

## “Coming Alive - But God”

Scripture: Jeremiah 23:5-8; Romans 8:10-11; Romans 5:12-21

Graphics: Coming Alive, tree

Big Truth: The Good News is that we are alive in Christ forevermore. Faith in the death and resurrection of Christ gives us everlasting life. Yet, our experience now is sometimes less than. The past few months have felt more like death than life. Yet, Jesus is still alive and calls us again to come alive in Him every day. Coming Alive by the Spirit in us is the call of the disciple of Jesus.

Focus phrase: Jesus is the One Man that gives us gracious gift life.

### 1. Introduction

- A. My father was 6’ 2”, had reddish hair and a big beard, was a husband, teacher and thespian (meaning he was an actor and drama teacher). He was a follower of Jesus who loved Christian camping (and any kind of camping, really), was goofy with his grandkids, and was a very good leader. On this Father’s Day, I honor my dad. He wasn’t perfect, but he was the **ONLY ONE** I had, and he was pretty darn great!
- B. Each of us has a father from which we were born. Some may still have their fathers. Some may not know who he is. Some have step-fathers. Others have fathers that have raised them that weren’t their biological fathers. You may have lots of father figures in your life. Some are alive and some are not.
- C. I acknowledge, also, that not all of us have had good relationships with our earthly dads.
- D. Yet, whoever that ‘dad’ is for you, he was unique and is the only one that is or was in that role in your life.
- E. My dad was the only **ONE** who could fill that role in **MY** life...and ever since he died in 2002, there hasn’t been another like him.
- F. As a way of lifting up our dads together this morning, in the comments section below, **just type the first name of your dad**, nothing else...just a name. No matter whether he’s alive right now or not. He’s the **ONE MAN** in your life that has filled that role.
- G. You have physical life because of your dad.
- H. But, here’s the **GOOD NEWS**: In the same way that you and I have **physical** life because of one man, God graciously gives us everlasting **spiritual** life because of One Man, whose name is **Jesus**.
- I. We’ve entitled this message **One Man**. And it’s all about Jesus.
- J. We’re in week 2 of a series of messages called **Coming Alive**. Our hope is that this series is a bridge for us to come back to in-person worship on July

19th, while still engaging intentionally with what we're beginning to call our **online campus**.

- K. Last week, we began in Romans 5 by laying the foundation for coming alive. It turns out that the life we're offered today and forever comes from God through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The message was called But God, one of my favorite phrases in all of scripture...one that the Apostle Paul likes to use a lot!
- L. Paul said to the Christians in Rome, both Jews and Gentiles, that **they were dead in their sin, BUT GOD gave them life** - every day and forever - through and because of the death and life of Jesus.
- M. (camera) Do you know this Jesus? Have you given your life to Him? Are you alive in Him today and forever?
- N. See, we'll keep pointing us to Romans 8:10-11 which says, "But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you."
- O. **We are coming alive.** Our church is coming alive. Our communities are coming alive. Our jobs and families are coming alive. Our awareness of those around us in coming alive.
- P. We haven't actually been physically dead, but because we're coming out of this pandemic and all that has gone along with it, we FEEL like we're coming alive.
- Q. If you're taking notes, write this down: **Jesus is the One Man that gives us gracious gift life.**
- R. Let's pray and then we'll dive into the next section of Romans 5.
- S. PRAY!
- T. Turn with me to Romans 5, starting in verse 12. Our scripture passage today is pretty thick - meaning it'll take all our brainpower to wade through. It contrasts the effects of the sin that came into the world through the first man, Adam, with the salvation that comes into the world through the ONE MAN, the last Adam, Jesus. Verse 12...

## 2. Scripture

### A. READ ROMANS 5:12-14

- i. Paul starts with "therefore" in verse 12. Whenever you see a 'therefore' in scripture you have to look before it to see what it's there for. In this case, Paul is pointing to the fact that, in the beginning of chapter 5, Jesus' death and resurrection reconcile us with God. Reconciliation is the bridging of

the gap between us and our holy God. That bridge is Jesus! We are put in right relationship with God through Jesus - there is the correct vertical alignment with God. He is holy, we are sinful. Jesus died and rose again. Which puts us in alignment with God who loves us.

- ii. So, Paul says, “THEREFORE...” and then gives a set of statements - not even really a complete sentence - about sin.
- iii. Let’s see if we can shed some light on these first three verses which focus on two different views of sin.
  - a. On the one hand, the **first sin** was the sin that Adam committed in the Garden of Eden, when he and Eve chose to disobey the ONE command that God gave them. God said, ““You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.”” (Genesis 3:3)
  - b. In our Long Story Short series, when we talked about The Fall, we learned that the actions of Adam and Eve created a ripple effect that has spread throughout all of time. That ONE first SIN, that came through ONE MAN, introduced death into the world - their world, which is now OUR world. Prior to that ONE SIN against God’s ONE command, there was no death. After that ONE SIN, Adam and Eve began the process of dying...which we experience still today.
  - c. Paul said that just as sin came into the world through one man, Adam, and death came to Adam and Eve through that one sin, so...death has now become a reality for ALL people BECAUSE ALL PEOPLE, like Adam and Eve, have sinned.
- iv. OUR sin is not always the SAME sin as Adam and Eve, but OUR sin (as individuals and people in general) causes death in the same way that that FIRST sin did.
- v. You might be saying, “Why do I have to fight this fight with sin because of what Adam did? That’s not fair!” That’s true! But think of it this way: When the president of a country declares war on another country, all the people of that nation, then, are at war with the other country. Because they are citizens of the nation that has declared war, even though individuals may not fight in the war, or even agree with it, they are all at war.
- vi. In the same way, because the FIRST Adam, engaged in ONE sin to begin the process of death, ALL of us, as part of the human race of Adams and Eves, are in the process of death because of that sin.
- vii. After verse 12, Paul then goes on a tangent, like many preachers do!
  - a. He mentions that sin was present between Adam and Moses, even though God hadn’t given the 10 Commandments yet.

