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These days there are a lot of thought leaders and thought formers, those who wish to shape the opinions of others, that are active on non-traditional forms of media more than ever. So places like YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and also podcasts. This is the place where people are engaging in ideas. And those of you who are younger know this already without me telling you.

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Now, in doing this, they are sort of bypassing the old way of this getting ideas out and forming thoughts and ideas, which happened in the traditional media and traditional ways. Through newspapers and through broadcast news on the major broadcast channels, through magazines, through authors who write books, and through professors who give lectures, and dare I say pastors who also share their opinions. But these days, these...

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These gatekeepers are bypassed by those who are able to create content and put them on new forms of media. This has pluses and minuses. One of the positives is that those who were formerly gatekeepers do not get to restrict the information that we were able to receive that they might not want us to hear. And for that, it can be a good thing for people to be able to get their ideas out and for folks to be able to engage. But of course, there are also negatives. There's no quality control.

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You know, there may be content that is not of good quality, of good veracity, or that may engage in harmful ideologies, although to be fair, the traditional media also promotes harmful, what we would consider as Christians, harmful ideologies. One of the things that we find though on these new forms of media is there's a lot of conversation about faith, and a lot of conversation about Christianity and reasons to believe or not to believe in Christianity.

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There are lots of people who engage in discussions and debates over the issue of apologetics. And I've told you before that apologetics is the Christian discipline of defending the faith. It comes from the Greek word apologia, which means to give a defense or give an answer. Peter uses this word in 1 Peter chapter 3 to say that we should be ready to give a defense, always, to be ready to give an apology or defense.

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And so, there are lots of people discussing various reasons to believe or not to believe from the side of believers and from the side of those who are critical. And one of the things that is the topic of discussion is whether the stories about Jesus in the gospel are true, real, historical. You see, because hardly anyone would deny that Jesus was a real person. Atheistic scholars...

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would not deny that Jesus is a real person. There's plenty of evidence outside the Bible that attests to a historical person named Jesus of Nazareth. scholars, even the most critical scholars, critical of the Bible, would also agree that it is a historical fact that Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross by the Romans. These things are historically verifiable. No one disputes them. But what the discussion and debate is about is whether the stories of the Bible, what the Bible says, what the Gospels say,

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he said and the Gospels say he did are historical or not. Yes, we know there was a man named Jesus who lived 2,000 years ago whereabouts, that he was a rabbi, he had excellent moral teachings and that he was crucified by the Romans, but are these stories in the Bible accurate? Or were they written later by followers who wish to defend their views of their religion? Back in the 90s in

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I assume it started before the 90s and it continued after the 90s, but mostly in the 90s there was something called the Jesus Seminar and those who have studied, had any kind of theological education will have heard of the Jesus Seminar. What the Jesus Seminar was,

was a group of scholars, half a dozen, maybe more, they would gather together and they would work through the stories and sayings of Jesus that are recorded in the Gospels and they would go one by one and have a discussion whether that story is historically...

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accurate whether it is a story that refers to the Jesus of history or what they call the Christ of faith and So they would discuss each of these sections and then they would have a vote And if they voted yes, it was an accurate Jesus story or an accurate Jesus saying and if they voted no It was attributed to the Christ of faith that is later followers invented Now the reason why I mentioned well, by the way, we can we can see some

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We can see some downfalls or negatives to this kind of approach that people would gather 20 centuries later and decide for us which was accurate and which was not. It requires some bit of hubris to think that they would be able to make those decisions so many years later for everybody. But the point of me bringing it up is that the text that we read today and the text that precede the text that we read today by

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24 hours. So this 48 hour period, where, you know, thereabouts, of what we read today are some of the portions of Scripture that are attributed to the Christ of faith and not to the Jesus of history. And I think we can see why. Because essentially what is here is not just a simple rabbi who had good moral teachings and was executed by the Romans. What we have here is a Jesus who claims to be

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and says that he is things that have to be reckoned with. He's Lord.

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And there's no getting around it. In the text today, we see that he is Lord of... not only of Israel, he claims to be Lord of Israel, he is acclaimed as the son of David, and we find in

other places of the New Testament, not only Lord of Israel, but King of all. We see that he is Lord of justice. We see he is Lord of time, or Lord of the future.

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and he is Lord of religion and he is Lord of life. And the claims and the stories here that are in the text that we read today demand a reckoning from us because if they are true, if they are accurate as to the Jesus of history, they require response. Now let me say this about the approach of the Jesus Seminar. One of the things that can easily be said about that approach and this theory, hypothesis.

