



April 5, 2026 | Matt Magee

Easter Sunday | Sermon Title: Empty Tomb and Open Curtain

Main Scripture: Isaiah 53:10-12; Hebrews 10:19-23

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CHURCH BODY HIGHLIGHTS

1. [Past Newsletters](#)
2. Mark your calendar for April 20th, **Foundations of Worship-based Prayer**. Join us for a special evening with guest speaker and pastor Aaron Telecky as he explores the biblical foundations of worship-based prayer.

ICEBREAKER

- Opening Metaphor: "Many of us live our Christian lives standing on the front porch of grace. We believe the theology of Friday... but emotionally and spiritually, we still feel a profound sense of distance."
- Discuss: Think about the difference between standing on someone's front porch versus sitting in their living room. What makes the living room feel so much more intimate? Why do you think so many Christians instinctively settle for the "porch" of faith rather than entering the living room of God's presence?

2. The Truth: God is Satisfied

- Read: Isaiah 53:10–11.
- Discuss: Pastor Matt noted that Jesus was the *Architect* of our salvation on Friday, but His resurrection means He is now the living *Executor* of our grace on Sunday. How does knowing that Jesus is actively applying His grace to your life right now change how you view His resurrection?
- Focus Question: Isaiah says that God looks at the sacrifice of Jesus and is "satisfied." If the Father is completely satisfied with Jesus' work for you, how does that free you from trying to satisfy God with your own performance?

3. The Struggle: The Evil Conscience

- Read: Hebrews 10:22.
- Discuss: Pastor Matt talked about the "evil conscience"—that nagging heart-sickness that whispers, *"I know He died for me, but I'm still not quite okay enough for God to really*

want me close." Read 1 John 3:19–20 ("*...whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.*")

- Important issue to understand: Discuss the difference between the Holy Spirit and one's conscience. What is your understanding?

Guidance for after discussion: Our conscience condemns or affirms based on our understanding, while the Spirit operates from divine omniscience and grace, offering reassurance and restoration that conscience cannot provide independently.

Read Romans 9:1. Paul declares, "I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit." This passage demonstrates that Paul recognizes conscience and the Spirit as separate witnesses operating together.

Our conscience functions as a natural faculty that evaluates actions, while the Spirit provides a higher, perfect witness that validates and sanctifies, or clarifies our conscience's evaluation.

Read 1 John 3:20-24: John writes that "whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart," and later notes "by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us." This passage reveals the critical relationship: the heart's condemnation (conscience's judgment) is real but limited, whereas God's knowledge and the Spirit's presence transcend and supersede what conscience alone can accomplish.

Together, these passages show that while conscience serves as a legitimate moral monitor accessible to all people, the Holy Spirit represents a superior and transformative presence available to believers—one that can purify, empower, and perfect what conscience alone cannot accomplish.

- Focus Question 2: When you fail, sin, mess up, what is the "old way" your conscience usually tells you to handle it? (e.g., hiding, pulling back from prayer, trying to "fix" yourself first). Why is our flesh so bent on earning our way back rather than trusting that God is greater than our condemning hearts?

The Rescue: The Torn Curtain

- Read: Hebrews 10:19–20.
- Discuss: Jesus didn't just offer us access to God; His torn flesh *is* our access. The barrier is entirely gone. The door is off its hinges!
- Read Romans 8:14–16 ("*For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'*")
- Focus Question: Pastor Matt quoted Alec Motyer: "*We strayed as sheep, but we return as sons.*" What is the difference between how a wandering sheep relates to a shepherd versus how a beloved son or daughter relates to a good Father?

The Opportunity: Drawing Near

- The New Way: The old way of the flesh is to pull back from God when we feel unworthy. The new, grace-motivated way of the Spirit is to run boldly to the throne of grace—not because we are perfect, but because we wear the family likeness.
- Discuss: Think about the week ahead. When your "evil conscience" flares up and tries to push you out onto the porch, what does it practically look like for you to point to the Empty Tomb and say, "I am broken, but the Victor is enough"?
- Application: Because the debt is paid, and the door is open, what is one area of your life where you now *get to* stop hustling for approval and simply rest in His presence?

PRAYER FOCUS

- Praise the Father for being perfectly satisfied with the work of the Son.
- Confess the times we listen to the "evil conscience" and try to earn our standing through our own efforts or avoid God in our shame.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to empower the group to live not as fearful sheep, but as confident sons and daughters who get to draw near to the Father this week.