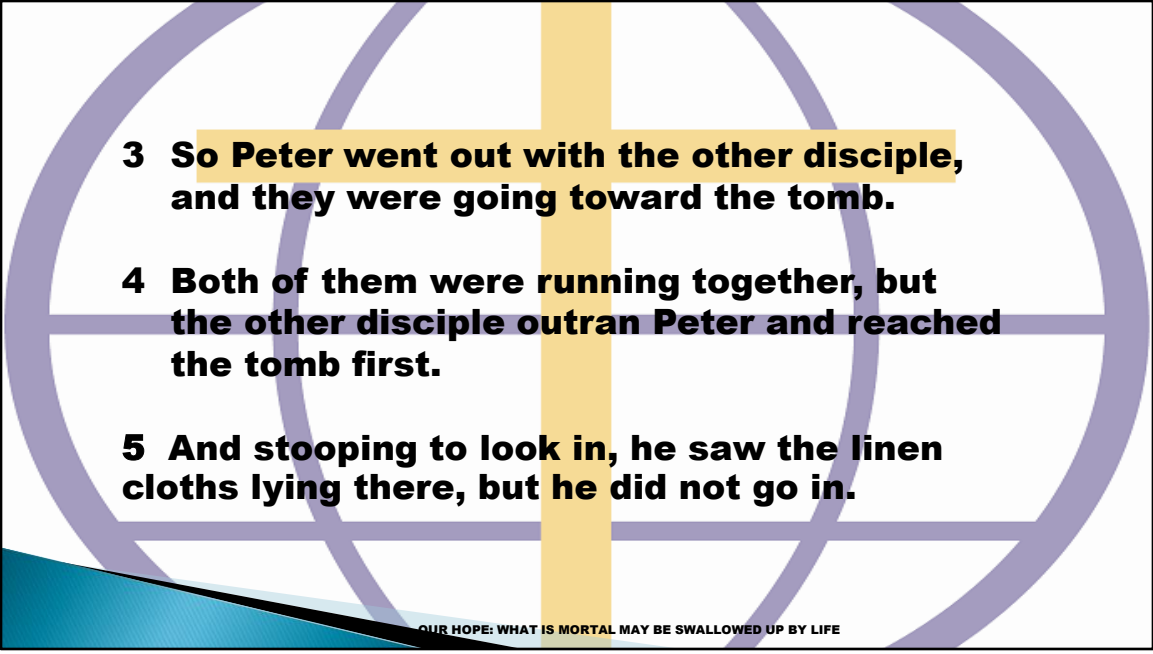
Those finding the empty tomb, as we read, did not understand Scripture and obviously had not fully grasped the fact that Jesus would die for them and be resurrected.

They came to the tomb expecting to see the dead remains of Jesus.

Scripture reading John 20: 1-18 (ESV)

- ▶ **1 ¶** 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.
- ▶ **2** 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.”**

HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE



3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb.

4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE



Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there,

7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.

8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed;

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY
LIFE

9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went back to their homes.

11 ¶ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb.

12 And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE



13 They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?”

She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.”

14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

**OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP
BY LIFE**



15 Jesus said to her,

“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?”

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”

**OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY
LIFE**



16 Jesus said to her, "Mary."

**She turned and said to him in Aramaic,
"Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).**

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY
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17 Jesus said to her,

“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.’”

18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples,

“I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.” (Joh 20:1-18 ESV)

