The night before Jesus was crucified, he made a very strange statement that nobody who heard it understood.

He said, “In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you’re going to see me because I am alive and you’re about to come alive!” John 14:19 (MSG)

What in the world did Jesus mean?

They probably were thinking we are already alive. What does He mean when He says, “you’re about to come alive?”

The answer to this question is why we celebrate Easter, Jesus proved who He was by following through on His promise.

He told His disciples many times, I’m God, I’m going to be lifted up to my death!

I’m going to be buried in the ground for three days then I’m going to bring myself back to life to prove I am who I say I am.

Today we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead!

Jesus’ resurrection changes everything!

We even mark time based on Jesus, when we say we are celebrating the resurrection in 2021 A.D. you are referring to Jesus Christ.

A.D. is short for Anno Domini which is Latin that translates to the year of our Lord.

The very existence of Jesus and His resurrection became a dividing line for how we measure time!

While most people think that Easter is about bunnies, eggs and candy we know it is all about Jesus being resurrected.

He is Alive……but have you every stopped to consider the second part of what Jesus said to His disciples?

The second part of His conversation involves all of us, Jesus is saying you are about to become ALIVE!

Jesus included all of us in His death so we could be included in His life.

The apostle Paul said it this way in 2 Corinthians 5:15 (MSG) “He included everyone in His death so everyone could be included in His life, A FAR BETTER LIFE than people ever lived on their own.”

Wouldn’t you like to get in on that? A far better life than what I can live on my own!

You might say what is the better life?

We all know about the good life; in fact, you might say today I’m living a pretty good life.

I have my health, I have survived a pandemic, I just got my stimulus money, my bracket in the NCAA my have been busted but we at least had sports to watch.

I have a good job, a good home, a relatively nice car to drive, my kids are back in school, I mean compared to the rest of the world I am living a good life!

But what if there is something more?

What if beyond the good life there was a better life?

One where we could say I’m really living, one where we could proclaim, we are ALIVE!

What if God had intended more than just a good life?

What if He intended for us to really be ALIVE with a better life?

We often settle for less because we don’t know there is anything better.

When I was a baby my parents fed me strained spinach…. Gerber’s best.

I thought it was yummy!!!

Because I didn’t know any better.

Of course, today I think it tastes like regurgitated seaweed!

In fact, I think that strained spinach is a mild form of child abuse.

I think parents should be forced to eat a whole jar before they give it to their kids!

But at that point in my life, I didn’t know any better. I thought strained spinach was fine cuisine.

When I entered grade school I learned about Spaghetti-Os. That was a step up from strained spinach.

When I became a teenager, I learned about Taco Bell. Now we’re talking! There is definitely something better in life.

Of course, today I’ve tasted lots of great foods.

Including Chipotle, once you’ve had Chipotle you will never go back to taco bell.

Not to mention the fact that I would never go back to strained spinach. No way!

I have tasted something better.

I believe God brought you to Southside Church on Easter Weekend so He could let you in on a little secret.

There is something better, you can be really ALIVE and experience the dawn of a new day because of the power of the resurrection of Jesus!

I’ve lived in Chesterfield County now for about 19 years, I have personally talked with thousands of people.

I’ve discovered that beneath the image of the quote “Good Life” are three dirty little secrets that nobody likes to talk about.

First is that people feel exhausted. They are worn out. They say, “I’m tired all the time, I can’t keep up, I’m overloaded.”

When I get home in the evening, I’m worn out. No energy. I’m exhausted.

Exhaustion leads to the second thing – Emptiness. You say, “I don’t think I’ve got another thing in me.

Nothing I do seems to bring me fulfilment, there is this nagging hole that never seems to be filled!

In those quiet moments we’re thinking, “If this good life is so good why am I unsatisfied?

Why don’t I feel more meaning in my life? And, by the way, what is the meaning of all this?

Getting more and having more and accomplishing more?

What’s the meaning behind it? If it’s so good, why don’t I feel more satisfied?”

Then Emptiness leads to the third thing……I feel like I’m trapped!

I couldn’t count the number of times people have said to me, Wynne, I feel trapped.

I feel trapped by my dept. I don’t know if I’m every going to get out of it.