- b. The 10 Commandments, and the rest of the Jewish Law, simply highlighted, categorized, and identified what was sin and what was not. Until that point, sin was anything that went against God's direct plan and His heart.
- c. After Adam, right through Moses and the Law, and up until Jesus, sin led to death... Paul told the Romans that sin and death had dominion over all people.

viii. **BUT!** I LOVE that phrase, don't I? Look at verse 15...

## **B. READ ROMANS 5:15-17**

- i. But God!
- ii. Sin may have dominion over all people, starting with Adam and Eve, and then the lives of the Jewish people, as identified in the Law God gave to Moses, **BUT GOD** had a better plan!
- iii. And that plan was the ONE MAN, Jesus!
- iv. The free gift - which is the salvation God offers us through Jesus - the free gift is NOT like the sin of Adam. The ONE SIN of Adam started a pathway that all of us take to death, because his sin leads to OUR sinning.
- v. BUT GOD wanted to change the highway. God wanted to build a new road. Jesus' death and resurrection puts us on a new pathway - a new highway - to LIFE!
- vi. But it's even better than THAT! Unlike the fact that people have died spiritually because of Adam's one sin, **salvation is offered to ALL** because of the ONE SAVING ACT of the ONE MAN, Jesus.
- vii. Because Jesus willingly went to the cross to die for ALL people, everyone who puts their faith in Christ is given the FREE GIFT of salvation and eternal life.
- viii. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:55-57: "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
- ix. That free gift, once received, gives us victory over sin...and gives us victory over death.
- x. And it's not just for one sin in our lives, but EVERY sin, EVERY TIME.
- xi. And it's underserved. And it's free. And it can be yours today, again.
- xii. Let's let Paul have the final word in verses 18-21...

## **C. READ ROMANS 5:18-21**

- i. One Man. Jesus.
- ii. The ultimate plan of God is not **only** the salvation of the world, but YOUR salvation.
- iii. Jesus is the **ONLY** way to eternal life. Jesus is **ONLY** way to a right relationship with God.
- iv. One Man. Jesus.

### 3. Application

- A. So, what is our response to the ONE MAN's death and life? What is our response to the gracious free gift of salvation offered to ALL through ONE MAN?
- B. And let me just say that there IS no other way because there is no OTHER man...not our fathers, not our grandfathers, not Paul, or any of the disciples. Not the Pope or John Wesley or anyone else that every lived. Not Adam.
- C. Only Jesus!
- D. Let THIS be your response:
  - i. First, if you have not, **Receive the Free Gift** of Salvation from God
    - a. Jesus is standing at the door of your heart and gently knocking. He won't force his way in to kick down the door. He's waiting for you to open that door and welcome Him in.
    - b. What does that mean? Well, if you're at the point of hearing that knock, you know that you can't do it all by yourself. You can't fix your problems. You can't save yourself from trouble. You've come face-to-face with mortality during COVID. You see the world in some chaos.
    - c. **Yet the Jesus people are mostly calm and hopeful.** There's ONE reason. His name is Jesus and he holds the future in His hands.
    - d. Those who put their faith in Jesus' death and life have a free gift of salvation and are secure. This is God's grace (God's undeserved favor) poured out for real in our lives in the form of a real person, Jesus.
    - e. This life, then, becomes our mission field to pull as many into the kingdom of god as possible before Jesus returns. If that's you today, please get in touch with me.
- E. Second, because of that grace that God gave you, **Abound in Grace.**
  - i. God's grace is us getting what we don't deserve. That's grace!
  - ii. And grace comes to us through the power of the Holy Spirit living in us. Grace offers the gift of salvation to start.

- iii. But then grace empowers your life with spiritual gifts and the gifts of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
- iv. Each of those grace gifts should be greater in your life this year than they were last year. If not, then something is wrong...let the Spirit identify it and help you clear the blockage.
- v. Use your spiritual gifts to glorify God and build up the church. Grow in the gifts of the Spirit - in love and peace and self-control...and JOY!
- vi. When you do, the people around you will be benefactors of your obedience and service to Christ.
- vii. Practice that at work, in your family, at church, in the grocery store.
- viii. As we begin to come back to worship in July, we'll need to muster every ounce of abounding in grace that we can with each other, especially for our leaders who are praying and trying hard to keep us safe and provide for us.
- ix. Let grace abound in your life.

F. Finally, let that grace and the free gift **Exercise Dominion in Life**

- i. What does that mean? Well, simply keep growing in Christ in every part of your life. Be changed every day into the person that God wants you to be.
- ii. Let the peace of God invade even the most hidden painful part of your life.
- iii. Keep growing in a Life of Obeying, which is Milestone 4 of our Intentional Discipleship process. Be ruled by the Holy Spirit in you and not by your mind, the world, or anything else.

G. Receive the Free Gift, Abound in Grace, and allow grace and salvation to Exercise Dominion in your Life.

#### 4. Conclusion

A. On this Fathers Day, let me talk directly to the current and future dads today:

- i. Be a man who takes after Jesus. Let Him be your hero.
- ii. Be a man who is in Christ for all those who come after you, your family, and world. We need men who are abounding in grace and living the life of a Christ-follower. Let the grace you've received from God abound through you to others in your life.
- iii. Be in control of how you live your life for Christ and how you love those around you.

B. For all of us today...there is but ONE MAN who saves. His name is Jesus. Come to Him today, give Him your everyday, and let grace abound. Come alive in Jesus again today! Let's pray...