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY
LIFE



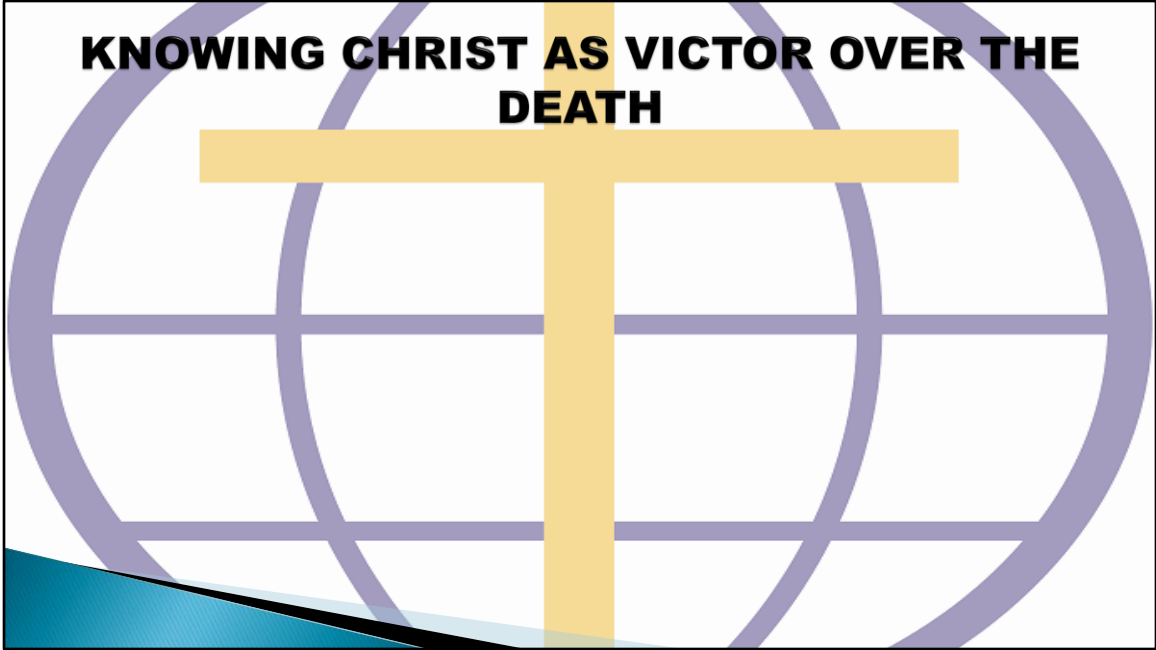
**THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE
LIVING GOD**

**THANK YOU JESUS FOR BEING THE
LIVING REALITY OF OUR HOPE.**

AMEN

**OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY
LIFE**

KNOWING CHRIST AS VICTOR OVER THE DEATH



Because we live after the death, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus, we know the surprise these first disciples experienced in the knowledge of what happened after his burial in a borrowed tomb.

Today, we know and believe that he was resurrected from the dead.

Sometimes, we can become so familiar with the biblical events talking about these extraordinary events that it becomes dull by familiarity.

That is why it is important to think about what those finding the empty tomb must have thought and experienced.

They had experienced the powerful ministry of Jesus for 3 1/2 years.

- They had seen him change water into wine.
- They had seen him feeding crowds of more than 5000 people with just a few loaves of bread and a few fish. Many had come to admire Jesus. He was a hero to them. So much so, that the general populace of Judea wanted to make him king.

He was the source of great consternation and trepidation for the religious leaders for

fear that people would leave them and turn to Jesus. They were so threatened that they contrived a plan to put him to death. And put him to death they did, manipulating those very people who wanted to make Jesus the King to chose instead a notorious criminal to be freed instead of Jesus.

Those religious leaders were also blind. In Acts 3:17-18, after the healing of the lame beggar, the apostle Peter says the following, **“17 ‘And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.’ (Ac 3:17-18 ESV)**

