



[Rev. Steven S. Billings](#)

Sermon for Easter Sunrise

March 31, 2024

Absolute Certainty

Job 19:23–27

²³ “Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! ²⁴ Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! ²⁵ For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. ²⁶ And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, ²⁷ whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!”

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Now, if you believe that, you have the same faith as Job. As he says in our text: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth."

These are words of prophecy, beloved, prophesy about the second coming of Christ to judge the living and the dead. They also prophesy about the resurrection – Christ’s and yours. For Job sees the truth revealed on that first Easter: "My Redeemer lives. He who died lives again and stands upon the earth in His resurrected body." This vision of the Prophet Job was fulfilled in the eyes of the Apostles, and explains why seeing the risen Jesus had such an impact on them: "In my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another."

These words of Job are also words of testimony. They testify to the faith of Job. For the prophet not only *speaks* God's Word; He *believes* God Word. So Job, speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, believes by the power of that same Spirit, that his Redeemer lives!

So, Job’s testimony is that Christ is risen. That’s your testimony, too, is it not?

If it’s not, it ought to be. For He who was crucified for your sins on Good Friday stood upon the earth, fully alive, on Easter Sunday. And you have a stake in that resurrection, for believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing that He has risen from the dead, you have life in His name.

That’s the prophesy and testimony of Job. Job is a marvelous example of an Old Testament Christian, a person who believed in the Christ who was to come. While the spiritual lives of the Old Testament saints often look different than ours – because of the specific laws God gave them to prepare for the coming of Christ – the ancient saints possessed the very same Faith that the Holy Spirit works in your heart today. For there was and is and ever shall be only one true Faith: the Christian Faith.

The Christian Faith is the only faith that brings to us poor sinners salvation and eternal life with the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Any other religion, whatever it may be called, condemns a person to an eternal death, because false religions cannot and do not grab hold of the chief article of the one true Faith: the forgiveness of all of your sins



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– of thought, words, and actions – a forgiveness given only because of Christ's life and death for you, a forgiveness received only through the gracious gift of faith given you by God's Holy Spirit and no one else.

This is the Faith Job held in his heart, worked by God's Holy Spirit. By this faith, Job recognized that he was a sinner, that he must die and be laid in the grave, knowing that the consequence of our sin is death. As he says, "After my skin has been thus destroyed. . . ." But, by this same faith, he believes in his own resurrection from the dead, for he trusts in the gift of forgiveness and eternal life that his living Redeemer delivers: "After my skin has been destroyed, this I know: that in my flesh I shall see God." As surely as Christ Jesus the Redeemer lives and stands upon the earth, so shall Job live and stand and behold His Savior with his own eyes: "Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another."

So it is for all sinners who thus believe. For in believing, you have life in His name. Believing in the Name of Jesus Christ, and having been baptized in His name, you have the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Believing that you hear the Living Voice of Jesus speaking to you – "I forgive you of all your sins" – you possess an abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness and will reign in glory on account of His Name (Romans 5:17). Believing that under the bread and wine is the true Body and Blood of Christ, given and shed for us Christians to eat and to drink, brings forgiveness of sins – and life everlasting.

And not only eternal life in the future, but a new life in His name even now. That life Job also enjoyed.

Now, that might sound strange – that Job "enjoyed" his life on earth, for we well know what Job's life was like. All of his earthly wealth – and he had been blessed richly by God – was taken away by the devil. On top of that, all ten of his children were killed at the same time when a great wind collapsed the house they were in. Then, Job had to deal with health issues, becoming afflicted with painful boils all over his body. After that, he lost the consolation of his wife, for she wanted nothing more to do with him or his God, telling him to curse God – the God who seemed to be cursing them – practically telling her husband to "drop dead." "Just curse God and die," she said. And his friends . . . when they came to console him, these dear pals of his told him that he only had himself to blame for all of his troubles, offering him no words of comfort in his time of misery.

Here's how Job himself, earlier in this same chapter, laments his sad situation, as he responds to the comfortless words of his "friends":

² "How long will you torment me and break me in pieces with words? ³ These ten times you have cast reproach upon me; are you not ashamed to wrong me? ⁴ And even if it be true that I have erred, my error remains with myself. ⁵ If indeed you magnify yourselves against me and make my disgrace an argument against me, ⁶ know then that God has put me in the wrong and closed his net about me. ⁷ Behold, I cry out, 'Violence!' but I am not answered; I call for help, but there is no justice. ⁸ He has walled up my way, so that I cannot pass, and he has set darkness upon my paths. ⁹ He has stripped from me my glory and



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taken the crown from my head. ¹⁰ He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone, and my hope has he pulled up like a tree. ¹¹ He has kindled his wrath against me and counts me as his adversary. ¹² His troops come on together; they have cast up their siege ramp against me and encamp around my tent.

¹³ "He has put my brothers far from me, and those who knew me are wholly estranged from me. ¹⁴ My relatives have failed me, my close friends have forgotten me. ¹⁵ The guests in my house and my maidservants count me as a stranger; I have become a foreigner in their eyes. ¹⁶ I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer; I must plead with him with my mouth for mercy. ¹⁷ My breath is strange to my wife, and I am a stench to the children of my own mother. ¹⁸ Even young children despise me; when I rise they talk against me. ¹⁹ All my intimate friends abhor me, and those whom I loved have turned against me (Job 19:2-19).

Does this sound like someone enjoying his life? And don't we find in Job's lament a resonance with all our own troubles? Relationship issues, health issues, emotional issues, personal finance issues; Job has them all, and so do we.

But, he has something else. What Job also has is something we all ought to find in our lives as well. As the Apostle John puts it in his First Epistle: "Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5). Job has faith in His Redeemer, His Lord, His Savior, and with that faith God gives him the victory that overcomes all the problems that life in this fallen world can bring.

Listen, when you know that you will be living forever with God, because of Christ's victory over sin and death for you, your life now is a life of victory. Even when it appears that God Himself is striking you — as it appeared to Job, who says, "Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has struck me!" (Job 19:21) — (even then) true faith trusts in that same God for deliverance — deliverance to life everlasting, deliverance from the cares and concerns of this life.

And you know what? God does deliver us out of our problems, in His time and according to His good and gracious will. He enables us to do our part in the restoration of a broken relationship by seeking forgiveness for offenses we may have committed, and by offering forgiveness to those who have offended us — and He comforts us by His eternal relationship with Him when our efforts to reconcile with others aren't successful. He delivers us from our ailments through the work of medical care providers, and especially by His promise to heal our illnesses permanently, by giving His children glorified bodies in the resurrection — bodies that will never again be ill or die. He delivers us out of the pit of depression through His uplifting Word, which He speaks by His Spirit through the comfort of caring family members and friends. He delivers us from want by providing us each day our daily bread, delivering everything we truly need, through the work our own hands, and through the generosity others.

We faithful believers in Jesus have the absolute certainty — as Job had — that we serve



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a risen Savior, and that, because of this, we await an eternal life with Him in the perfection of heaven, *and* that we can enjoy life in this world – just as faithful Job did – even in the midst of great troubles, knowing that, through our God-given faith, He has given us the victory through our Living Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

For He *is* risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

And in His name, beloved, so are you! Amen