

## Service Overview

**Speaker:** Reuben

**Sermon Series:** At the Table with Jesus

**Message:** Sitting At the Table our Eyes Are Opened

**Scripture Reference:** Luke 24:13-35

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## **Service Welcome** *Speaker: Worship Team*

Good morning everybody. Welcome to Easter Sunday morning. And, what was I going to say again? 'He is risen! He's risen indeed.' Something that's been said down through the ancient times by believers. You know, it's our responsibility, it's our place to say it in our generation. 'He is risen. He is risen indeed.' And it's not just about a daggy thing to say or a thing that might mean something to us more than one time or another.

It's actually talking about the victory that Jesus has done today. And actually, it underlies everything we have in Christ. Because at that time that Jesus rose from the dead, God exerted the power that is like his mighty strength when he raised Christ from the dead, seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms. In the spirit realm around us, God has seated Jesus at his right hand in the place of authority, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked not only in the present age, but also in the one to come.

It's not just a thing to say, is it? When we say he's risen indeed, we are saying he is seated at the place of authority. And it's what our faith and our long-term salvation is based on—what Jesus did on the cross. And he rose again the third day because folks, today he is risen. Would you like to stand together?

We're going to celebrate great things. This song is about lots of great things God does, but particularly today that Jesus is raised from the dead.

Let us worship him. Let's worship. Come. Let's bow our heads.

## **Worship Singing**

**Song:** Great Things by Jonas Myrin, Phil Wickham

## **Words of Peter, the Disciple of Jesus** *Speaker: Ben*

The words of Peter, disciple of Jesus.

We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross. But God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.

He was not seen by all people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen by us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. And all the prophets testify about him, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

And the words of Peter again, praise be to God and the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you.

## **Worship Singing**

**Song:** King of Kings by Brooke Ligertwood, Jason Ingram, Scott Ligertwood

**Song:** Jesus Messiah by Chris Tomlin, Daniel Carson, Ed Cash, Jesse Reeves

## **Post-Worship Prayer** *Speaker: Worship Team*

We stand in awe of you today, Jesus. You've been exalted and seated in the highest place in the spirit realm on earth and out through the galaxies, both in this age and in the age to come. We pray that your authority and your breakthrough in your freedom would be upon our lives today. Father, we pray that you'd break the power of darkness that would come against us.

If people are struggling today, Lord, would you lift that off because of the victory of Jesus? Not just because it's chocolate Easter eggs or an Easter Sunday celebration, but because of what Jesus has done on this day. And we pray, Lord God, that you would show us how to live in your victory. Thank you for everyone here today, Lord, and for what's going on in our lives.

We bring every bit that maybe we're struggling with, every bit we're worried about. We bring it now under the Lordship of Christ and pray that you would bring your breakthrough and God would you meet us, everyone, where we're at, and lead us forward in your victory today. We praise you for your presence here. We love you, God. We love you, Lord God, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## **Baptism** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Amen. Thank you so much, David, and worship team and sound team. Today is about Jesus. Today we celebrate that he has risen. He's risen indeed. And we don't just celebrate something that happened in the past, but we celebrate the resurrected Jesus today. And as part of our celebration today, it's our joy to share in a baptism this morning.

And so, baptism is about identifying with Jesus. It's something that he asked us to do. Baptism itself, according to Romans 6, talks about just as Christ died, that we too have died to our old self. And just as Jesus rose to new life, as we celebrate today that we too have been risen to new life in Christ through faith in him.

*--- Following this, a member of the congregation undergoes baptism ---*

## **Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

So much joy to celebrate what God is doing in people's lives, isn't it? For those who arrived after we welcomed people here this morning, I do want to say a really warm welcome. Welcome to everyone who's worshipping with us online this morning as well. I'm Kathy, I'm one of the pastors here and, the kids are about to go out in a moment, but as they go out, what I'd love you to do is just share something that this weekend has held for you. It might be something significant, something that has brought joy, or just something that you've been doing.

But just if you can introduce yourself to someone new, perhaps someone you haven't met, someone who doesn't know what your weekend has held and have a chat.

*--- Break as members of the congregation greet and discuss with one another ---*

So, this is another exciting week in the life of Parramatta Baptist. I want to say, congratulations to James\* and Sarah\*, who are getting married on Saturday. So we want to wish you God's richest blessing over your new married lives together, and may Saturday be a great, joyous day and rain free.

