

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

HOW CAN JESUS BE THE ONLY WAY? | DECONSTRUCT | RECONSTRUCT

RYAN BRAMLETT | AUGUST 13, 2023

Traders Point, how are we? It's so good to be with you today. I just want to put something on your radar before we get rolling today, something that is actually going to start here at the end of August and roll through the beginning of October. And these are what we are calling:

Vision Nights

Here's what they are. They are a chance for us to get together to celebrate. To look back and see how faithful God has been through the history of our church. And it's also a time to look ahead and to look at the vision we believe God is leading us to in this next season.

These nights are going to be incredible. Our Lead Pastor, Aaron, is going to be there. Executive Pastor, Greg, is going to be at each one of them. We're going to have Kids' Ministry available; worship is going to be going on.

These are nights you do not want to miss. So I just want to personally invite you to attend whatever campus you call home. Make sure you get to one of these Vision Nights. If you're looking for more information you can go to the link behind me. That will give you all of the dates, all of the information. No need to RSVP. Just show up.

And I want to talk specifically to our Plainfield campus really quickly because we are up first. Alright? August 27, 6 to 8 p.m. I'm going to be there. Would love to see you there at our Plainfield campus.

But for everyone, you guys excited for these Vision Nights? I'm telling you; you don't want to miss them.

As far as today goes, we're continuing in our series *Deconstruct | Reconstruct*. And deconstruct, we said is really has become an umbrella term that describes the process of someone leaving their faith. And we know it's a process. It doesn't just happen overnight.

So we want to be sensitive because a lot of the time deconstruction happens after: after the pain, after the trial, after the abuse, after the questions just simply couldn't be answered, or at least answered adequately, so we walk away from our faith.

So I just want to put it out there for all of us. If you are in that process right now, or maybe you are on the verge, or maybe you have some reservations when it comes to your faith and what you believe. Can I just encourage you and tell you to keep coming?



Deconstruction doesn't have to end with walking away, it can actually end in reconstruction and building a new faith and a richer and deeper relationship with you and God. And that's what we're focused on in this series.

We're not up here saying we have all of the answers to all of the questions and to all of the topics, but we want to be brave enough to have a conversation about them. And we want to put it out in the center of all the conversations that are happening around deconstruction.

Questions like: why does God care who I sleep with anyway? We're going to look at topics like gender dysphoria and transgendered people. We're going to look at claims like, "Hasn't the Bible been used to oppress minorities and women?" And every single week we will just kind of open up one of these and have an honest conversation. And we want to be thoughtful yet theological on each one of these.

We don't want everything to just happen in the here and now. We want to come along side you in this series. So we put together a resource list and you can scan this QR code. We've vetted a bunch of books and we're just bringing them to you.

So as you're working through this series and there is a topic that you want to know more about, you can find some additional reading material. As well as—I just want to offer our pastoral team. We want to come around you. If you have a conversation where you want to do more one on one, pastors at every campus are available to you.

As far as today goes, we're going to be continuing this conversation. And here's the question we're going to be talking about:

How can Jesus be the only way?

A light one to begin. Just throw that one out there. How can Jesus be the only way? This is a big one. Right? Why does He have to be? Why can't it be that all good people go to heaven? Or why can't it be all religions are the same and everyone gets saved? Does it really need to be an exclusive claim: Jesus is the only way?

Before we kind of jump into that, I just want to start with this question:

Did Jesus believe that?

Did Jesus believe that He was the only way? Or did He allude to the fact that He was just one of many? What did Jesus say about who He thought He was? Let's start there and see. In John 14, verse 6, He talks about this directly:

"Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'" John 14:6 (NLT)

You know, there's no need... There's no hidden meaning, there's no looking underneath the thing. I mean, when you read it, what does it sound like to you? Does it sound like He

was saying He was just one of many ways? No, He says, "I am the way." Is there another way? He says, "No. No one can come to the Father except through Me."

Now this might be one of the most controversial and offensive claims that Christianity makes today. Within our pluralistic society, the idea that we would say that there is one way to do something, it bothers a lot of people.

