The Rock Easter 2022

**JESUS IS THE ANSWER**

**Luke 4:1–2 (NKJV)** Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, **2** being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

**WE’RE CURRENTLY IN A SEASON CALLED “40 DAYS OF PREPARATION”… IT’S A SEASON WHERE WE’VE BEEN FASTING, PRAYING AND PREPARING FOR GOD TO MOVE BY HIS SPIRIT.**

**FUNNIES ABOUT FASTING: The first 10 days of this fast, I did a water-only fast.**

1. **About the third day on my drive home from work, I realized I was noticing things… I got home and told Kimberly… “Do you know how many great restaurants there are around here?”**
2. **Then, about the fifth day, someone asked us to go get a bite to eat with him, so we went to Chick-fil-A… Kimberly got a salad…and I ordered hot water… and the gentleman (Steven) ordered a grilled chicken sandwich… with Chick-fil-A sauce. As we sat down, the man talked for quite a while, sharing his heart… but that chicken sandwich just sat there… so I tried to get him to eat, and even began sharing some things to give him a chance to eat, but he only took one bite and started talking again… and there it sat… a perfectly good chicken sandwich… and finally, I told him, “You are so ungrateful!!!”**

**3. On the 7th day at church… I was talking to someone after service… I’m not sure what they had for breakfast… maybe an everything bagel… but I smelled garlic… and though I didn’t do it, the thought crossed my mind, “Ooo garlic… breathe that in.”**

**YOU KNOW, PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ARE FACING MANY CHALLENGES TODAY... ADDICTIONS… DEPRESSION… MENTAL ILLNESSES… STRESS… ANXIETY… FEAR ABOUT WHAT’S COMING… MANY ARE DEALING WITH SICKNESSES… DISEASES… FINANCIAL PRESSURES… RISING PRICES… LOSS OF HOUSING… DEBT… BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS… EMBARRASSMENT… HUMILIATION… DISAPPOINTMENTS… ETC., ETC. … AND THEY ARE LOOKING FOR ANSWERS.**

**AND THAT’S WHY GOD HAS CALLED US TO PRAYER AND FASTING.**

**AND THESE SAME KIND OF THINGS WERE HAPPENING IN JESUS’ DAY TOO… PEOPLE WERE UNDER A LOT OF PRESSURE… POVERTY… FEAR… AND SICKNESS.**

**AND THAT’S WHY JESUS SPENT 40 DAYS PRAYING AND FASTING.**

**I WANT YOU TO SEE WHAT HAPPENED WHEN JESUS RETURNED FROM HIS 40 DAYS OF FASTING AND PRAYER…**

**Luke 4:14–21 (NKJV)** Then Jesus returned in **the power of the Spirit** to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. **15** And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. **16** So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. **17** And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: **18** “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; **19** To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” **20** Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21** And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

**NOT ONLY IS JESUS THE ONLY SAVIOR OF THE WORLD… WHO DIED TO PAY FOR THE SINS OF HUMANITY… AND WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY… THAT’S WHAT GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER IS ALL ABOUT…**

**BUT JESUS HAS ALSO BEEN ANOINTED WITH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BRING SUPERNATURAL ANSWERS TO PEOPLE’S PROBLEM**

**LISTEN AGAIN TO VERSES 18 & 19…**

**18** “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor;

**PEOPLE STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY DON’T JUST NEED SOME MONEY… OR THEY’LL SOON BE RIGHT BACK IN THE SAME FINANCIAL CRISIS… JESUS KNEW THEY NEEDED TO COME INTO RELATIONSHIP WITH FATHER GOD WHO FEEDS THE BIRDS OF THE WORLD EVERY DAY… AND TO ALLOW HIM TO BE THEIR PROVIDER… AND ALSO TO TEACH THEM HOW TO HANDLE THOSE RESOURCES SO THAT THE SUPPLY MEETS THEIR NEEDS… AND EVEN OVERFLOWS.**