All right. I do want to say a big thank you to Sarah and to the other members of the 'Encounter' team this week. If you were able to get to Encounter, that worship experience downstairs was absolutely beautiful to experience in the lead up to Easter, to be able to really steady ourselves in the truths of all that it meant for Jesus to go to the cross and what it means for us as well.

If you missed Encounter, we will get that up on our YouTube channel in the next few days. So you can actually engage in that as an online experience, if that's helpful for you. But yeah. Thank you. Thank you so much to Sarah and to your team as well.

Well, being Easter Sunday, we do celebrate Jesus' life, new life, resurrected life, and we celebrate every story that Jesus is doing among us as a church. And those of you who are regularly with us know that we celebrate the stories of new life that we hear by putting fruit on the tree. These stories of fruit represent first time commitment. In some cases, they're recommitments—they could be significant growth, healing, physical healing or emotional healing. So we just would love to hear what God is doing in your life. And I do want to encourage us all of those names under the tree, whether your name is there or not, just keep praying into that place of God's movement among us as the resurrected Jesus really, really does transform lives. He really is alive and making us like him.

## **Prayer** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Thank you to everyone who gives as part of just all of the ministry that goes on in this place. How about we pray together?

Jesus, we celebrate today that you are alive. We celebrate your resurrection. But God, we want to thank you for all that that meant—in the purposes of the Father, of all that means for salvation, history and more. Personally, Lord God, we want to thank you for all that that means for us as well.

Lord God, I want to thank you that you have taken us from the trajectory that we were on, and what you have given those of us who have put our faith in you. You have given us new life that will go on forever with you. And we want to praise you for that. Lord God, we want to thank you for the profound hope that we have, that this life and these current struggles are not the end. But Lord God, there is so much that awaits of the perfection and fullness of relationship with you that you made us for.

So we thank you for the hope that we carry. And Lord God, I want to thank you that that hope is open for all people, Lord, that it's not just for us as some kind of in-crowd, but Jesus, we remember this day that you loved the world so much that you died and you rose again. And, Lord God, I want to thank you that your heart is for those who haven't yet put their trust in you, that you love them.

And so, Lord God, I just want to pray for those who might be among us even this morning, who haven't yet made that commitment to you. Oh Lord God, I want to pray that we would meet the resurrected Jesus. And Lord, I want to pray for each of us, Lord, in the places where you send us through the week.

For the people that you've put around us who don't yet know you. Oh Lord, I pray that we would live like you, that we would be salt light people who are distinctive and attractive because of Jesus. That we would live our faith and our life in you, Jesus, out loud. And Lord God, I want to pray that because of who we are, and Lord also the witness that we get to share, the ways that we might be able to read the Bible with those who don't yet know you.

Lord, may others also come to put their hope in you as well. Lord, we want to pray for our park ministry today. Lord God, I want to thank you for Oliver\* and for each of the team down there. Lord, for those who sleep rough and live on the margins, we want to pray for them. Lord, we recognise that there are so many different reasons why they might find themselves in that situation and Lord, that you love them.

And Lord God, I just want to pray that there will be those in the park who also desire to know who you are as well. And so, Lord, as Oliver and his little team have now set in place a little group that read the Bible on Monday mornings in a cafe near the park. But God, we want to pray that even today they might have conversations with those who come to lunch who would be keen to explore who you are. Jesus came to meet with this little group who read together.

And Lord, we pray for Reuben as he comes to speak as well. Lord, we just ask that your spirit would fill him afresh, and we ask, Lord, that you would give us ears to hear the things that you are saying to us today. We bless you, Lord God. Amen.

## **Bible Reading: Luke 24: 13-35 (NSRV)**

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles[a] from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along? They stood still, looking sad.[b] 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' 19 He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth,[c] who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.[d] Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' 25 Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah[e] should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us[f] while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' 33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. 34 They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' 35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

## **Sermon: Sitting At The Table our Eyes Are Opened** *Speaker: Reuben*

Hi, I'm Reuben, and, I'm part of the pastoral team here at PBC. Big welcome also to those joining us online, we're really glad you're with us today. Some friends I met recently told us they had been watching for six months before they came to PBC. So, yeah, we want to let you guys know that you are so much a part of this as everyone in the room, and we hope to see you soon.

So, I'm still a little new to PBC, so I thought I'd share a little bit about myself this week. So I was born in Newcastle and grew up in a little Bible College called Tahlee. My parents were from Singapore, and so even though I was an Aussie citizen, they registered me as a citizen of Singapore as well. So here's the thing. One important fact is that all male citizens have to serve in the Singaporean armed forces when they turn 18. That's a bit different to other countries. And so I spent two and a half years of my life serving in the Singapore Army as an Australian citizen. There was just no way around it.