So the alternative is... What's being given to us in today's culture sounds great on the surface, but it breaks down pretty quickly. It sounds something like this, "Hey, listen. You can have your religion, you can have your faith, but all religions are the same. Alright? You have a little bit; they have a little bit. Behave. Get along. It's all the same thing. Okay?"

I don't think so. I don't think that they all can be the same. But a lot of times this is the way it is depicted. It's this old illustration. Maybe you've heard of it before. But it uses the blind men and the elephant.

And the idea is that there is this group of blind men who are wandering along and they all come into contact with an elephant.

SPEAR

And the first one comes up to the elephant and he reaches out and he touches the tusk and he's like, "Whatever this thing is, I don't know what it is but I think it's a spear. That's what I'm feeling."

SNAKE

And then the next one comes us and he says, "I think you're crazy." And he grabs the nose and he says, "I think it's a snake. I'm pretty sure it's a snake."

WALL

And then the next blind man walks up and he's like, "I'm pretty sure we just hit a brick wall. This thing is huge and it's solid. I can't even touch the top of it."

TREE

And then the next one comes and he grabs ahold of the leg and he's like, "I'm pretty sure it's a tree. I'm pretty sure it's a tree."

And the way that this picture is often used is to say, "Hey, that's what it is like for all religions. All religions are like blind men groping in the darkness all feeling the same thing but describing it differently."

So, yeah. There are all kinds of truth, but they are kind of all wrong too because they don't have the full picture. They can't see the whole thing.

Leslie Newbigin, who was a British apologist and missionary, was constantly bombarded with this picture. People would come to him and say, "What gives you the

right? Why are you pushing Jesus the way that you are? Look at this picture. Religion is just a multiple of different ways to describe the same thing. You just have a piece of it.”

And one day he kind of had an epiphany. He was sitting there thinking about their claims and what they were saying and he came to this conclusion, “The only way that you can tell me that I’m only seeing a piece of the elephant is if you’re claiming to see the whole elephant. So what you are doing is doing the very thing that you are accusing me of. You’re making a superior claim. So, we’re back to square one.”

I think we have to come to the reality that we all make exclusive truth claims. And truth, by its very nature, excludes. Because this is true, these other things can’t be true.

But before we dive in today, I want to be very clear of the truth that I’m talking about. I’m going to use this photo to demonstrate what I’m talking about when I’m talking about truth.

This picture is of a family [Ryan’s family]. Yeah. I noticed this morning that I’m wearing the same shirt in the picture that I am today. I promise that I have more than three shirts. I have four.

If I told you to look at this picture and then I made this claim and I said, “Hey, that woman in the middle is the mother of those children,” and I brought that to you as truth, you probably wouldn’t argue.

And if you did, I would give you evidence. I would say, “I was there. I was at the birth. I saw them come from her into this world.” I saw most of them. I saw three out of four. I passed out once. Right? But for the most part I was there. I saw it.

And you wouldn’t argue with me on that. You would say, “Okay, that sounds true. And part of that is because of a unique truth claim. There is nobody else signing up to say, “I’m the mother of those children.”

She’s the one who birthed them. She’s the one taking care of them. She’s the one feeding them every day. And I know nobody else is going in on that because I alone am paying for the snack budget. If you would like to contribute to that fund, let me know after service.

But, here’s what I want us to look at when we talk about Jesus today. I’m not making claims that are good, better, or best. I am making a truth claim. Is Jesus who He says He is? Is He really the way the truth and the life? Is there evidence that supports that claim? What is unique about Jesus? What is He claiming that no other world religions are claiming?

So this is two-fold.

For people who have started coming to church and you’ve started to think about putting your faith in Jesus. But you’re like, “Is there really any difference between this and something else?” Should I keep looking around? What’s unique about Christianity?”

And I'd say for the other group it's that you've always been in your faith. As long as you can think about it, you've just believed. And it's never been hard for you, until recently.

You started meeting people from different backgrounds and then you really started to wonder, "Is there anything unique about my faith?" And, "Can my faith be substantiated? Is there evidence for me to believe what I believe or is this just a blind faith that I stumbled into?"

That's what we're going to be looking at today:

The unique claims of Jesus

The unique claims of Jesus that Jesus alone is making. And I think, I hope, by the end of it we will see that we're not looking at the same elephant, because if we deconstruct Christianity down to its most essential parts, it is very different than anything else.