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is that there is absolutely zero textual evidence that there was ever a gospel that included the bits about the Jesus of history and not the ones that they attributed to the Christ of faith. There is no such text. The claim of critical scholars and those who would claim that the Jesus of the Bible is inaccurate, their claim is that followers later added those parts in. But there is no text. You will not find one that just has the parts.

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that they like, you won't find it. It is a pure hypothesis. In fact, critical scholars have hypothesized a source, a gospel text that precedes the gospel of Mark called Q, which is from the German word Kala, which is German for source. They hypothesized there was a proto-gospel that only had the parts about Jesus that were the Jesus of history and that the ones we have were added later. The problem is there is no textual evidence for this Q. You will not find it.

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You will not find it in any museum, you will not find it in any library, you will not find it in any stone jar hidden in the desert around Jerusalem. You will not find it because it does not exist. There is no textual evidence for this approach. And so I would assert that these stories that we have in the gospel are accurate to the Jesus of history. There is no evidence that there is any other text that was written about Jesus other than the ones we have. There were ones later than the ones we have.

12:42

but in the time and the milieu of these, when these were written. And so if these stories are true, we have to reckon with this Jesus. So I'm gonna talk about five things that we need to reckon with, that we see in this text today. The first thing we see here on Palm Sunday is that Jesus is the Lord of justice. He's the judge of all. If we back up and you can look in your Bible if you want to.

13:08

back up just a little bit before the text we read in Luke 19. If we look just a little bit before, we see that he, after he visits Zacchaeus, which is one of our favorite stories of Zacchaeus, Jesus' visit to Zacchaeus, he tells a parable. And it's called the parable of the ten minnes. This begins in verse 11 of chapter 19. And Jesus tells us a parable.

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about a nobleman who is going to go to a far land to receive a kingdom. a lot of Jesus's parables are pretty abstruse, they're hard to understand. This one is very plain, according to its meaning. This nobleman is Jesus. It is very obvious that he's talking about himself. So he's going to a far land to receive a kingdom. And before he went into this far country, he called ten of his servants, and he gave each of them a minnah, which is a...

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amount of money, other Gospels call it a talent, gives him a talent which is actually quite a large amount of money, but he gives them all a minna and he says engage in business until I come back. expects them to bring him a return. But then in verse 14 it says his citizens of this nobleman hated him and sent a delegation after him saying we don't want this man to reign over us. So they rejected Jesus according to what Jesus is saying. When he returned having received the kingdom,

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This is again an obvious allusion to Jesus receiving the kingdom and his own people rejecting him. When he received the kingdom, ordered the servants who he had given the money to be called to him that he might know what they had gained by doing business. The first came before him saying, Lord, your menna has made 10. And he said, well done, my servant. And the second one came and his menna had made five. And the last one came and he said, Lord, I knew that you were a harsh man and I didn't want to incur your

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your punishment. So I hit your men and here it is back.

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And the nobleman said, you could have at least deposited it with the bankers and get some interest out of it. He said, take the minnow from him and give it to the one who has 10. And they said to him, Lord, he has 10 minnows. And he said, I tell you, everyone who has, the more will be given. And from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And here's the key verse, verse 27. But as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me. Whoa.

15:39

This is not a meek and mild rabbi. This is a Lord of justice. This is the claim that Jesus makes. That He is the Judge of all. He claims here, through parable form and also in other places, that He will return and judge humanity. That He will separate the sheep from the goats. That He will judge all of us one day. And if that is true, if that is true, that this Jesus

16:09

is the judge of all, we have to reckon with that. We have to reckon with it right now, I think. Because if he, if we will stand before him one day as judge, we have to decide how we're going to approach that judge. You know, if people are going to stand before a judge in a courtroom, generally they treat the judge with respect. Generally they treat the judge with deference. Generally they seek to gain the judge's favor.

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If you've ever been in a courtroom, you know this. The judge demands respect. They often are seated high upon a bench, a dais here in Tompkins County. It's pretty high up. But most people respect that judge. Now, of course, there are people who come into the court with contempt. There's some people who reject the judge and say, I don't want anything to do with this judge. And if they have that amount of contempt, they usually get thrown in jail. But most people, when they come into court, are deferential to the judge.