And so when you start in the army, you enter basic training as a recruit. That's the only picture I could find, by the way. It was quite late in the journey, but this is how I got some of my basic training. You do something really mundane, like polishing your boots, cleaning your rifle, get dressed, pack your bags, and get ready to get in. Go into the jungle, and then you wait. You wait and you wait and you wait. And then suddenly a loud voice shouts out a new command.

And then you're rushing to the next thing. And then if you don't get there in time, you get punished, and then you wait again. And so we used to joke about how we would wait to rush and then rush to wait. Is that true for any of us today? All it takes is one email, one text message, and our hearts start to race.

We think about new deadlines and new things to do, and then we spend the rest of our time trying to escape from it. We scroll on our phones, we watch videos that distract us from the stress that we are facing. And one of the things I have learned most through my work is that anxious people find it very hard to make good decisions.

When you are anxious, it is really hard to make a good decision. So whether or not we like it, we are being formed by our habits and the culture around us. So today I want to talk about the rhythm of life that God intended for us, about how we walk and sit with Jesus in order to experience the fullness of his grace.

So if you if you're new here, today is one of the greatest days in the Christian calendar where we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. And this holiday reflects how he was crucified for our sins on Good Friday and how he rose from the dead three days later, which is today, Easter Sunday or Resurrection Sunday. And this is really significant because it signifies God's victory over sin and death.

And this really gives us hope of eternal life and serves as a reminder of his very deep and unconditional love for us. So our church has been doing a series on the invitation to come to the table and sit with Jesus, a place where you belong unconditionally, and a place where you can find perfect peace and get strengthened in your inner being.

And so that's what I'm going to talk a bit more about today. So the story we heard, well, I'm going to break that down into two parts. The first part features the disciples walking with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. And the second part is about sitting at the table with Jesus. I want you to remember that because I see as we were worshiping earlier, I just felt God saying very clearly that some of us struggle to walk with him, and some of us struggle to sit with him.

And so by starting with the walking. Walking with Jesus is the very foundation of our faith. It's so important. So in verse 13, we read that the two disciples were walking to a village called Emmaus, that's about seven miles from Jerusalem. That's 11.29km, to be precise. Okay, so from where we are right now, how far is that you would reach Auburn, Cabramatta, Raging Waters, Turramurra, Kellyville, Dural, Macquarie Park and Ryde. You would almost get to Concord, but not quite. And if you were to walk those seven miles, Google Maps says it would take you about 2.5 hours to get there. It would easily have taken longer if you didn't have comfortable sneakers, walking on dirt roads, and it had to avoid snakes and certain sections with bandits, perhaps. So let's just say that this was not a quick journey.

And that's the first thing I want to talk about, is that God is not in a hurry. Okay, the disciples were processing some really traumatic events that had just happened. Most processes of healing and restoration take time. Some types of healing require us to be in relationship with people, if there are areas of relationship or brokenness in us that came from relationship, rather than facing it alone.

No one accidentally knows the Word of God really well, suddenly. It all takes time in the Word. In our culture today, that's not encouraged. Patience. All right, so God's not in a hurry, so we shouldn't be in a hurry either. So they were processing traumatic events that just take time. And our culture today does not encourage patience by any means.

We want to be faster, cheaper, bigger and better. It's almost impossible to do all those things. And I'm definitely guilty of being a consumer of this culture. I try to automate as many things as I can, and the funny thing about trying to save time is that you spend more time trying to save it. And, well, you can ask my wife, my kids and anyone who has house sat for us.

It can be complicated to switch off and switch on the lights at our house using voice commands. Some people can't even get out of our house, they don't know how to use the door.



But how long does it take to develop patience? How long does it take to develop culture? How long does it take to develop a healthy or build a healthy church? 173 years? Now, our life is like a love song to Jesus for those who have a relationship with him. If your life was a love song to Jesus, you're not going to try to rush to the end of the song, but you want to play every single note in our worship and as an offering to him.

So don't be in a hurry. So God's not in a hurry. Have you heard of this guy, James Dyson? Dyson vacuum cleaners. Pretty famous. Now, I want to see if you know how many models or prototypes that he made before launching his first bagless vacuum cleaner.