PERSON

PATH

PURPOSE

So if you're taking notes, the three unique claims that we are going to look at are the person of Jesus, the path to Jesus, and the purpose of Jesus, what we do with Him once we believe.

Unique claim #1: PERSON

So let's just start with the person of Jesus. How is Jesus, as a leader and a founder of Christianity, and Christianity different than every other world religion?

Well, when you look at the other religions of the world, they are usually started by a human—it is a prophet or a teacher who believed he had received a revelation from God and now he is sharing it with the world. They are human signposts pointing to God saying, "Follow me. Do these things and you will make your way toward God and you will receive salvation."

Jesus says something dramatically different. He doesn't say I'm a prophet, He says, "I am God." That is a fundamentally different claim than anyone else's. And I want you to really spend some time thinking about that.

To put it in context for you I put it in a fun vin diagram, because vin diagrams, as everyone knows, are fun. So in the first circle I want you to think about are people who changed the world. Who could you put in that circle?

I'm talking about people who have changed the way history went, changed the way we think, changed the way we treat people, I don't know, changed our whole calendar system? Who are the people you would put in that circle?

But then I want you to draw another circle [below and overlapping] and I want you to make a list of the people who claim to be God.

Now, I'm going to be honest with you. There are a lot of people who have claimed to be God over the years. You can YouTube this right now. You will see thousands of people claiming to be God.

But the question I want to ask you is: did they also change the world? No, they probably haven't even changed their underpants. You are not looking at them and believing them, because there is no evidence behind their claim. Right?

But when you look at these two circles, and you see people who change the world and you see a person who claimed to be God, the only one that I know of that fits in the middle of these two circles is Jesus.

Jesus is the only one who lived a life and who made the claim that, "I am God," and lived such a beautiful and good life that people saw Him and said, "I think He's right."

They saw miracles. They heard these teachings that they had never heard before. It was revolutionary. And it caused them to believe that this really was God.

The next thing I want to put in front of you is just another question:

Did Jesus believe He was God?

Did Jesus believe that He was God or is this something that we inherited? Is this something that people later down the road started to impose on Jesus?

Or, has it been there all along? The short answer is yes. Jesus claimed over and over again that He was God. And this really offended the religious people.

And by offend, I mean they tried to kill Him. There was once when they were about to do it. They picked up rocks and they were about to sling them at His head. And Jesus was like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa. Are you going to kill me because I'm doing miracles?" and they were like, "No we're not going to kill you because you're doing miracles. We're killing you because you are claiming to be God."

Look at Jesus' response. He says:

"Don't believe me unless," don't believe me unless, "I carry out my Father's work. But if I do his work, believe in the evidence of the miraculous works I have done," in the evidence, "...even if you don't believe me. Then you will know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father." John 10:37-38 (NLT)

So He's saying, "Hey, listen. Don't just take my claims. Put it on the other side too. Look at the evidence that I am presenting to you. And do we have any evidence of the miraculous that Jesus is talking about? Yeah.

The miraculous works of Jesus (not an exhaustive list)

Here. This is a list and it is not even an exhaustive list. I just want to go through a handful of miracles that Jesus did. Look at this. First miracle:

- Jesus changed water into wine (John 2:1-11)

What's not to love about this guy? Right?

- Jesus fed five thousand (Matthew 14:15-21)

...with a brown bag lunch. He takes a little bit of food for one person, blesses it, and distributes it to 5,000 people.

We see in the Scriptures that:

- Jesus healed a man with leprosy (Mark 1:40-45)

He touches the untouchable, that man is healed, and at the same time He is not infected.

- Jesus cured a woman who suffered for 12 years (Luke 8:43-48)

- Jesus cast out an evil spirit (Mark 1:23-28)

...showing that He had power over the spiritual world.

- Jesus stilled the storm (Matthew 8:23-27)

Which is a really big deal because back then the seas, the storms, were the most powerful, they were the most chaotic—no one had control over them except for God. And He silenced the storm with a word, showing that He had power over this physical world.