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They respect the judge and they seek the favor of the judge. And if Christ Jesus is the judge of all, then we have to reckon with how we're going to approach that judge. There are certain people who are going to shake their fist and say, I don't want anything to do with this. He can judge me however he wants. And there are people who say that. But most people will want to get the deference of the person who's going to weigh their soul in the scales. Who's going to weigh their soul in the scales. And if Jesus is going to weigh your soul in the scales, I charge you.

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You have to reckon with the fact that he is the judge of all. This is the claim of the text. The second thing we see is that he is Lord of Israel. After he tells this parable, he enters into Israel bearing the symbols of kingship. Now, what is here in this text that tells us that he is actively accepting the symbols of kingship? Well, in order to understand

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fullness of what's going on in this Palm Sunday story, we have to go back to 1 Kings chapter 1. In 1 Kings chapter 1, we have an aging King David. He's old, he's infirm, he's mostly bedridden, and one of his sons named Adonijah sees an opening. He thinks David has fallen, he thinks David is incapable, he's unable to hold his throne. And so Adonijah institutes a coup.

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Kudai Taw and he takes over the king of Israel and he sets himself up his king and upon the throne. But while he was while he and his friends were doing this while they had set him on the throne and while they were celebrating and slapping themselves on the back David hatched a plan. He said to his wife Bathsheba go and get Nathan the prophet and Zadok the priest.

19:02

and bring them to me. And so they brought Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet to him and he said, take Solomon and put him on my mule. You see David had a royal mule that he rode. He said, take Solomon and put him on my mule, my donkey, and go before him and go to Gihon. And Solomon will ride on the mule to Gihon and everyone will see him. And when you get to Gihon, I want you to anoint him as king over Israel.

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And so they put Solomon on the donkey and he rode to Gihon and all of Israel saw it and all of Israel followed. And when they anointed Solomon as king, they acclaimed him as king. Meanwhile, Adonijah and his folks had no idea. A messenger came into the court and said, behold, David has set Solomon on his mule, his donkey, and has anointed him at Gihon. And Adonijah was undone. David's strategy was superior. So that's the

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context for the text today. Jesus riding in on a donkey is an acceptance of his claim, is laying a claim to be the King of Israel. Jesus has resisted that kingship throughout his ministry. There was one instance where he performed a miracle and they were going to make him King and he disappeared. When people would ask him if he was the Christ, he would kind of deflect. All throughout his ministry he resisted, not because he was reluctant,

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but because it was not yet time. But now it's time. Not only does someone set him on the donkey, he tells them to go and get it. He institutes his claim for royalty. He is the king of Israel. And as he comes down the Mount of Olives, thousands come waving palm



branches and laying out the red carpet, which of course is what these cloaks represent. He is the king.

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Not only is he the king of Israel, but we know from the other texts, including the one that we read today from Philippians, he is the king of all. And if this Jesus is who the Bible says he is, we have to reckon with that. What if we were to... What if there was someone who was the king of the universe? Well, there is Jesus, but let's just put it into another... another idiom. Like in Dune, there's this, you know, king of the... emperor of the universe, right?

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Some of you have seen Dune or read it. Let's say there was a king of the universe. How would you approach the king? Wouldn't you approach that king with awe? Wouldn't you approach that king with reverence? Wouldn't you try to gain that king's favor? Certainly there would be people who would shake their fist and say, I don't want this king. I reject this king. But most people would try to gain that king's favor. And so if Jesus is the king of all, as he claimed he was, we have to reckon with it.

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We have to reckon with the fact that Jesus is King. And we have to make a decision about what we're going to do with that information. Are we going to bow the knee? Are we going to pay him homage? Or are we not? So he is the Lord of justice. And he is the Lord of Israel. But thirdly, we see he is the Lord of the future. He is the Lord of time. We see this passage going back to Luke 19, starting in verse 41.

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where he gives a prediction. First he starts weeping over Jerusalem. It says in verse 41, he drew near, he saw the city, he wept over it. It's one of the few places we find Jesus weeping in the gospels. He wept over it saying, would that you even you had known the day and the things that make for peace. Even now he is wishing for Israel to turn to him. Even now he is wishing that they would come under his protection. In Matthew's gospel he describes himself as a mother bird.