*--- Break as congregants call out prototype numbers ---*

He made it 5127 prototypes before potentially getting it right. And they've probably made thousands more since. You cannot say that was an overnight success. Any athlete who does well is not an overnight success. Sometimes we read about things or watch videos that make things look easier than they are, but we know it just takes a lot of perseverance and time.

And so in Thessalonians we are encouraged to rejoice always, to pray continually, and to give thanks in all circumstances. That's all the time. Pray. Always pray without ceasing because it does take time. Some things we really have to contend for.

And around August last year, I noticed a pain in my left hand and found that I hurt a nerve. I found it really hard to do this, which is why I was doing this a lot during the open mic and I forgot to explain, and it definitely affected playing instruments. Once Kathy prayed for my hand and it got significantly better, but it wasn't fully there. And over time I asked Max\*, my son, to pray for my hand and it has steadily been getting better.

I'm nearly there. Very, very close. In fact, right now it feels pretty good. So I would say that not giving up, just contending for it has resulted in almost full restoration of my hand. I'd say it's at least 99% right now. That's pretty cool. Yeah. And you know, there are other areas that we have to contend for, areas of spiritual breakthrough, the salvation of your loved ones, financial or work situations, parenting, anything.

That takes contending for—mental health, restoring of relationships. I just want to declare God's goodness over all of those areas that take a long time. He is there. He is at work, and he knows exactly what to do. And so walking with Jesus is the foundation of our faith. The other thing is that, well, back to the story.

Jesus is fresh from being resurrected, and then he suddenly shows up to these two disciples. He really wants to intervene. I think it's funny. Okay, respectfully, that Jesus has just gone through a time of intense and unimaginable suffering, torture, abandonment, and ultimately a slow death.

And so when you ask the disciples, 'what are you talking about?' And they say, 'what are you talking about? You've come from Jerusalem and you don't know what has happened.' And then he says, 'tell me what things you know, as someone who's just gone through something indescribable.'

When we walk closely with God, he often asks us questions that he knows the answer to because it reveals what is in our hearts. And it also allows him to co-write the story with us and sort of change the ending. So in 2012, my wife and I were praying about where to go after a season in Sydney.

We felt the Sydney season was over and we told God we would go anywhere but Singapore because it's very hot there. And, you know, knowing the culture well, I would prefer a cooler country with mountains, perhaps. And someone prayed wisely over us. And he sensed that God was saying or asking us, 'what if God wants you to go to Singapore?'

That's all he said. And immediately our hearts leapt, because that was what God had already put in our hearts. And so we ended up spending ten years in Singapore because God knew us inside out. That's also why we're so sweaty in all of these pictures. Another time in Singapore, I was invited to a fairly high profile launch of a new business, and I was feeling fairly important, and I thought, I'll go there and do some networking, get to know some important people.

But what you need to understand is that in five years of running my own business, God had always been the one providing the business leads. I did not do any marketing, so when I got to the venue, I immediately felt God telling me, asking me, 'so what do you think you're doing here?' And I immediately knew that I was trying to do things in my own strength.

So this is the part where I walked in, I grabbed a drink and I walked out of the place. So he asked questions that he knows the answers to. So hearing his voice or getting questions from God, we've got 'not being in a hurry.' Those are aspects of the foundation of our faith.

But another part of it comes through the importance of the Word of God. Even though Jesus wanted to intervene, he patiently walked through all the scriptures with the disciples on this long walk. Now, if you want to know something really well, you should teach it. So for this, you know, for the past few weeks, I've been really reading this passage.

And during worship today, we sang King of Kings, one of my favorite songs. We were actually at Hillsong when they first released the song on a Sunday. But today it broke me because the depth of having been sort of meditating on that passage for weeks now, something I saw, something that I didn't see before, and I could barely sing the song.

So if you want to know something well, teach it. And in the same way, Jesus probably shared verses with the disciples that explained who he was and what he would go through. Like Isaiah 7, 'where

the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and we'll call him Emmanuel.' That's pretty amazing. Micah 5, 'but you, Bethlehem, out of you will come for me, one who will be ruler over Israel.'

And Psalms 22, 'dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me. They pierced my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display. People stand, gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots on my garments.' That's pretty spot on, isn't it? So Jesus really loves us and he will walk the journey with us.

It's really important to spend time with God in His Word because we begin to understand the fullness and the goodness of his plans for us, and our hearts will burn with desire to see his kingdom come. It's really interesting that the disciples were kept from recognising Jesus for hours. Why didn't Jesus just reveal himself? Was it so that they wouldn't be so shocked, shell shocked that he could actually explain the scriptures to them?