- Jesus healed a paralyzed man and forgives sins (Mark 2:1-12)

Who forgives sins but God alone?

- Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-46)

...proving that He had power over life and death.

And then finally:

- Jesus rose from the dead (Luke 24:5-8)

I want this list to be overwhelming to you in some way, but I also want you to think about this. Here's the evidence that Jesus is putting forth. Why He is who He said He is. Because He came and He proved it. Let the evidence show that He has power over life, power over death, power over sin, power over the spiritual world, power over the physical world, and power over life and death itself.

And I know what you are thinking because some of you are skeptical, just like I am skeptical. And your question is:

How do we know this isn't just a myth?

How do we know that all of these miracles weren't just added in after the fact, hundreds of years, thousands of years later. That's a good question, and the short answer is the timeline is just too close.

You see, the written accounts that we have were taken and distributed during the same lifetime. To get legend or myth, you need a big gap between when something happens and when it's published—hundreds if not thousands of years. And you just don't have that in these accounts. That's not what the Scriptures show us.

One of the biggest finds in recent years was a creed that was found in 1 Corinthians. So, 1 Corinthians is a book that was written in about 53 to 55 A.D., still pretty close to the resurrection of Jesus. In that letter there is a creed that Paul recites that pre-dates him, pre-dates this letter or any letter that we have.

I want you to see this. This is what the first believers believed. This isn't what was added in to what we believe today. What they believed is what we believe. And it has never changed. And a lot of historians timestamp this creed from anywhere in the few months after the resurrection to up to a year. Take a look at what they believed. 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 1. Paul says:

"Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place."

But here it is:

"I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me." It didn't start with him, here's the creed, "Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve.

"After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time," look at this, "most of whom are still alive," go talk to them, "though some have died. Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him." 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NLT)

So this is what they believed from the very beginning. They believed Jesus came. They believed He was the Son of God. They believed He died and was buried. And in that death He paid the penalty for the sins of the world.

And, once again proving the miraculous, He raised from the dead on that third day, defeating sin and death and the power that had over all of us. And then He has offered us this way of life of following Him. This is what they have believed from the very beginning.

I just want to give you a little bit more as we continue to work through the evidence before us.

The evidence of the resurrection

What evidence do we have of the resurrection? That's a big claim to make. And I know that's hard to hear, to believe that a man died but then rose from the dead. I get it. And normally the way that you can get there to believe it is to believe that it's a miracle.

But what I will say is, no matter what worldview you choose to believe, you're going to need at least one miracle. Scientists will tell you this. Even though you believe in the Big Bang—you trace it all the way back. They'll say, "Just give me one miracle," because they need one. How else do you get from nothing to something? But they say, "Give me that one. I'll make sense of the rest of the world."

I'm going to make this same claim. If you can place your faith and believe in the resurrection and the evidence behind it, you can make sense of everything else. Here's the evidence that we have that the resurrection really did happen, it's the:

Empty tomb

They were never able to produce a body. The most powerful regime in the world would have wanted to stop this before it ever got out. If they could have produced a body they would have.

In M. T. Wright's book *The Resurrection of the Son of God* he looks at and studies very scholarly work on the most historical conclusions that we could come to on why things happened the way that they did. And one of the most plausible answers is He truly did resurrect.

The second one is this:

Testimony

And by that really I mean, the testimony of women. Scriptures say that women were the first ones to see Jesus after He resurrected. Now, I say that because a woman's testimony was invalid. It was useless.

So, if they wanted to make their case and if they wanted to really, really be airtight and believable, they would have removed that piece. They could have started, He came to the apostles, He came to the 500.

They didn't need to start there but they did, which tells me if they wanted to remove something from the story or add something to the story board, they would have started there but they didn't. So that leads me to believe that the rest of the accounts are true.

And maybe the biggest piece of evidence that we can have that the resurrection really happened and a man was dead but then raised three days later is:

The impact of the resurrection on the disciples

If you remember, the time after Jesus went to a cross, everyone was terrified. Everyone was running. Everyone was turning their backs on Jesus. But then something happened.

These men and women somehow found this newfound courage and they go from hiding to standing firm. They go against mobs and to new cities and government officials and they stand and say, "There is nothing that is going to stop us from speaking the gospel, even death." A lot of them died and they had nothing to gain from it.