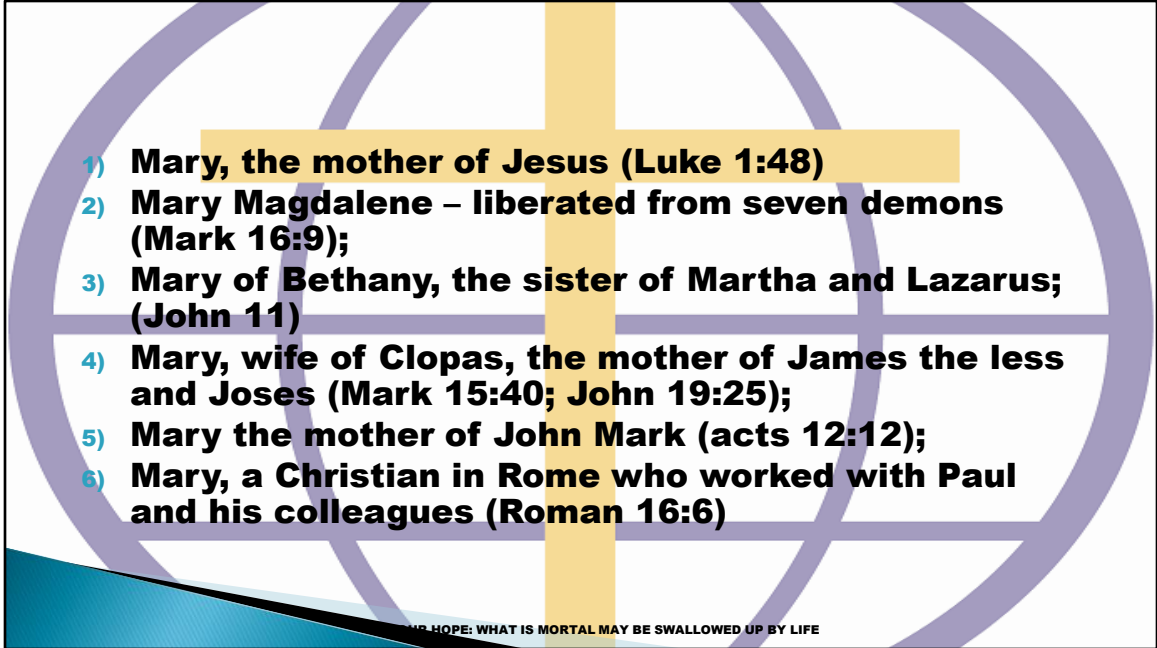
- They had seen the raising of Lazarus after four days of being in a grave. His physical body was decomposing but yet Jesus, being the resurrection and the life, called him out of the tomb.

When they saw the empty tomb, it did not enter their minds that Jesus had been resurrected. Mary Magdalene thought that Jesus’ body had been taken away.

The only one who believed at that time was the disciple whom Jesus loved. **He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen.** The Bible tells us that he (the beloved disciple) saw and believed (verse 8).

This shows us that it takes a supernatural intervention and the opening of our minds for us to believe in the love of the triune God and the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Who is this Mary Magdalene?



Mary Magdalene realize that Jesus was really risen from the dead when he appeared to her and called her by name!

We can only imagine the surprise, the joy, the mixed thoughts and emotions she must have felt. She was convinced that Jesus was indeed resurrected. She was the witness bearer to the other disciples of Jesus.

It is interesting that the risen Jesus chose a woman to bring the message of his resurrection when the Judean society regarded women as less intelligent than men. Their view of women was completely distorted.

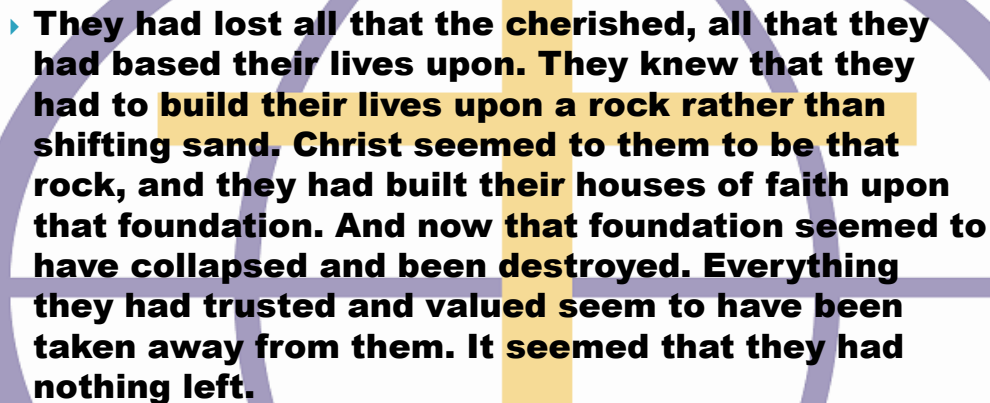
Jesus validated women’s importance during his ministry and again at his resurrection.

How can we learn from the experiences of these witnesses in our lives today living as post-resurrection disciples.