I feel trapped in a relationship, either with a girlfriend or boyfriend or in a marriage.

I can’t get on with it …but I can’t get out of it.

I feel trapped by the expectations of other people around me.

I feel trapped by guilt. I feel trapped by shame and I feel trapped by fear.

I feel trapped by my own anger which I can’t control.

I feel trapped by bitterness with somebody who hurt me. I’m even a slave to my schedule.”

Do you ever feel like any of these? Emptiness? Exhaustion? Feeling trapped?

I’ve got good news for you today. There’s an antidote. It’s called The Better Life.

The reason God brought you here today is so you can learn about the better life.

There is something more that you can experience, and you are about to come ALIVE.

In fact, today can be the dawn of a new day in your life!

What we are celebrating today blows open the doors to being ALIVE!

Jesus wants to offer you an experience that will lead to a better life where you can really live!

What is this better life that Jesus Christ offers us? It can be summed up in three things. The better life …….

1. Is a life filled with meaning.

The greatest tragedy in life isn’t death, it is living without knowing why you exist.

It is living a life without purpose!

Too often people go through life without knowing the reason they exist, or why God placed them on the planet to begin with.

Let me cut to the chase, the good life is not good enough.

Looking good, feeling good, achieving success, that’s not good enough to bring you meaning!

It may fill some voids, but it really doesn’t bring lasting satisfaction.

If looking good were the goal and feeling good were enough then Hollywood and Madison avenue would be filled with the happiest people on earth, but it’s not.

It takes more than money, status, and success to bring you ultimate fulfilment.

A lot of people confuse a full life with a meaningful life. They are not the same.

Having a full schedule is not the same as having a fulfilled life.

We need meaning!

Where do we find ultimate meaning? There is only one place. From the God who created you.

And the God who created you loves you so much that He sent His son to take on death so we might be able to experience Life!

The apostle Paul put it this way. In Colossians 3:4 (CEV) 4a Christ gives meaning to your life.

You were made by God for a purpose and it is through God we find meaning!

And God wants to make you alive!

Peter, who followed Jesus, says it this way: 1 Peter 1:3-4 (MSG) 3 What a God we have! And how fortunate we are to have him, this Father of our Master Jesus! Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we've been given a brand-new life and have everything to live for, 4 including a future in heaven—and the future starts now!

This verse is powerful and reveals a couple of things we can count on!

The fully alive better life is connected to what Jesus did on Easter.

His resurrection afforded us the privilege of experience new life!

This isn’t just an add on or a rebranding of what you had before.

Have you ever seen the packages that say new and improved?

What this means is the same old thing repackaged.

This is not what Jesus is offering He is offering a better life, one where you are brand new, one where you are really alive!

Jesus said Himself: John 10:10b (NIV) 10 I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

The more I allow Jesus to shape my life the more fulfilling it becomes.

Though Jesus I have gained perspective on my gifts my abilities and why He has made me and that brings meaning and fulfilment to my life!

The better lifer is not just filled with meaning, it ……

1. Is a life freed by Grace.

What does that mean?

Paul, who wrote most of the New Testament, reminded us in Romans 7:6b (MSG) that “We’re free to live a new life in the freedom of God.”

Free because of Grace. What is Grace?

Grace is when God gives you what you need, not what you deserve.

That’s grace. Everything you have in your life is because of God’s grace.

The next breath you take – that’s a gift of grace. If God didn’t want you to take it, your heart would have stopped a long time ago.

Your whole life is a gift of God’s amazing grace!

Grace is God saying, “I love you.

“I’m not mad at you. I forgive you because Jesus Christ has taken your sin on the cross.”

Through God’s Grace we find the pathway to a better life where we are ALIVE!

No matter what you’ve done in the past, grace is God saying, “I’m going to give you another chance—and another, and another, and another.

Any golfers in the room? Good, I need you to know I am really bad at golf!

Worms hate me! because when I golf, they lose their heads.

However, there is one word I learned in Golf that makes the game worth it for me.

And that word is mulligan!

If you don’t know anything about golf here is how a mulligan works, when you have a really bad shot, like you slice it into the woods.

Bounce it off your friend’s golf cart, or hit it into the water trap.

All you have to do is take a mulligan. It is like the shot never happened.

This is what Grace is like.