Even when we don't feel him, he's always there at work in our lives, and one of the times that God was most present in our lives was when we lost our second child, Sophia\*. We lost her when she was ten weeks old. She suffered from myocarditis. She was in perfect health, but her heart suddenly stopped as I was putting her down for a nap one day.

And what followed was 12 hours of resuscitation efforts, surgery, waiting in ICU, and very, very difficult decision making. Remember, it's hard to make decisions when you're anxious. Ultimately, we had to say goodbye to our baby girl. And throughout this really difficult day, both of us felt carried in the arms of God. We did not have any strength to face a situation like this, and I've never felt a more tangible presence of God as he shielded us from trauma.

But as we journeys go, and God not being in a hurry, we still have to go through the whole process of grief because that is healthy and it is good. It blows my mind that the first thing I think of when I think of Sophia is God's goodness, and that's how amazing he is. And so just with our first half, we're talking about how walking with Jesus that is the foundation of our faith.

God's not in a hurry. He wants to intervene and he's always there working in us. And the Word of God really helps us to understand how deep his love is for us. But wait, there's more right? Because sitting with Jesus allows him to minister to us and completely ignites our faith. Walking well is really, really important. And I want to propose to you that sitting with Jesus is just as important.

There are many expressions of sitting with Jesus at the table in the Bible. One person poured out a year's wages of perfume at his feet. So at the table, but pouring perfume at his feet. Others reclined next to Jesus in John 13 and others were served bread that Jesus broke in the in the chapter that we just read.

So all of this points to intimacy with Jesus. And that is what sitting with Jesus at the table is about. It is about his presence. So let's go back to the story. The disciples by now were really gripped by this mysterious stranger who shows up, doesn't know what happened in Jerusalem, but could explain from the Bible all the way from Moses all the way through to the prophets. He also called them fools in their moment of despair and grief. And Jesus acted as if he was going to continue a little bit further.

And I believe that Jesus wanted to see what the disciples would do if he were to keep walking on, whether in their spirits they were actually beginning to recognise him. And God is so gentle when he tests our hearts. There have been times in my life when I've told God, just tell me what to do, because it's so much easier to be told what to do, and given commands like in the army, instead of thinking for myself or taking a risk like Indiana Jones here on a path less followed when no one has done that before. That's scary. But more likely than not, his words to all of us would be, or to me, 'son, what would you like to do?' And that really requires a level of maturity, because that is the path of sonship.

When we carry his heart, he gives us free will to act. We are not robots, and he gets so much more glory when we obey him out of our own will. And so at this point, they invite Jesus to come and rest with them because it was getting dark by now. And so the disciples managed to convince Jesus to spend the night with them.

And I love how this this cue to rest. It's time to rest. It's getting dark, sets off a marvelous revelation of Jesus, and their hearts were ministered to immediately. In an instant, all the despair, the anguish, and the pain they had been feeling was broken, and instead they were now filled with hope, excitement and courage. We need to let Jesus minister to us and one major way to do that is to rest in him.

So in this case, rest was the trigger. Resting can really trigger God ministering to us in our lives. We do not rest enough. Most of my experiences of the world we live in, and even in Christian culture, involve not resting enough because it is easy to shape your identity in what you do, rather than who you are and be who you are.

In this modern age, we tend to work well into the night rather than rest, because so much is expected of us. So just like when you are unwell, resting will do you more good than exercising.

God can also use our habits and everyday rituals to reveal himself.

Now, the act of giving things and breaking bread with friends was very common in Jewish culture, and it still is today. And yet something that was so common was also the climax of this story. I believe that Jesus was modelling to us that some of these simple acts can really release him to minister into our hearts, and this is something we can do at home with friends at any time.

And I would like to challenge us to remember that when you need Jesus to minister to you. Because here's one way to do it. We pause to rest, and we give thanks. We remember how we have been redeemed through his sacrifice. As we break the bread and we share meals together and we serve one another, that's really fun.

I really enjoy sharing meals together and that just encourages their hearts so greatly in a way that would transform their lives. However, I think it's so significant that he broke the bread in front of them. Like his body, because he wants to minister to our hearts. And so the disciples got up immediately. Their faith was ignited, and by now it was dark, and they probably made their way back to Jerusalem in the dark, because they were so excited to tell the disciples about what just happened.