LIVING AS POST RESURRECTION DISCIPLES

▶ **“God seemed to be absent, and all seemed to be lost. They were in utter despair. In each case, the reaction was entirely understandable from a human point of view. If I had been there, I would have done the same. It is so easy to judge those disciples as if we would have behaved better or known better. Yet the harsh reality is that we would have done the same.**

**OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY
LIFE**



▶ **They had lost all that they cherished, all that they had based their lives upon. They knew that they had to build their lives upon a rock rather than shifting sand. Christ seemed to them to be that rock, and they had built their houses of faith upon that foundation. And now that foundation seemed to have collapsed and been destroyed. Everything they had trusted and valued seem to have been taken away from them. It seemed that they had nothing left.**

(From KNOWING CHRIST by Alister McGrath pages 232-233)

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We live in very uncertain times. With the Covid-19, we live in a period that this world has never experienced. Numerous nations around the globe have shut down their economy to a level never seen before. Many countries have closed their borders.

As of yesterday, from what we know, over 100,000 people had died from this killing virus. So many are grieving the lost of loved ones.

Millions of people are out of work. Domestic violence is increasing in many places. Some health systems are taxed beyond their limits. The list of suffering goes on.

We can ask where is God in all of this?

The resurrection of Jesus reassures us that even if the world is collapsing around us, God is still at work even if we are unable to see his presence with our naked eyes.

We can trust in Jesus when it appears, physically speaking, to be going completely absent. He is not. He is very much alive!

This is true nationwide and also true in our individual lives. Jesus is never absent.

Jesus has conquered sin and death through his crucifixion and resurrection, yet we still see the terrible effects of sinfulness all around us. It causes so much suffering.

During these times, we must hold on to the promises that God will never leave us nor forsake us in whatever situation we may be.

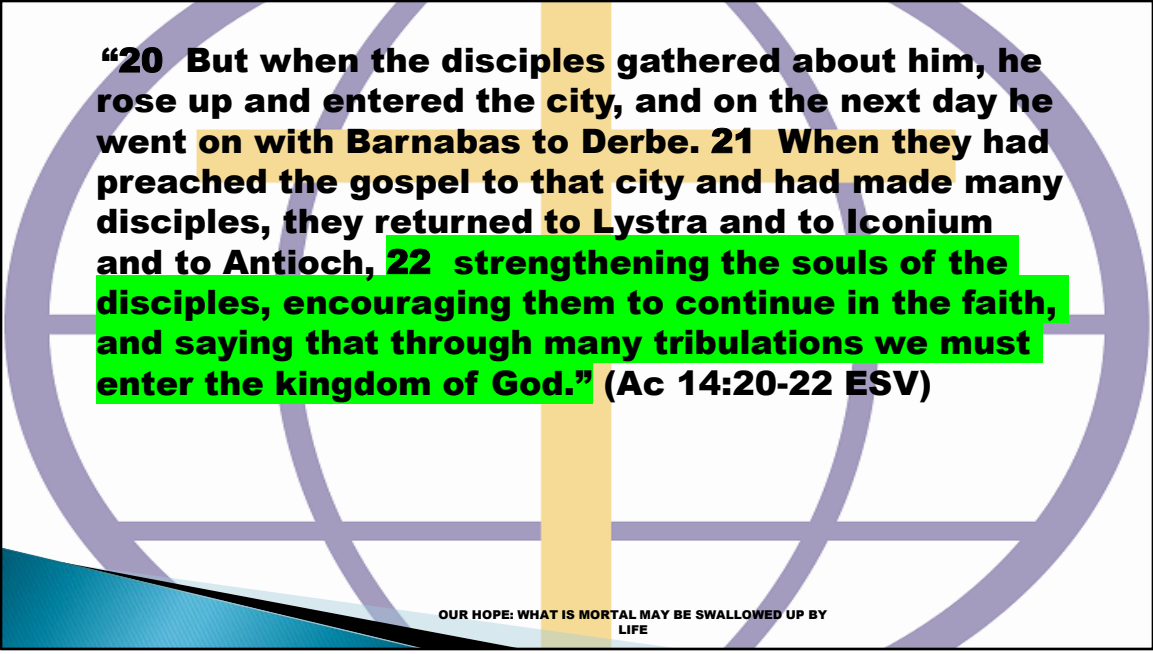
One of my friends who lives with cancer and his wife who has serious health problems wrote in an email that he was walking in the valley of the shadow of death, as we can read in Psalm 23.

