March 31, 2019 - Easter Sunday

**The Ultimate Mic Drop!**

Matthew 28:1-7

**Intro:** There is a term that has begun to receive common acceptance in our culture in the past few years -

Mic Drop - or Drop the Mic!

In the interest of healthy communication - and helping everyone from all generations and backgrounds to understand one another - I did a little research on the meaning of the term -

Dictionary - **mic drop**

*noun* ***-*** an instance of deliberately dropping or tossing aside one's microphone at the end of a performance or speech one considers to have been particularly impressive. "He ruffled some feathers with his acceptance speech and mic drop after winning the Best British Album award"

* + used to emphasize that a discussion is at an end after a definitive or particularly impressive point has been made."Nuff said. Mic drop!"

Wikipedia - A **mic drop** is the gesture of intentionally dropping one's [microphone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microphone) at the end of a performance or speech to signal triumph. Figuratively, it is an expression of triumph for a successful event and indicates a boastful attitude toward one's own performance.

Urban Dictionary - An extremely expensive, [theatrical](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=theatrical) form of [punctuation](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=punctuation) often done by performers who have never actually had to purchase a [microphone](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=microphone).

I started thinking of this message when I was preparing a funeral message. I was thinking of who might be at the service - the message I wanted to share with them. They were people I care about - some of them were young - and seemed to be living in a way that is destructive... not taking them closer to the Lord, His plan... potentially very destructive...

When I think of what to share at a funeral service, beyond sharing the blessings of that person’s life, we often deal with the issue of death. Why is there death? Why do people die?

That question comes up whether the person is young or old - Why? Why did they have to suffer? Why did they have to die? Why did they die suddenly? Why did they die at this time? At this age? Why do we have to deal with death?

And what happens after death? What is the answer?

Many different ideas prevail about the answers to these questions - many different faiths and religions offer different answers -

Which is right? Who is right? How can we know what is right?

Let me share with you Christianity’s view - and why I believe the Bible offers us the best answer to these questions -

Death is not God’s original plan!  God did not desire for anyone to die!  God created man and woman perfect in every way.

Genesis 1:27 - So God created human beings in his own image.

In the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:31 - Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

The first man and woman had perfect health, and would never die – except for a single choice they made that affected all of us.

Genesis 2:15-17 - The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. But the Lord God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden— except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.”

God made humans in His image – part of that means that He gave us a choice-

God said, “Here is this garden – you can enjoy every facet of this place - to stay on this path I just ask you to avoid one thing -  If you don’t avoid this… then you will choose to be on another path – a path of death.”

It is a choice - and that is the image of God - the likeness of God - the nature of God - that which separates us from the rest of Creation -

What happened – they made the choice God told them not to make - they got on the wrong path – and every man and every woman has been on the wrong path ever since! We all make bad choices from time to time.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil - once they ate of that tree, they began to no longer have a relationship with God simply based on His goodness - they felt their relationship with God was based on their knowledge of Good and Evil - and ever since, every person, every family and every group has had their lists …

And none of us ever even measure up to our own lists! …

We all get on the wrong path! Everyone I do a funeral for at some point in their lives were on the wrong path! I was on the wrong path! You’ve been on the wrong path! At some point in our lives, we’ve all been on that wrong path! We START our lives on the wrong path!

This is why we face death - Death in the human race is the result of that original decision - that original choice to get off the path of God.

How do we get back on the right path? How do we defeat this enemy of death? How do we overcome all the fear and feelings we face when we think of our own death, and when we face the death of people we love?

Hebrews 9:27-28 - And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ died once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.

Jesus Christ died! God loves us so much that He sent His Son to die!

While every man and woman dies – God didn’t have to die!  Jesus Christ did not have to die!  But He did – He chose to die – for us!

His death was not for anything He did - His death was willingly offering up His life to satisfy the justice of God -

God’s justice on the human race for that original choice of our original parents was death - Jesus came to take that punishment away from us by taking that punishment of death for us!

Yet, we are all going to die.  We may be in our 40’s or we may be in our 80’s but apart from the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are all going to die!  And – we are all going to be judged.

What is this judgment?  Will we be judged on how good or how bad we’ve been?

No!  Thankfully, no! That’s not what the Bible says! If we were judged on how good or bad we’ve all been – none of us would make it!

Ephesians 2:8-9 - God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

When you believed … it is a gift from God … Believing is receiving - We are not going to be judged on whether we were good people or bad people – whether we did good things or bad things – if that were the case none of us would make it because we’ve all done bad things –

We’re going to be judged on whether or not we accepted the fact and put our faith and trust in the act of Christ dying in our place - as the punishment for our sins.

If heaven was dependent on whether we were good or bad, or whether we followed all the rules, we would never make it.

When I learn about people’s lives for every funeral I do - there are a lot of people who are good - They have earned the love of many people - They are fun - but that’s not grace. Grace is - my goodness or my badness doesn’t make the difference - the gift of Jesus makes the difference!