**HE GOES ON TO SAY…**

He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,

**MANY PEOPLE ARE BROKENHEARTED BECAUSE OF A BROKEN RELATIONSHIP, THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE, OR ANOTHER DEVASTATING DISAPPOINTMENT… AND YOU’VE HEARD THE PHRASE, “TIME HEALS”… AND TIME CAN DEFINITELY MAKE A DIFFERENCE… BUT JESUS KNEW THAT ONLY THE POWER OF GOD CAN HEAL A BROKEN HEART SO COMPLETELY THAT THE PERSON BECOMES FULL OF THE JOY AND LIFE AGAIN.**

**THEN HE SAID…**

To proclaim liberty to the captives

**THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE IN BONDAGE TODAY… SEXUAL ADDICTIONS… PORNOGRAPHY… DRUG ADDICTIONS… ALCOHOLISM… GAMBLING… OTHER DESTRUCTIVE HABITS… AND THEY KNOW IT’S DESTROYING THEM, BUT THEY CAN’T STOP… BUT JESUS IS ANOINTED WITH POWER TO COMPLETELY DELIVER PEOPLE.**

**THEN HE SAID…**

And recovery of sight to the blind

**JESUS LITERALLY HEALS PEOPLE THAT THE MEDICAL WORLD CANNOT HELP…**

**THEN HE SAID…**

To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

**JESUS DELIVERS PEOPLE FROM ALL OPPRESSIONS INCLUDING DEPRESSION, ANXIETY… MENTAL ILLNESSES… EVIL SPIRITS… TORMENTING FEAR… HEARING VOICES, ETC. … ETC.**

**AND LAST HE SAID IN VERSE 19…**

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

**THAT’S THE YEAR IN JEWISH LAW WHEN EVERYONE WHO HAS LOST THINGS IN BAD BUSINESS DEALS… OR BECAUSE OF DEBT… GETS EVERYTHING RESTORED TO THEM.**

**IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, DOESN’T IT? BUT IT IS TRUE!!!**

**AND ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS KEEP READING HERE IN LUKE TO SEE THAT JESUS BACKED UP EVERYTHING HE SAID**

**LET ME PICK IT UP IN VERSE 33…**

**Luke 4:33–35 (NKJV)** Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, **34** saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” **35** But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him.

**LET ME SKIP DOWN TO VERSE 38…**

**Luke 4:38–39 (NKJV)** Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. But Simon’s wife’s mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. **39** So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

**LISTEN TO VERSE 40…**

**Luke 4:40 (NKJV)** When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

**AND THE SUPERNATURAL HELP WENT ON AND ON… AND IT INCLUDED HELP WITH FINANCES... LISTEN TO WHAT JESUS SAID TO A STRUGGLING FISHERMAN IN THE NEXT CHAPTER…**

**Luke 5:4–7 (NKJV)** When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” **5** But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.” **6** And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. **7** So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

**WHATEVER THE PROBLEM WAS, JESUS HAD THE ANSWER, AND THEREFORE JESUS WAS THE ANSWER.**

**AND THAT’S THE WAY IT IS TODAY… JESUS STILL HAS THE ANSWER, SO JESUS IS THE ANSWER.**

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**DO YOU BELIEVE IT? MAYBE YOU DIDN’T BEFORE, BUT TODAY YOU DO. THAT’S BECAUSE GOD IS SPEAKING TO YOU TODAY, AND HIS PRESENCE IS HERE. WHEN WE HEAR HIM SPEAK, WE BEGIN TO BELIEVE.**

**BUT LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT JESUS TOLD SIMON PETER AFTER HE FILLED THOSE TWO BOATS UP WITH FISH…**

**Luke 5:10** **…** And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.”

**AND WHEN JESUS FINISHED HIS ASSIGNMENT HERE ON EARTH, WHAT DID HE TELL HIS FOLLOWERS JUST BEFORE HE ASCENDED BACK INTO HEAVEN?**