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who would protect her chicks and we know that hens will do this and other kinds of birds if there's danger say a forest fire some kind of fiery danger the mother bird will put out her wings and their chicks will go underneath her to protect the chicks the baby birds and the mother will take all the fiery assault Jesus is offering that even now to Jerusalem he said I will be

23:22

your protector. I will gather you under my wings. I will get you out to safety. But then he issues a prediction in verse 43. He says, the days will come upon you when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and him you in and tear you down to the ground, you and your children. They will not leave one stone upon another in you because you did not know the time of your visitation.

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Jesus predicts the fall of Jerusalem.

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In other places of the gospel, he does it even more explicitly. Earlier in Luke, he says that the Roman armies will surround you and when you see them surrounding you, run for the hills because Jerusalem is about to be destroyed. Jesus made very specific predictions. He also predicted his death. He said, I'm going to be arrested by the Romans. I'm going to be flogged. I'm going to be crucified. And three days later, I will rise. Now critical scholars and folks who don't believe that the gospel's

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portray an accurate story of Jesus' life, we'll say those are written after the fact. Of course, they couldn't have predicted the future. Those are written after Jesus died. Those are written after the destruction of Jerusalem. But if we don't have a cynical take on this, we see several places in the Gospel text where Jesus predicts very specifically the future. And

if he can do that, he is the Lord of the future. He is the, what one hymn says, the potentate of time.

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And if he is that, we have to reckon with that. What if there was somebody who could predict the future? Like accurately predict the future? How would you respond to that? You know, there may be people that say, I don't care about this person. I want nothing to do with this person who can predict the future. But I guarantee you, there will be people going up to this person and asking them to tell them the future. Asking them, getting stock tips from him. Maybe asking who's going to win the Super Bowl.

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and putting in less trivial matters, predicting the future is a very powerful skill. And I think if anyone came on the scene today and they were able to accurately predict the future, they would in very short order become one of the most important persons in the world. If Jesus is who He said He is, He is that person. He is the Lord of time. He is the Lord of the future. And if He is, we have to reckon with that. We have to reckon with someone

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who knows what will come to pass and we have to decide how we're going to relate to it. Are we going to go to that person with our prayers? Are we going to go to that person with our requests? Are we going to trust that person to steward our lives? But we can't go back once we see that he is the Lord of time to pretending that he isn't. If he is who he says he is, we have to reckon with that fact. We have to make a decision.

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that. Fourthly, we see he is Lord of religion. After he says this parable, the saying, he enters the temple and all and the other gospel writers have him entering the temple to cleanse it. And it says he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold saying, my house shall be a house of prayer but you have made it into a den of robbers. Jesus is demonstrating that this is his house. He is

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Lord over this house. This is not just the temple of Yahweh. He is Yahweh incarnate. This is His house and He is Lord over it. He is Lord over religion, in other words. He's not just a good teacher. He's not just a wise sage. He is Lord over our spiritual lives and we have to reckon with that. You know, there's a lot of people today and I've talked about it before and actually heard a podcast this week that

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talked about. It's very interesting. Lots of people today who want to have the externals of religion without faith or even without belief in God. There was a person I heard of being interviewed on a podcast that she's an atheist who engages in spiritual practices. And there's a lot of people who've seen this recently. That spiritual practices such as meditation, such as one of the examples is sitting in a beautiful church.

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Maybe not this church, but a cathedral. Imagine a cathedral. I mean, I can sit in here and feel God's presence, but in a big cathedral that has all the echoes and the stained glass and tall ceilings and gothic vaults. There was a person recently who said, I'm an atheist, but I'm a cultural Christian. I love to go to the church. I love to sing the hymns. I love to sit in the beautiful sanctuary. I love the fellowship, the passing of the peace. Obviously, that person was not an introvert.

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But they love the external parts of religion. And there are lots of people who want to engage in spirituality because they find it useful. And it is useful. But they don't want to have the Jesus of history or the Christ of faith involved in it. But the claim that Jesus is making is that he is Lord over religion. He is Lord over spirituality. You can't have spirituality without Jesus. And if we do have any spiritual experiences because the Spirit of God has granted it to us, and I do believe

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that the Spirit of God is gracious to grant people all sorts of experiences even if they aren't believers in Jesus. I do believe that in order to draw them to Himself. But in order to have spirituality that is true and authentic and real, we have to reckon with the Jesus' claim to be the Lord of it. And we have to decide whether we are going to incorporate not just religious externals, which even science says can be very useful, but also the person.