This thought of Jesus’ grace being sufficient - no matter what any of us has done - no matter how any of us has lived - this idea of Jesus’ grace being enough - where we can receive the gift of God by a simple confession of faith with our mouth and belief in our heart - When we finally pray and put our faith into words - Jesus’ grace is sufficient!

Jesus’ grace - free grace - it’s enough for you - for all of us.

Sometimes we ask, “Why did this person have to die?”

Why did Jesus have to die?

**Christ died once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people.**

He died to take away the cause of our death!

John 3:16 - For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

He loved us enough to die for us!  He was the sacrifice that was required to pay for all our sins.  

Romans 3:23 – For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.

Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 10:9 – If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

1st John 1:9 - But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

How did this death of Jesus Christ happen for us?

Christmas story … an Angel came to a virgin -

* Said the Holy Spirit would come upon her
* She would give birth to the Messiah - the one the Jewish people had been waiting for to set them free - the Son of God
* Jesus was born - miraculously
* He lived a sinless life - performed miracles - gave great teachings

As I was preparing this message - I thought about some of the “mic drop” moments in the life of Christ -

Luke 4:16-21 - When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,

that the blind will see,

that the oppressed will be set free,

and that the time of the Lord’s favor has come.”

He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue looked at him intently. Then he began to speak to them. “The Scripture you’ve just heard has been fulfilled this very day!”

Boom! There is it - a mic drop moment!

Another was the Sermon on the Mount -

One of the most famous and referenced discourses in the history of the world -

* Golden Rule
* Treating people well - loving people - defeating racism
* Great ways to live - great ways to parent.
* Reconciled the teaching of the Old Testament with the teaching of the New Testament
* A summary of all the teachings of God in concise and comprehensive form!

Certainly, a teaching like that, then walking off the mountain, is a mic moment!

Jesus has blind people come up to him - mic drop!

* deaf people
* multitudes came and He healed them all!
* Called to the home of a little girl - she was dead - He raised her up…
* Went to Lazarus’ place … roll away the stone … loose him and let him go!

Boom! Mic Drop moment!

But with all of that - we are still sinful - we are still unable to save ourselves - we are still unworthy of having a relationship with God - we are still bound to pay for our own sins with death -

What more could be done?

Jesus was arrested … they came to Him in the middle of the night … He was willing to go - told His disciples not to fight it -

Put on trial before the Jewish Council - the record is they broke many of their own laws at that trial - they beat Him - pulled out His beard …

Put on trial before the Roman governor … Jesus didn’t respond to the questions or accusations - except when the Governor asked questions about Jesus nature and where He was from - Jesus acknowledged that He was a king from another world -

This shook the governor - at one point he got frustrated and asked Jesus, “Don’t you know that I have power to release you or have you killed?”

Jesus response …

Pilate tried to release Him according to a custom … the people called for the release of a terrorist, revolutionary murderer instead, and called for the crucifixion of Jesus.

The governor had Jesus beaten beyond recognition, hoping to satisfy the people … beaten within an inch of His life … back opened up … crown of thorns … Jesus never fought it -

Ultimately, He was given over to be crucified …

Death was certified when the bodies had to be taken down from the cross -

The soldiers were commanded to speed up the process by breaking their legs…

Crucifixion would take a long time …. Torturous … nails … breathing … suffocation …

But people heard Jesus, “Father, I give up my spirit.” Then He died -

When the soldiers came by - He was already dead - certified dead - they didn’t have to break His legs - stuck a spear in His side to confirm His death.

He was taken down from the cross - wrapped up in a shroud - put in a tomb - the tomb was sealed - He was there in the grave for three days - He was dead!

He did this to die in our place - to take the punishment for all of our sins!

But was that the end? Is that all there is?

Our punishment is gone - but Jesus is dead and we still die?

No!

Matthew 28:1-7 - Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.

Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember what I have told you.”

Ultimate Mic Drop!

1st Corinthians 15:3-8 - I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.

Mohammed was a great fundraiser - military general - won a lot of battles - wrote a book that many read and follow today - but none of his exploits match up to this.

Buddha was a teacher and writer that many followed - He changed his mind like crazy - changed his “path” several times - yet he has gained many followers of parts of his ideology - but he never had a moment like this!

It wasn’t just Jesus’ teachings, kindness, miracles, love, goodness, etc. he did all that - then died - then LIVED! Top that yo! Boom!

He died for you - to take your punishment - then He came back to life - ultimate mic drop moment -

What’s this got to do with our death?

1st Corinthians 15:20-23 - But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.

If we believe - we can have an ultimate mic drop moment like Jesus had! We will conquer death! We will be raised from the dead!

Ultimately - we will be raised from the dead in a body that will never die - never get sick - never have pain - never suffer -

You will never receive a better offer than this -

And you can have it - simply by believing and confessing -

**INVITATION**