**Mark 16:15 (CSB)** **[Jesus said]** “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

**Matthew 28:19–20 (NIV)** **[Jesus said]** “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you…”

**SEE… HE HANDED THE BATON TO THEM AND COMMISSIONED THEM TO GO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.**

**THE ROCK’S MISSION STATEMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN:**

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**FOR MANY YEARS WE’VE INVITED PEOPLE TO A CHURCH CAMPUS TO BE DISCIPLED… AND IT’S BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE… FOR THOSE WHO COME. BUT NOW THE LORD IS CALLING US TO MAKE A CHANGE… A BIG CHANGE.**

**IT ONLY ADDS ONE WORD TO OUR MISSION STATEMENT, BUT IT WILL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD TO OUR EFFECTIVENESS AT REACHING AND MAKING DISCIPLES.**

**YOU SEE, JESUS NEVER TOLD US TO INVITE PEOPLE TO COME BE DISCIPLED. HE SAID, “GO MAKE DISCIPLES.” AND THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT WE’RE GOING TO DO.**

**AFTER MUCH PRAYER OVER THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, INCLUDING MANY OF OUR PASTORS IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS, WE BELIEVE GOD HAS ADJUSTED OUR MISSION STATEMENT TO NOW BE:**

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**IT’S ANOTHER WAY OF SAYING, “EVERYONE DISCIPLES.”**

**SO HOW EXACTLY WILL WE DO THAT?**

**WELL JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO THAT TOO…**

**Mark 1:17 (NKJV)** **[Jesus said]** “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”

**AND IT’S ALREADY STARTING TO HAPPEN…**

**EXCERPTS FROM A TESTIMONY**

One day, my mother in law … shared her testimony at an eyebrow salon where [she had begun holding Bible] studies. It was open only for women, but that day Men and Women went. Afterwards, I was re-inspired by the Lord, so I started a study for Men. It went well, however, I did not like the idea of my wife not being [there, and] I felt the Lord prompt me to open the study to couples, [and later] to open [it] up to families. This made the study accessible to more people, but it was [still] not clicking yet. As I continued ministering at work, people would say no for a variety of reasons. They either already went to church, the time we started was too late for them, or the day itself did not seem right. [This] went on a few weeks, [and] the Lord prompted me once more to move the study to Fridays. Once we moved it to Fridays, [it] grew by 4 people every week. God has been showing up at every study and moving in [people’s] lives. [The people] coming consists of coworkers whom we [had] shared the word and planted seeds with for several years.

[Our group] has been explosive. I now know that the 700-1000 employees at the company where I work is the territory given to me. More [people] keep [being] added…so I am [no longer working] alone. We are all partnering together… We are intentional at work to share the word of God [and people] have been coming. Believers and non-believers, Catholics, and Ex-Mormons … are now being ministered to and knowing the presence of the God of the Bible. They are asking questions and wanting to know who God is and [they] are seeing [things] first hand through the studies…

My wife … began the process of reconnecting with high school friends … two of whom we are now coaching through OSL level 1. And **her** coworkers are also coming! This last week, we had 20 people come and some [of my] coworkers [are hungry and want] more… I [can] see and feel the atmosphere being transformed at my workplace…

… because my coworkers are getting discipled and experiencing God, the word [is spreading] and people [at work] are coming up to me daily and asking me about it. All it took was one encounter… one study… and the word of God [began to open] up… "Come and see" is the motto.

**YOU SEE… JESUS IS GOING TO TEACH US HOW TO DO IT.**

**IN MATTHEW 16:18, JESUS SAID,**  “… I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” **(ESV)**

**JESUS IS CALLING US TO BECOME THE CHURCH HE DESIRES US TO BE**

**SO IN THREE WEEKS WE’RE GOING TO BEGIN A BRAND NEW STUDY… ONE WE’VE NEVER DONE BEFORE… IT WILL BE CALLED:**

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**THIS MAY BE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THING WE’VE EVER DONE… AND CERTAINLY SINCE WE LAUNCHED OSL IN 2003**

**EX – IN ONE OF OUR MID-DAY PRAYER TIMES, I FELT GOD LEAD ME TO LOOK AT THE STORY OF JESUS FEEDING THE 5,000 FROM MARK’S GOSPEL.**

**JUST BEFORE HE PERFORMED THE MIRACLE OF MULTIPLYING THE LOAVES AND FISH, JESUS GAVE A VERY INTERESTING INSTRUCTION IN MARK 6:39… IT SAYS…**

**Mark 6:39–40 (NKJV)** **Then He commanded them to make them all sit down IN GROUPS** on the green grass. **40** So they sat down in ranks, **in hundreds and in fifties**.