Jesus is offering us through His death and resurrection a mulligan.

You know all those stupid things you’ve done? Past regrets that you wish you had done differently?

Dumb decisions, bad mistakes, sins, faults, failures, whatever you want to call it.

Jesus says bring it to me and I’ll erase them all, and you can start over.

I will take your good life and make you ALIVE where you can have a better life!

You don’t have to earn God’s love and approval you have it through the work Jesus did on the cross.

Through the cross God erased the performance-based life of religion.

Hebrews 7:18-19 (LB) “The old system…was canceled because it didn’t work. It was weak and useless for saving people. It never made anyone really right with God. But now we have a far better hope, for Christ makes us acceptable to God…”

Say Yes to Jesus and you get a mulligan, a do over, and it is all because of His amazing grace!

Through the resurrection we can be alive and find meaning, experience grace but we can also experience the reality of the better life because….

1. It is a life fueled by Supernatural Power.

Do you ever get weary with all that life throws your way?

You wonder, “Where can I find the power to face all that I’m facing in life?”

Well, I have good news for you, Jesus wants to fill us with power that can withstand the pressure.

When a submarine travels to depths that can be cruising in the ocean, what keeps it from being crushed like a soda can? The air pressure built up within.

What Jesus did on Easter opens the floodgates of heaven!

Where the power of His spirit can flood us within.

This is power within that can withstand pressure without!

Jeremiah 31:25 (CEV) 25Those who feel tired and worn out will find new life and energy,

Zechariah 4:6 (NCV) “You will not succeed by your own strength or power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord.”

God wants you to plug into His power.

Here’s the good news.

The same power God demonstrated when He raised Jesus Christ from the dead is same power available for you! Paul declared in Romans 8:11 (Ph)

“Once the Spirit lives within you, He will bring to your whole being new strength and vitality.”

God wants to give you a better life fueled by His power!

Today you have a choice.

You can go through the rest of your life living the good life, disconnected from God’s power or you can live the better life plugged into God’s power.

It’s your choice.

Whichever one you choose you’re still going to have problems. Because life is a series of problems.

We are reminded: “Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without His unfolding grace.” 2 Corinthians 4:16 (MSG)

Maybe you’re here today and you’re a little tired, a little worn out. You may be on the edge.

You may have felt like giving up.

Maybe you’re in a dating relationship and you feel like giving up on it.

Maybe you’re in a marriage and you’ve tried hard to make it work but it’s just not getting any better.

It may even be getting worse and you feel done.

Or you may feel like giving up on your job.

Or giving up on your school.

Or maybe you feel like giving up on your health because you’re just not getting any better.

Or like giving up on that kid whose headed in the wrong direction.

Or maybe you feel like giving up on your goals, your dreams, your ambitions.

Don’t do it. Don’t give up. Look up. Look up to God.

Don’t give up, give in.

Give in and say Yes to Jesus!

He’ll give you supernatural power to do the things that He put you on this earth to do.

He’ll give you power on a daily basis.

Has God been trying to get your attention? I think so. I think that’s why He brought you here to Southside Church on Easter Sunday.

God wants to tell you, “The good life is not good enough. Step up to the better life. The life you were intended to live from the beginning.”

You say, “It sounds good. How do I get it? How do I get this life of meaning, grace, and power?”

You can’t buy it or earn it. You must accept it. It’s a gift. You have to express faith in Jesus say Yes and believe so you can receive.

You don’t get it through religion or going to church. You only get it through a relationship with God by accepting Jesus.

Remember what Jesus said! “I came so you can have real and eternal life, a better life than you ever dreamed of.” John 10:10 (MSG)

That’s why Jesus lived died and rose again!

Instead of feeling empty and trapped and exhausted He says I want you to have meaning and freedom and power.

This is what Easter is about. It’s not about crowds. It’s about being ALIVE!

Why Easter is important to me (campus pastor share how - I found meaning, Grace and power through Jesus)

Today He wants to make you alive – today could be a dawn of a new day for you!

Response time – prayer!

Spiritual survey:

Name:

Email:

1. I accept Jesus as my savior today - I want the better life!
2. I rededicate myself to Jesus today.
3. I’m already living for Jesus.
4. I’m not sure I’m ready.