

"Losing My Religion"
1 Cor. 15:3-8 & Acts 9:1-19
March 31, 2013 EASTER
Peter Hiett

[Song: Losing My Religion]

"Losing My Religion"
Oh life, it's bigger
It's bigger than you
And you are not me
The lengths that I will go to
The distance in your eyes
Oh no, I've said too much
I've said enough

That's me in the corner
That's me in the spotlight
Losing my religion
Trying to keep up with you
And I don't know if I can do it
Oh no, I've said too much
I haven't said enough

I thought that I heard you laughing
I thought that I heard you sing
I think I thought I saw you try

Every whisper
Of every waking hour
I'm choosing my confessions
Trying to keep an eye on you
Like a hurt, lost and blinded fool, fool
Oh no, I've said too much
I've said enough

Consider this
Consider this, the hint of the century
Consider this, the slip
That brought me to my knees, failed
What if all these fantasies come
Flailing around
Now I've said too much

I thought that I heard you laughing
I thought that I heard you sing
I think I thought I saw you try

But that was just a dream
That was just a dream

That's me in the corner
That's me in the spotlight
Losing my religion

Trying to keep up with you
And I don't know if I can do it
Oh no, I've said too much
I haven't said enough

I thought that I heard you laughing
I thought that I heard you sing
I think I thought I saw you try

But that was just a dream
Try, cry, why try
That was just a dream
Just a dream
Just a dream, dream

Clip from *Religulous*

Bill Maher: Religion must die for mankind to live. The hour is getting very late to be able to indulge in having in key decisions made by religious people. Faith means making a virtue out of not thinking. It's nothing to brag about. And those who preach faith, and enable and elevate it are intellectual slaveholders, keeping mankind in a bondage to fantasy and nonsense that has spawned and justified so much lunacy and destruction. Religion is dangerous because it allows human beings who don't have all the answers to think that they do. Most people would think it's wonderful when someone says, "I'm willing, Lord! I'll do whatever you want me to do!" Except that since there are no gods actually talking to us, that void is filled in by people with their own corruptions and limitations and agendas. And anyone who tells you they know, they just know what happens when you die, I promise you, you don't. How can I be so sure? Because I don't know, and you do not possess mental powers that I do not. Religion must die for mankind to live.

Well, that's why we placed this coffin on the stage, it symbolizes the death of religion.

"Anyone that tells you they know what happens when you die, I promise you, they don't."
How does he know that?
How does he know that you don't possess mental powers that he doesn't?
How does he know that our own mental powers are the only way to know stuff?

I mean, Bill Maher seems to have a lot of faith in his own mental powers and his own knowledge of good and evil. And what will happen if we don't take his advice? I mean, Bill Maher seems rather religious, yet he certainly has a point.

Religion has spawned and justified so much lunacy and destruction, so maybe "religion must die for mankind to survive."

It was 1992 when "Losing My Religion" by REM won several Grammies and best song of the year. That was the year I became a senior pastor and I remember resenting that song. Since that time, according to recent surveys, the number of people in America who claim "no religious affiliation" has doubled: Maybe we're losing our religion. Twice as many claim no affiliation as adults than they did as children. [Pew Survey]

Well, this is Easter Sunday. Traditionally, it's the day when people who have lost their religion or are losing religion come to church. And maybe that's you...you were drug here by a friend or relative or perhaps you've been here all along and quietly struggle with religion.

Well, what is religion? Isn't religion the way we make sense of our world and give meaning to our lives? It's how we gain "knowledge of good and evil," so we can choose the good and reject the evil and so make ourselves good and our world good. Religion is a system of belief through which we gain control and protect ourselves. I think that is religion. And why do we lose it? I suppose there are all sorts of reasons...but perhaps 1) we conclude that it just doesn't work and so it isn't true or 2) it claims to be good but it just doesn't *seem* to be good...but perhaps...even evil.

Well, for six months here at the Sanctuary we've been preaching through Ephesians. It's a letter written by Saint Paul, who wrote about half of all the books in the New Testament. And at one time, Saint Paul was perhaps more religious than any man that ever lived. In Philippians 3 he writes that he was a "Hebrew of Hebrews" and "as to the law—blameless."

Well, as Easter approached, I began wondering: "What did Easter mean for Paul?" And then I realized that Easter actually happened to Paul like it happened to the other Apostles. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul recounts all of Jesus' resurrection appearances and then he writes, "*Last of all, as to one untimely born he appeared also to me.*" And here is what I find so fascinating: Easter didn't make Paul more religious—but far less religious. And Paul, or as he was known at the time, Saul, had been very religious.