Yet walking in the valley of the shadow of death he said words to the effect that he could see God's wonderful hands accompanying them.

There are times in our lives where we can feel despair and alone. We may feel or think that there is no helper, but there is.

It's easy to trust in Christ when things are going good and well. We must not forget that God is completely reliable and present when we journey in difficult times. God the Father and Jesus never leave us. The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, is always with us and in us.

We are not forget what Dr. Luke wrote in the book of Acts.



“20 But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” (Ac 14:20-22 ESV)

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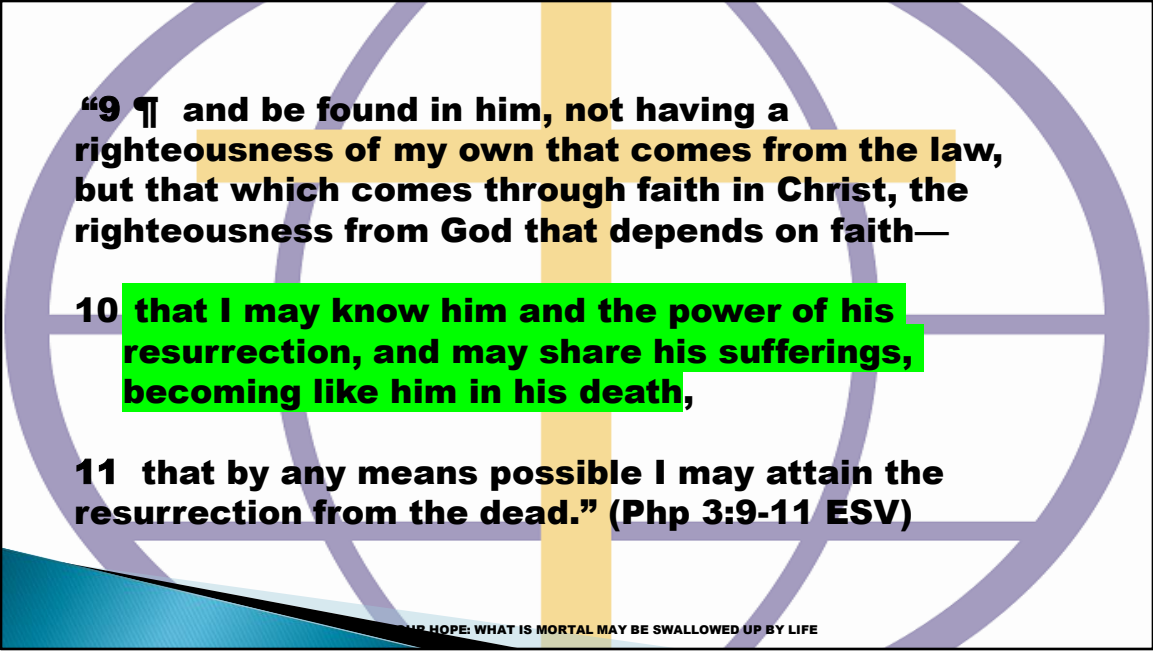
We simply do not know what lies ahead of us. We can be sure that we can trust in Christ, the solid rock.

Jesus, God with us, has shown us through his death and resurrection that he is completely reliable and trustworthy.

Although so many do not believe in the reality of the living Christ, we know that he lives because we have a personal relationship with him. God’s Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are children of God.

It is not only about knowing that Christ is the anchor of our soul. It is experiencing that he is so.

(Next slide)



“9 ¶ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” (Php 3:9-11 ESV)

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE

We live in between the times. Living between the times of Christ death, resurrection and ascension to heaven and between the time of his return.