Even though they were closest to him, His family, His brother who didn't believe until after the resurrection, now believed that Jesus was who He said He was.

The most logical conclusion you can get to is that these people saw a man murdered one day and then they saw Him walking around the next. I don't know a lot but I'm going to follow Him. The evidence of the resurrection is there.

Unique claim #2: PATH

The second claim that I just want to present to you today is that of the path to Jesus. We see that the path that Jesus offers is radically different than any other path that is presented out there.

We can try to group all religions together and say, "Isn't it all just different routes to get to the same place in the end? Isn't that what religion really is? It just helps you throughout your life. It gives you some virtue, some ethics that you can cling to as you make your way through this world." So if you think about it through this graphic, like it's just multiple routes, we have this starting place when we believe.

And depending on what you believe, it may take you this way, but if you believe something else it will take you this way and you will end with God. You will end up in heaven. Here's the idea, these religions, what they do is they carve a way for you. They help you make your way through.

Whether that's the Tibetan prayer wheel, whether it's these virtues that you get to, whether it's knowledge that you acquire, or this language that you learn, these pillars that you live your life by—you continually make these sacrifices little by little and you continue going. But when do you find out that you've arrived? When do you find out that you got there and you'd done enough?

Well, for most world religions, your arrival time is death. You have no security along the way. You don't know how long you'll get to go; you don't know how long you have to go, but you just continue to go and you take what you have and continue doing more and more and more.

But, once again, what Christianity offers is something very, very different. Look at what it says in Hebrews, chapter 10. It says:

"But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. There he waits until his

enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy.” Hebrews 10:12-14 (NLT)

You see how different it is?

So I want you to go back to this map. And if this describes world religions, that as you go it's going to help you get there... This is religion, the basic concept, man's effort to get to God. I'm going to use this ethic, and I'm going to use this way to prayer, and I'm going to use this way to live, and I'm going to go after it. I'm going to do and do and do until it is done. All of these vows, getting you to God.

But I want to ask you what would the map of Christianity look like? It would look like something very different. It would say, "You have arrived. There is no route that you have to take. There is no thing that you have to do. There is no language that you have to learn. There is no knowledge that you have to acquire. There is no coming to the end with questions of whether the good outweighed the bad."

Christianity is fundamentally different. It's not man making his way toward God. It's God making His way toward man. And He's already arrived. He's already come. He's already satisfied all that needed to be done with that one sacrifice. Look at what it says in Ephesians. It says:

"God saved you by his grace," and when did He do it? "...when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it." Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)

Do you see how it is uniquely different from anything else?

The person of Jesus is not just claiming to be another prophet; He's claiming to be God Himself. And He did things that only God could do.

And the path is fundamentally different. There are no routes going to the same place when one is telling you to spend your life going for it, and to do more, and to work harder. You have already arrived. God has come near to you.

Unique claim #3: PURPOSE

And the final piece, the final unique claim that I will offer you today is the purpose of it all. What do we do with our faith. Who does it help us to become? And what are we supposed to do with it anyway? The purpose of it.

I think, if you look at a lot of world religions the idea is that you are acquiring this to help you connect with your god better, and to connect with those around you, specifically those who you believe are following the same god as you.

It gives you a way to live in community with them on two different extremes. It either tells you how to love those people who are like you, or it teaches you to love nothing and to completely detach yourself from the world. Those are the two extremes.

But what everyone pretty much agrees on is that this world is terrible. The physical world is useless. We're just waiting until we can be beamed up out of here and to get away. That's the idea of most religions and the purpose of them.

But we see Christianity is very different on every single level. Because Christianity doesn't just say love the people who look like you, or who believe what you believe.

No, it starts from the foundation of why Jesus came in the first place. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world." Not a group of people. Not an ethnicity. God loved the world and He sent His only begotten Son for those who believe. They will be saved and have eternal life and will not find condemnation. It is for the world. Very different teaching.

That's why this unity that comes from it is nothing like anything else we've ever seen. It's what it says in Galatians. Now, because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross, there is no longer Jew or Gentile. There is no longer free nor slave. There is no longer man or woman. All are one in Christ. This is unifying—all people are welcome.