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil

Saul's religion was LAW: That is taking knowledge of good and evil.

Saul was a Pharisee of Pharisees and according to popular perception, I don't think the Pharisees would seem all that strange to us. Their goal was to make the Law clear and practical. They would say, "Pastor just tell me what to do so I can go do it." See? Saul believed he could freely reject evil and choose the good and thus make himself good.

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil

Salvation: His Own Judgment

So his judgment was salvation,

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil

Salvation: His Own Judgment

Sanctification: His Own Judgment

and his judgment was sanctification. That is, with His free will, his choice, his judgment, Saul believed he could make himself in the image of God and make Israel (his church) into the people of God. He could build Jerusalem and keep it safe from heretics like the followers of Jesus.

Even as a young man, he was notorious for his zeal in defending his religion. In fact, he was there when Stephen (the very first martyr) was stoned to death by a religious mob. Bystanders said that Stephen's face glowed like that of an angel, but Saul evidently ignored the light and grew even more violent. Saul believed there would be a judgment and that he knew the judgment and so he could help judge. And Saul firmly believed in the Messiah and hoped for the Messiah; he knew all about the Messiah. Actually, it was with his knowledge of the Messiah that he had judged Jesus and rejected Jesus...

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil

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The Messiah: His Own Judgment

And now sought to kill his followers.

You see, Saul's problem with Jesus was that He hung on a cross, a tree. Saul's problem with Jesus was that He didn't act like Saul. Saul's problem with Jesus is that He didn't act more like this:

(See next page)

Clip from *DJESUS Uncrossed*

Announcer: Get ready for the ULTIMATE historical revenge fantasy...

[reveal Jesus pushing aside the giant rock so he can exit his tomb]

Jesus: Guess who's back!

[title appears]

Announcer: "Djesus Uncrossed".

[cut to Romans fighting]

Announcer: He's risen from the dead!

Jesus: [wielding a sword from behind his cross] Miss Me?

Roman Soldier: Kill him!!

[Jesus joins the fight]

Announcer: And he's preaching *anything* but forgiveness.

[cut to more fighting scenes]

Announcer: He may be wearing sandals... but he can STILL kick ass!

[reveal carnage]

Roman Soldier: Jesus H. Christ!

Announcer: The "H" is silent!

Announcer: "Djesus Uncrossed".

[cut to Jesus cocking his rifle]

Jesus: No more Mr. Nice Jesus!

[tag: "SUMMER 2013"]

That was from Saturday Night Live a few weeks ago. The next day, even the anchor on CNN expressed outrage over that skit for having mocked Jesus right before Easter. But I don't think it makes fun of Jesus. I think it makes fun of our image of Jesus. It makes fun of the Jesus we Christians seem to hope will come, the second time around. The Messiah that comes back "uncrossed" and full of vengeance: the very same Messiah that the Jews had hoped for the first time around— the very Messiah that Jesus refuses to be, the very Messiah in which Saul put his hope 2000 years ago, as he made his way down the road to Damascus looking for the heretical followers of Jesus so he could drag them off to judgment and death. You see? Saul was deeply religious and the religion is rather familiar—isn't it?

Acts 9:1 Easter according to Saint Paul (that is Rabbi Saul).

But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring the bound to Jerusalem. Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Three days...

Like three days that Jesus, the Son of Man (Matthew 12:10) was in the “heart of the earth. Easter, “His eyes were opened” and “he saw nothing.”

[Peter starts singing]

I saw the Light, I saw the Light,
Now everything is darkness, everything is night.
Now I'm so confused—don't know what is right... what the heck...
I saw the Light.

Paul was cornered, exposed and undone by Jesus on Easter.

[Peter starts singing again]

That's me in the corner
That's me in the spotlight
Losing my religion
Trying to keep up with you
And I don't know if I can do it
Oh now I've said too much
I haven't said enough...

On Easter, Rabbi Saul lost his religion.

Before Easter, he saw everything; he knew everything

And now, he knew nothing; he knew nothing but a voice, in the darkness that called his name.

Before Easter, Saul “knew everything” about God and on Easter he began to know God.

On Easter, Saul lost his religion and not just his religion, all religion.

Easter is the death of religion.

We all have a religion: [Peter starts singing] “every whisper...of every waiting hour...I'm ...choosing my confession, trying to keep an eye on you.”

We choose religion like we breathe; we all take knowledge of good and evil in order to choose the good, judge the good, make ourselves good and make our world good or what we judge to be good.

See? I think Bill Maher is profoundly religious. He has deep faith in his own reason. He didn't reason his way to his own reason. He has deep faith in the Scientific Method, for you can't prove the scientific method with the scientific method, it takes faith.