And that's another seven miles in a complete darkness. So by now you would be at the airport if you just walked in one day, 14 miles, you'd be past Liverpool and to me, that really says a lot about when we rest we get we get reignited. It's not rest that makes you more sleepy. So I just want to bring it back to walking and sitting.

So I shared about how walking with Jesus is the foundation of our faith. It's non-negotiable, and at the same time, it's sitting at the table with Jesus that allows him to minister to us and ignites our faith. I feel that this morning, some of us really struggle to sit at the table with Jesus. I just wanted to share when Shaun\* hit the cymbals really hard earlier, my first instinct was like, 'you can't do that because I'm still reading the room, right? Trying to be respectable and honor everyone in the room.' And at the very same time, just that release of freedom to have that exuberance, that celebration of joy. Sometimes there's a bit lacking in our culture. And I realized in that moment I was putting all my attention on that walking, that long serving perseverance and discipline, because that's very admirable.

Sometimes people will think that you're lazy if you're sitting with Jesus. He was called, you know, the kind of people that he had dinners with were mostly questionable. And he was judged a lot. But we absolutely have to sit at the table and just rest in him. And there's so much joy and a fullness of faith that comes out of that rest.

And so I want to challenge some of us this morning who really struggle to sit. I've met people who say that they can't rest. They just don't rest. They their way of recharging is out in nature. They have to do something. I want to challenge that as well. To be still before Jesus is, and to sit with him because he has so much, for he died for us.

And there's so much fullness that we want to know. And so, the last question I want to ask, we've been receiving the invitation to the table, but because God wants to engage with us, is Jesus waiting

for you to invite him in? He might be going, 'oh, I might just walk a little further.' Are you going to invite him in and engage with him?

If you don't know Jesus, then I would challenge you. Would you like to know him? And the freedom and the grace that he can bring into your life? Or like I said, if you struggle with walking or sitting with him, I want you to think about that because the band is going to come up, soon and lead us, into a song of response.

### **Post-Sermon Prayer** *Speaker: Reuben*

So do come up with and get prayer with someone just to stand together and say, 'yes, Jesus, I invite, I want to invite you in right now,' so let me pray for us. Can we stand?

Lord, I thank you so much for your invitation to let us be ministered to by you. We wholeheartedly want you to work in us for your glory. And I'm going to read from first Thessalonians 5:23: 'May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.' Okay. Thank you, Lord.

### **Worship Singing**

**Song:** In Christ Alone by Keith Getty, Stuart Townend

### **Post-Worship Prayer** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Jesus, we do stand in your power today. We stand in your power.

Thank you that your power is with us as we walk with you, Jesus. And thank you, Lord God, that it is in the sitting with you that you open our eyes to the reality of who you are. A deeper reality that there we find our strength renewed. There we find a greater fullness of life. We thank you. Lord, I pray that as we go into the rest of this weekend, Lord, that we would indeed invite you in.

Lord, whether it be in the walking or the sitting which you speak to us, Lord, would you show us your invitation specifically to each one of us? You know us. You know the part of either the walking or the sitting or a little bit of both. That is the challenge for each of us. And Lord God, I want to pray that in those places that stretch us and challenge us, Jesus, that that would be the place where we invite you in. We thank you, Lord, that it's your delight to join us whenever we invite you in. That's your greatest joy. Thank you that it was a hard fought price that you paid in order to do that. We bless you, Lord. Amen.

## **Conclusion** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

We have our prayer team down the front wearing a blank lanyard. We invite you to come and get prayer.

And it may be, as Reuben has said, that place of invitation where you want to just pray God's blessing, you know, as we invite Jesus into whatever that place might be. But I'm just really conscious. Today is Resurrection Sunday. You know, Ephesians talks about the power of Christ that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that is at work among us, the same power that as we pray for the fullness of Jesus in whatever it might be that is at work here and now.

And so we're going to pray with that kind of faith this morning. And if you would like prayer, come forward and be prayed for. Otherwise, bless you. Please join us for hot cross buns. Otherwise we'll be eating them for the rest of the year.

## **Online Outro** *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Hey, thank you for joining us online today. We pray that you have been blessed and encouraged. And if there is something from today that you would like us to pray into with you, don't hesitate to let us know.

If we haven't met you, we'd love to hear from you. And you also welcome to come and join us in person as well. To know more about our church, please go to our church website and you can also find more details about who we are through our newsletter. And you can subscribe to that through our website as well.

God bless you and may you have a great week.

*\*Names have been changed to protect privacy.*