**NOTICE… BEFORE JESUS PERFORMED THE MIRACLE, HE COMMANDED THEM TO GET INTO GROUPS… AND IN MY HEART, I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT GOD WAS SAYING.**

**GOD IS ABOUT TO DO MANY OUTSTANDING MIRACLES AMONG US… THAT’S WHAT THESE 40 DAYS OF PREPARATION ARE ALL ABOUT.**

**AND NOW HE’S ASKING US TO GET READY FOR IT.**

**OVER THE NEXT THREE WEEKS WE ALL NEED TO ASSEMBLE IN GROUPS.**

**THE GROUPS COULD BE AS SIMPLE AS A FEW SINGLE PEOPLE GETTING TOGETHER… OR COUPLES… OR FAMILIES… OR A COMBINATION OF THEM.**

**YOU COULD GATHER TOGETHER TO WITH OR WITHOUT SNACKS.**

**YOU COULD GATHER FOR A MEAL… OR NOT.**

**IF YOU WANT TO HAVE A MEAL, YOU HAVE THE MEAL TOGETHER, THEN DO THE STUDY… OR STUDY FIRST AND THEN HAVE THE MEAL.**

**I GUESS IT *COULD BE* JUST YOUR OWN FAMILY… BUT… I SUGGEST IT WILL BE MORE POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE IF THERE’S MORE THAN ONE FAMILY REPRESENTED.**

**SO GOD IS CALLING US TO GATHER IN GROUPS TO STUDY…**

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**THIS STUDY IS FOR EVERYONE… EVEN THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE VISITING WITH US TODAY… OR WATCHING ONLINE**

**WE’RE ASKING EVERYONE TO PARTICIPATE… AND WE KNOW IT WILL BE A STRETCH FOR SOME… BUT IT WILL BE WORTH IT.**

**MANY OF YOU WILL HAVE TO STEP UP AND TAKE THE LEAD TO ASSEMBLE THE GROUPS… BUT IT’S IMPORTANT**

**THE STUDY WILL BEGIN THE WEEK OF MAY 8, 2022.**

**SO WE HAVE THREE WEEKS TO ASSEMBLE IN GROUPS.**

**OBVIOUSLY, HOUSE CHURCHES ARE ALREADY IN GROUPS.**

**WHY IS GOD CALLING ALL OF US TO DO THIS???**

**BECAUSE THERE’S A WORLD OUT THERE WHO ARE HURTING, AND ARE DESPERATE FOR JESUS… AND “JESUS’ CHURCH” IS GOD’S PLAN TO REACH THEM.**

**FRIENDS… JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEMS PEOPLE ARE FACING TODAY, AND HE’S CALLING US—HIS CHURCH—TO RISE TO THE OCCASION AND BECOME THE CHURCH HE HAS CALLED US TO BE.**

**TODAY, THERE ARE PEOPLE HERE… AND PEOPLE WATCHING… WHO NEED JESUS’ HELP… AND WE’RE GOING TO COME TO JESUS IN PRAYER RIGHT NOW.**

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

1. **NEW BELIEVERS**
2. **SICKNESSES, ADDICTIONS, FINANCIAL CHALLENGES, ETC.**
3. **PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND US**

**AND LET’S ALSO PRESENT OURSELVES TO GOD AND ASK HIM TO LEAD US TO ASSEMBLE… OR BE IN… THE RIGHT GROUP TO STUDY JESUS’ CHURCH.**

1. **PRAY TO ASSEMBLE GROUPS… HEAR FROM JESUS**