See, I'm saying, most people don't actually leave religion; they just switch religions. In fact, the 20th Century was a massive experiment in some relatively new religions like atheism, and 60 million people were slaughtered by it under Stalin in the Soviet Union and millions more in China, Cambodia, even Cuba. Atheism, Social Darwinism, 6 million in Nazi Germany deemed: "least fit to survive." I'm just saying, we all seem to have religion and it all seems to be rather destructive.

Now, Judaism, which is the foundation of Christianity, the Old Covenant, the Law...that religion did not commit the same atrocities as the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany, and yet it did crucify the Messiah...that is, it crucified God, in the flesh on a tree. It was religious people, Christ's own people, people just like Rabbi Saul that pressured the Romans into nailing Jesus to a tree—the tree of Law, the tree of the "knowledge of good and evil."

LISTEN: Religion crucified The Good on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Then and there we took His life.

See, I don't think Bill Maher even begins to comprehend the depths of his own argument. In fact, according to Scripture religion (at least religion as I'm defining it) doesn't save us, rather, it damns us.

Do you remember how the snake tempted Eve and that first Adam? "Take the knowledge of good and evil and make yourself in the image of God;" "Take the Law and judge yourself, save yourself, sanctify yourself, you can be your own Messiah." The snake didn't tempt them with sex, drugs and rock-n-roll. The snake tempted them with religion.

Now, "the knowledge of good and evil" isn't bad. The Law is not bad; the Law describes the Good. God's Law describes Love, but it is not Love; God is Love. God's Law describes the Good and God is Good, but thinking I can take Good to make myself good is the very definition of evil.

Maybe all religion, all human religion is all the same religion and that religion is ME in control—man in control—Adam in control. Saul's religion was himself.

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil

Salvation: His Own Judgment

Sanctification: His Own Judgment

The Messiah: His Own Judgment

Himself

So Bill Maher suggests one way for man to seize control and save himself. Joseph Stalin suggests another, and the Rabbis, Pharisees, and Senior Pastors suggest still another. Granted, we may have God's Law, but we still take it to gain control of God, and I don't think that makes it better...but worse. Because now we are manipulating God, using God, not just using people and persecuting people but persecuting God—crucifying God.

But you've got to have some sympathy for Rabbi Saul and all of us pastors of religious organizations. How are we supposed to motivate people, control people and get them to do what's right? See? [Peter walks towards a coffin that is on stage] If I can just clarify some laws and build some walls; if I can fabricate a box and appeal to people's ego with threats of punishment and promises of reward, then I can make people get in that box. See? With religion I can create order out of chaos. See? With religion, I can make sense of my world—seize control of all the people in my world and stay safe and secure in my box! [Peter slaps the coffin]

Religion is me in TOTAL CONTROL!

[Andrew (the Associate pastor) sits up in the coffin eating a sandwich]

Andrew: Hey, what's up?

Peter: Tibert! What the hell are you doing? I'm preaching the Easter sermon!

Andrew: Oh sorry man...Holy week totally stressed me out, so after I read the text, I went in the back room, thought I'd eat a sandwich and catch a power nap, AND then I saw this (the coffin)...next thing I know, you're pounding on the lid!

Peter: Andrew Tibert, you know the rules, now get your act together and start acting like a pastor on Easter! [Andrew gets out and sulks as he returns to his seat in the front row.]

OK, that was slightly staged...but I hope you get my point:

With my religion, I try to get my whole world to fit in my box and stay in my box.

But the only things that will stay in my box are dead.

With religion, I construct my own coffin, everybody else's coffin and even God's coffin.

With religion, the people of God, using the very law of God, attempted to crucify God in order to make Him fit in their box: We nailed "the Good" to the tree of the knowledge of Good, in order to make Jesus, who is the revelation of "the Good" fit in our box.

With religion, we put God in a box, called a tomb.

On Easter, He rose from the dead, broke the box, and destroyed the "religion" that is me—my old "ME" that is prideful, arrogant, insecure, self-righteous, self-centered, judgmental, constantly anxious old ME—my old Adam, my old man—ME.

[Peter begins singing]

That's me in the corner. That's me in the Spotlight losing my religion.

Back to our story:

And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

The name "Ananias" means, "when God has graciously given" and Ananias would have been one of those that Paul would have drug to Jerusalem to be tried and murdered.

The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas.

Saul had been like king Saul, that seized control of God's kingdom and betrayed the son of David.