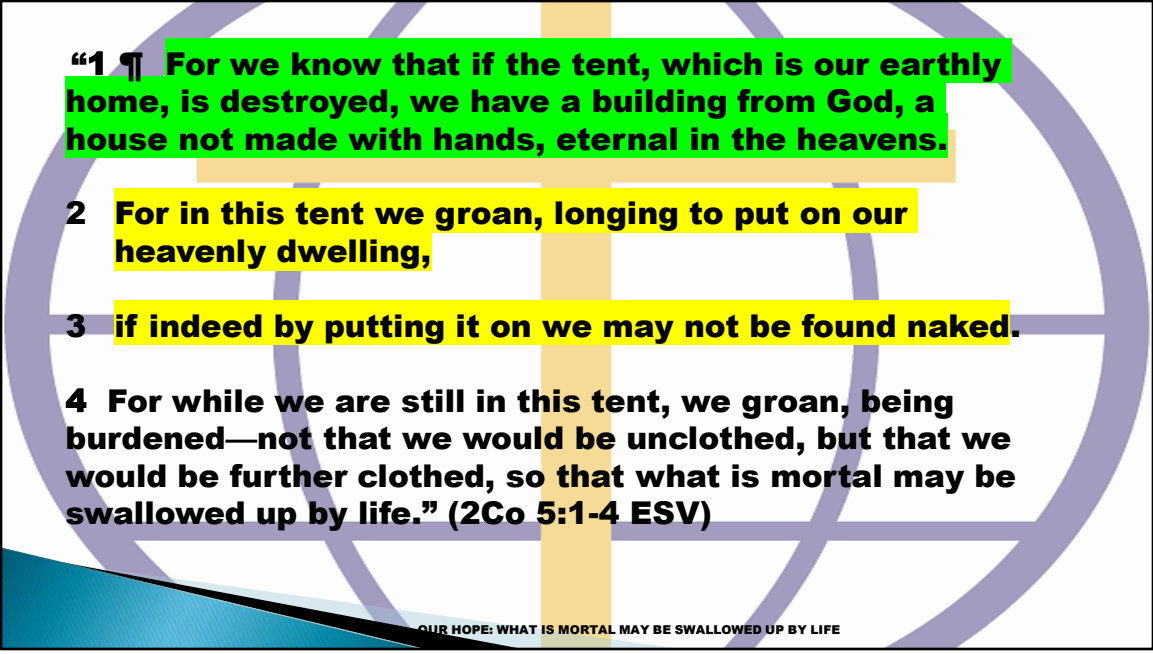
We can find reassurance in the fact that all prophecies written about Jesus became true. They all became reality in Christ.

Because we know God loves us so much that he gave his only begotten Son and he loves the world, we can be assured of a glorious future with him for all eternity as co-heir with Christ, as we stay faithful to him because he is always faithful to us.

There is so much to say but we must end here .

The world continues to suffer. The whole of nature continues to groan awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God. Living in these in-between times is not always easy but we can live in these times with reassurance in the fidelity of God the Father towards us in Jesus Christ.

The following is such an encouraging reminder .



“1 ¶ For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,

3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked.

4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.” (2Co 5:1-4 ESV)

OUR HOPE: WHAT IS MORTAL MAY BE SWALLOWED UP BY LIFE

Let us thank God that in Christ we are swallowed up by life!

COMMUNION

- ▶ **“48 I am the bread of life.**
- ▶ **49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.**
- ▶ **51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” (Joh 6:48-51 ESV)**

Christ here makes the telling point that all those who eat of any earthly bread - even the manna which God provided for the people of Israel during their wilderness wanderings - will die. Bread offers sustenance during life; it cannot offer hope beyond that. Bread sustains us physically; it cannot sustain us spiritually, or open up the possibility of a new existence beyond the realm of the physical. Yet the “bread of life” is rather different. As the “bread of life”, Jesus offers the hope of eternal life to those who feed on him. To know Christ is to experience this hope as a present reality, knowing that it is grounded in the trustworthiness of God.

Note also that feeding is itself an image of “knowing Christ”, affirming our need to absorb an appropriate Christ as an internal reality rather than the remote external figure.

(From: KNOWING CHRIST, Alister McGrath, page 129)



▶ **“23 ¶ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,**

▶ **24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”” (1Co 11:23-24 ESV)**

PORT
FLOWER



▶ **“25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, **“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”**”**

▶ **26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” (1Co 11:25-26 ESV)**

PORT
FLOWER

I WILL RISE BY CHRIS TOMLIN

He is risen from the dead

BENEDICTION

▶ **“The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.” (Re 22:17 ESV)**

▶ **“20 ¶ He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**

▶ **21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.” (Re 22:20-21 ESV)**

PORT
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