Where did they get this? They got it from Jesus who modeled it perfectly, not to just love those who loved Him. What gain is that? No. As He was being crucified He said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing."

And then He gave teachings like, "No, no. Don't just love the people who believe or who are in your family. No. Love your enemies. Love those who hate you."

He created such a beautiful community and is still creating a world that this world has never ever seen. Why is that? Because the purpose is different. Christianity isn't about waiting until one day we get beamed up out of here. Christianity is about the restoring and the reclaiming of all things, of a new heaven and also a new earth. Look at this in Revelation. He says:

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

"I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, 'Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.

'He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.' And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" Revelation 21:1-5 (NLT)

This is the Word of the Lord. These are the promises that He is making. And there is no greater purpose for our lives. Think about that. We're not waiting or shrinking back. We have purpose right now.

And our purpose, our identity, is not found in how good we do something but it is found in who we are. An identity that is already established because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross, we are children of God.



We are sons and daughters. Our identity has been established. And the purpose that we have been given is unlike anything else. We have now been chosen to partner with God in the restoring and renewing of all things.

Me and you, by the Spirit of God, walking hand in hand, restoring things back to the way that God always wanted them to be. Me and you get to work toward that. It's this idea that we're going to do our best to bring heaven to earth until one day the two are one. There is not a more beautiful purpose in life that we can give ourselves to. And this is what Jesus offers. Unique in every way.

What about those who never heard?

But I also know that maybe you're sitting here thinking what about those who have never heard? If you're saying faith comes from hearing and believing in Jesus and what He's done, what about those who have never heard the gospel?

What about those in the remote parts of the world who never got a chance to hear about God's gracious gift of salvation? What about them? And I can humbly stand here before you and say, "I don't know."

I love the way that Dr. Tim Keller said this. He said, "I'm on a need to know basis with God. He hasn't given me everything. But He's given me something."

And what I do know is that Jesus is the only way I know to get to God. And what I do know is that we all have been given some revelation. Romans talks about a general revelation, meaning we go out into this created world and we look at it and in the back of our minds and our hearts it's almost like we know that there is a God behind it. And we will be responsible for that level of revelation.

What I know is that God is more gracious and more just and more loving than me and you. So I don't know how it shakes out in the very end and what that will look like, but I know a few things. I know that it will be fair, I know it will be loving.

What I also know is that question no longer applies to any of us. Because, as of today, we have all heard the gospel, the Good News that saves. The sacrifice that has made perfect those He is making holy.

What I just want to do right now is to create a space for you to respond. To go back to that ancient creed and give you a chance to respond and to receive the free gift of salvation that is in the name of Jesus. Unique to Him. Only Him. Only He is offering this.

So right where you are, I just want to give you time just to lean in, to bow your heads, close your eyes, and if you're ready to make that your own, if you're ready to make that prayer and to begin following Jesus, just repeat after me.

Then for those of us who have been following Jesus for a long time, but maybe the evidence today is overwhelming and you want to get back to it and you want to follow after Him and you want to be a part of the life He's calling you to, I encourage you to

pray this too. It may be a little bit bold, but I ask you to pray it out loud. Just repeat these lines after me. Join us in prayer.

Father, I believe that Jesus died for my sins. I believe Jesus went to the cross to pay the penalty for not just the sins of the world, but for my sins. I believe that Jesus was buried. I believe that He was raised from the dead. Father, I receive Your gracious gift of salvation. I receive it through the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Amen.

Church, can we celebrate everyone who prayed that prayer? If that was you, if you prayed that prayer today, you've seen Jesus for who He is, you want to begin to follow Him we want to continue to celebrate. At all of our campuses we're going to have people at the front of the stage. Please do not leave here without talking to someone.

Or, maybe you're on the fringe and you're working through some things and you've seen hope for the first time and you just want to come talk with someone, pray with someone. Once again, do not leave here without talking to someone.

Church, as you go I just want you to know that we love you and I want to take this moment to invite you back next week as we continue the conversation. Love you guys. Enjoy your day. Have an even better week. See you next Sunday.