It's no accident that Jesus says, "You'll find him in the place of Judas." Judas seized control and hung himself on a tree before he could see that Jesus hung on the tree in his place. We don't know exactly what happened to Judas after that but Jesus loved Judas and Judas was one of the 12, and it appears that Saul was God's choice to take Judas's place. (Karl Barth takes fifty pages of his dogmatics to show how true that is.) Saul is a Judas that lost his religion on Easter, when he saw that he was saved and sanctified by grace "at the house of Judas."

...look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name. But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.

His name is Jesus, it literally means "God is salvation." Paul's religion had been "I am salvation"—the religion of me. You can't see Jesus as He truly is and hang on to your religion, your religion of me, and that's why losing your religion can hurt. Jesus said, "He must suffer for the sake of my name." Suffering is the loss of control and here's the wildest thing: Saint Paul will actually long to suffer just to be with Jesus.

So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately, something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized, and taking food, he was strengthened.

He preached the gospel, raised the dead, was repeatedly beaten flogged and imprisoned. He wrote the Bible and changed the world. But on Easter (Paul's Easter) he lost his religion, perhaps all religion; Paul lost Saul, he lost himself. Just think about it.

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil

Salvation: His Own Judgment

Sanctification: His Own Judgment

The Messiah: His Own Judgment

Himself

Before Easter, he thought he'd done nothing but good, and after he saw he'd done nothing but evil. He had been blameless under the Law. Now he saw that he was, in his own words: "*the foremost of sinners*," the world's most religious man and the world's worst sinner. And the Law hadn't changed. Yet it had an entirely different meaning; Jesus is the meaning.

Before, he knew about "the Good;" now he is known by the Good.

Before, he knew descriptions of Love; now he is known by Love.

Before, he took knowledge of Good and evil; now he receives Grace.

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil Receiving Grace

Salvation: His Own Judgment

Sanctification: His Own Judgment

The Messiah: His Own Judgment

Himself

It wasn't his choice—he didn't choose—he was chosen.

It wasn't his free will—it was God's free will.

It wasn't his judgment—it was God's judgment.

Saul's Religion

Law: Taking Knowledge of Good and Evil Receiving Grace

Salvation: His Own Judgment

God's Judgment

Sanctification: His Own Judgment

The Messiah: His Own Judgment

Himself

He was chosen at his worst, a son of perdition—a Judas—actually worse than Judas; God literally chose the world's most notorious sinner and turned him into history's greatest saint.

Saul's Religion

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Salvation: His Own Judgment

God's Judgment

Sanctification: His Own Judgment

God's Judgment

The Messiah: His Own Judgment

Himself

And I don't know about you but that kind of messes up my ability to judge sinners and saints. And for years I've thought, "God if you did that for Saul of Tarsus, why don't you do it for everyone?" And for years I think He's been whispering, "How do you know I don't?" And this is really wild, but Paul seems to say, that just as Jesus appeared to him, Jesus will appear to all:

2 Timothy 4:2 says, “He will judge the living and the dead by his appearing.”

Like He appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Like He appeared to John in the Revelation.

Like He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus.

2 Thessalonians 2:9 Paul writes that Jesus will “*bring the son of perdition, the anti-Christ to nothing*” by the “*appearance of his coming*.” And do you see? Paul had been a Judas, a son of perdition—anti-Christ, and Jesus destroyed him by the “*appearance of his coming*.” Paul wrote, “*It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.*”

Paul was judged on the road to Damascus and Paul was saved on the road to Damascus. Paul was saved from himself, his sin, his religion:

He was saved from his old man and found his new man.

He lost his old life and found his new life.

He lost his religion and was found by Jesus.

And it doesn’t just happen on the road to Damascus. And it doesn’t just happen at the End of time, it’s happening *all* the time.

Later in Acts, Paul says that when Jesus appeared to him. And after he said, “*Saul you are persecuting me,*” He said, “*Saul it is hard to kick against to goads.*” Jesus had been goading Saul. He must have been looking at Saul through the eyes of those that Saul drug off to prison. It was His glory that shown in the face of Stephen as he had been stoned to death. Jesus is the Truth and Jesus is the presence of Love. And Jesus had been goading Paul all along.

At the judgment in Matthew 25, Jesus says, “*Whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me...*” I bet that Saul saw the Light of Christ in the eyes of those he persecuted, and yet he fought against that Love and ran from that Light. John 3:19 “*This is the judgment, the light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light.*”

Don’t run from God’s judgment or you will hide yourself in Hell.

God’s Judgment is Salvation.

God’s Salvation is Judgment.

Judgment and Salvation are both Jesus.

And He is the same “*yesterday, today and forever;*” He doesn’t change.