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that's behind the externals, Jesus Christ. Lastly, we see that Jesus is the Lord of life. And we see this from the Gospel of John, which of course tells the story of the triumphal entry. But before it, he tells the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. That's why I said in about 48 hours, in a period of about 48 hours, Jesus stakes in a claim of immense magnitude.

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He's not just a rabbi, he's not just a teacher, he is all these things. You probably know the story. Jesus had a friend named Lazarus, he's very dear to him. He got a report that he was very sick, Jesus wept, he didn't go and visit. Lazarus' sisters were very sad. You could have come and healed him, he didn't do it. He got a report that he had died, he's still wept, he didn't come. He waited long enough, the text says, in order that God would be glorified...

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by waiting long enough so everyone would know that Lazarus was truly dead. He showed up on the scene and of course he cried out, he said, roll away the stone and he said, Lazarus, come forth. And Lazarus came forth, he stood up, life entered his veins and he walked up out of the tomb. And if this is a true story, we have to reckon with that. He is Lord of life itself. He said before he raised,

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Lazarus from the dead. I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me though he die will live and he who believes in me will never die. If that is a true Jesus story, we have to reckon with that. He is the Lord of life itself. Now interestingly, there are also people today

that are seeking immortality. There's a movement actually that one person said recently that he believes this is the first generation world where there will be people who live forever.

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through advances in medicine, through advances in nutrition, through advances in cloning and growing body parts in laboratories, and I would assume also artificial intelligence. They're actually people, and I'm not making this up, you can look it up, who are pursuing immortality. They want to live forever. They're pursuing eternal life. And Jesus says the way you pursue eternal life is not through these exercise regimens.

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It's not through a certain diet. It's not through a certain medical procedure or gene editing, which can now be done through a process called CRISPR. All these things that people are pursuing, the way that you live forever is you believe in me. Because I am the Lord of life. If it is true that he raised Lazarus from the dead, if it is true that he himself raised from the dead, he is the only source of life. And those who want to live forever will not find it.

32:05

in any other source but Him. We have to reckon with this man. We have to reckon with this person who claimed to be these things. He claimed to be the Lord of life. He claimed to be the Lord of religion, the Lord of the future, the Lord of Israel, and the Lord of justice.

32:25

You know, we talk a lot about having faith and what does it mean to have faith? I've had discussions with some of you about this. What does it mean to have faith? You know, maybe I don't feel something. I don't have a feeling. I don't really feel like I believe or feel the feeling of faith, whatever that may be. Well, I think what we see in the text today is that faith is a sense and trust in this man. We may not feel it. We may not understand it, but these, this text today calls us to respond.

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It causes to respond to a claim of this man Jesus that is presented in this text. And essentially what it means to have faith is to say, yes, you are the Lord of justice. I am going to seek your pardon. Yes, you are the Lord of the future. I am going to seek your counsel and I'm going to pray to you. Yes, you are the king of the universe. I'm going to bow my knee to you. Yes, you are the Lord of the religion. I'm going to seek my spirituality in you. Yes, you are the Lord of life.

33:24

I'm going to stake my claim that if I believe in you, I will live forever. And essentially what having faith in this man is, saying, I believe that he really existed. I believe that the words that the Gospels describe him with are true. And I'm going to trust him. I'm going to follow him. I don't think you need more feelings. Feelings may come. But essentially all you have to say is, I believe he existed and I'm going to follow this man. And each and every one of us has to come to a reckoning of that.

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For those who don't believe or are wanting to believe or are seeking belief in Christ, you have a choice to make and I would call you to think about that choice right now. Am I going to follow this man? Am I going to put my trust in him? For those maybe who have doubts about your faith, and that's a lot of us, I would encourage you this morning. Your doubts are real, they're legitimate, and I've shared many of them, but a text like this today calls us to say, whatever my doubts, I'm going to follow this man.

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We may struggle with the moral teachings of the Bible. We may question why things are said to be right or wrong. So maybe if that's you today, maybe you might say, I don't know about these things, but I am going to follow this man. And for all of us who believe in Jesus and all of us in this room, we have an opportunity to reaffirm our faith. He is the Lord of all, and it requires a reckoning. And I would encourage all of us.

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to follow him and to trust him because he is the Lord and he has entered into his house. Let's pray. Thank you for listening to this week's podcast. Please rate and review us on your podcast service and share with anyone who may be interested. The intro and outro music for the New Life podcast is provided by Sandra McCracken with her permission. Please visit her website at [sandramcracken.com](http://sandramcracken.com). We'll see you next week.