So, this was God’s Judgment on Paul. And this is God’s Judgment on us. We will each be cornered, each be trapped in the spotlight of Christ’s glorious presence. And we will see that we have not chosen the Good—the Good chose us. So we will each have to stand in the Light of His furious Love and realize there is not one thing we can do that could make Him love us more or make Him love us less.

When my life feels out of control, sometimes I lie awake and find things to feel guilty about. I have things I can feel guilty about, but what am I most guilty of? I think it’s trying to find things to feel guilty about, so I can fix these things, manipulate God and gain control. And so God must destroy my religion. That is, I must believe that I’m forgiven.

Ultimately, we each must surrender to this brilliant fact:

We are the naked object of God’s affection.

We will each have to sacrifice our pride, lose all control and surrender to Grace.

We will each have to lose our religion, & surrender to Jesus—God’s Judgment.

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Himself

Receiving Grace

God's Judgment

God's Judgment

God's Judgment

Paul lost his religion and kind of became Jesus' religion. I mean, religion is what we do and we are what Jesus does...literally we become His Body, and nothing is wasted. It is like Paul was deconstructed on the Damascus road and then reconstructed using all the same pieces, like Jerusalem is destroyed and comes down, new, from Heaven. Like we each must be emptied of ourselves and filled with something else.

Religion is fallen man's imitation of Jesus, but faith is the very presence of Jesus in fallen man. Jesus is not interested in making you religious. Jesus is interested in making you Himself, His Body, His Temple, His Bride.

Young Rabbi Saul was a religious zealot. Old Saint Paul was a lovesick fool. He had lost his religion and gained Christ.

Philippians 3:5-9:

...circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as [crap], in order that I may gain Christ 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 faith of Christ]...

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Himself

Paul's Faith

Receiving Grace

God's Judgment

God's Judgment

God's Judgment

Jesus

Saul's religion was himself.

Saint Paul's faith was Jesus.

Well, to sum up:

We're all born into this messed up world, and so we each take knowledge of good and evil, to save ourselves and maintain control.

We each construct a religion called "Me—" My Self, My Flesh, My Ego. [Peter stands inside the coffin] And in order to fit everything in that box, people must die, God must die, and I die. [Peter climbs inside the coffin and shuts the lid.] (I die alone, in outer darkness). I thought it would be Heaven, but it turns out to be Hell.

Maybe it's not such a bad thing to lose your religion. And what most of us call "Christianity" just might be religion. Maybe it doesn't seem good, because it is not good. And maybe Christianity doesn't work for "Me," because Christ is working against "Me"—that self-centered, self-righteous, always anxious, miserable old "Me," that's how crosses work.

Maybe I can't make sense of Jesus because Jesus is making sense of me. Maybe I've gone blind so I'll listen for a voice in the darkness. Maybe Jesus is destroying the old man that I create in order to liberate the New Man that God has already created. Maybe Jesus is destroying my box. It feels like I'm being assaulted by Hell, but it's Heaven assaulting it from the outside even as Jesus invades from the inside.

The Gospel is that God loved us when we were dead, imprisoned in ourselves, unable to choose the Good, unable to love. On the cross, He gave up His Spirit and descended into the heart of the earth where He enters your tomb and my tomb and rises from the dead. Faith, Hope and Love in you, are Jesus rising in you, as you lose your religion—your "self"—this old box. [Peter gets out of the coffin.] He communed with us in death that we would commune with Him in life. [Peter gets the bread] He entered our tomb and there He rises.

Communion

And so, on that night that He was betrayed by all of us, He took the bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given to you; take this; eat it; do it in remembrance of me. And in the same way, after supper, He took the cup saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you, and do it in remembrance of me."

So we invite you to come to the table. Take the broken body of Christ, and put it in your tomb.

Prayer

If you would make these words your words.

Lord, I confess my sin—my religion the religion of me in control. I confess my sin, and I receive your Grace, which is The Good, which is The Life, which is The Light. Thank you for rising from the dead in me.

Lord Jesus we thank you that you not only descended into a tomb two thousand years ago, but at the boundary of eternity and time you descended into my tomb, my life. And like you say at the end of Revelation: "I'm making *all* things new," so we thank you.

Benediction

Christ is risen. Christ is rising all around you and Christ is rising within you! You can run from His glory and hide yourself in outer darkness for a time. But Easter cannot be stopped. Religion is the story that the fallen children of Adam are telling. Easter is the story that God has already told. I'm not saying religious activity is bad, I'm just saying it's evil, *IF* it's not powered by Love, and God is Love.

Saint Paul wrote this,

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 and 7-8a

Love has risen from the dead and will not fail!

Disclaimer: The following document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.