

0 (0s):

Crabs McKinley, and she's not breathing. She's not breathing at all. They finally got her breathing and they ran her out of the room. So I'm chasing after this nurse, down the hallway, into the NICU, following my daughter. And I could see she is just struggling. You can see her chest just heaving up and down as she's trying to breathe this little tiny baby. And I remember watching her as the nurse, put her under one of those big plastic hoods and turned up the oxygen and I could see my daughter's O two levels going down. Her blood ox level kept going down and down and down, no matter how much the nurse turned up the oxygen. And I could see this like directly proportion of more oxygen, less oxygen in her blood. And finally the oxygen was mast maxed out.

0 (40s):

And I was like, Oh my gosh, I asked the nurse, what are you going to do? Like there's no more oxygen. And she ran out of the room without saying anything to me. And I was terrified. Right. And I was thinking, God, where are you now?

1 (52s):

I remember praying. Yeah.

0 (55s):

And looking over her and just saying, God, we've waited so long for her. Why would you give us this child?

1 (1m 2s):

And then take her away right here in this moment? Where are you? God, where are you? And so

0 (1m 10s):

All of us have had those moments where we literally said, God, where are you? Why aren't you here? Why aren't you doing anything? And in those moments, that's what we asked. Where are you now? Where are you? Now? We need God in those moments. Perhaps you've had those moments. Maybe it has been a child that you love. That has an issue that is sick. Maybe it's because you've lost your job. God, where are you now? Maybe it's with that diagnosis. God, where are you now? And when we have those ones, that's the question we ask.

1 (1m 40s):

And that's why we

0 (1m 40s):

Need hope in those moments. Perhaps some of you are in that moment right now. And if you are, this message is especially for you. But I think all of us could hear it because we need hope for the present. We need hope

1 (1m 51s):

For this moment.

0 (1m 54s):

You know, sometimes we ask that question and in strange times, like this week when I was wearing my pants and I went like this to pick up one of the kids and God, where were you? When I was eating so much cheese, why didn't you stop me? Right. Okay. Yes, that happened to me. Okay. We have those ones. Where are you now? God. Where are you now? So we're going to look at one of those stories in Matthew chapter one, if you want to grip your Bible with me, Matthew who writing this account of Jesus starts out by talking about Jesus's dad, Joseph.

1 (2m 24s):

And what we know

0 (2m 24s):

About Joseph is that he was a good guy. He was, he was a good dude. He, he worked hard. He was a carpenter. Meaning he probably worked in that region was stone. Meaning he was strong. He was strong. He was, I mean, to work with stone, you, you have to know what your stuff, he's a carpenter. He's working hard. He probably had built his own house, but we know in those days, so this, this is a good dude. He's working hard.

1 (2m 45s):

R and he was good morally because he was waiting for marriage. I mean, that's,

0 (2m 51s):

That's a hard thing to do for anybody. Right. He was waiting for marriage. And so finally he found this young woman, he fell in love with her. She was Mary. She liked him because he had a job. Okay. You know, whatever it was, they fell in love. Right. And then he proposes. They're, they're engaged. And even the parents like this match, you know, that's what parents did in those days. They kind of arranged it or at least had to give approval. So everything's going good. Joseph's a good guy. He's working hard. He's good looking. He has a job. And

1 (3m 21s):

Here he is. And there

0 (3m 24s):

Probably, if we can imagine they're, you know, showing off the ring, they're going to taste cake. They're checking out events centers as they did in those days.

1 (3m 34s):

And then he notices,

0 (3m 35s):

Mary's showing a little bit and it turns out she's pregnant. And he knows he's not the father they've been waiting. He's been a righteous dude. And now this woman that he's been waiting,

1 (3m 48s):

Four, just cheated on him with some other dude. Now we're not doing

0 (3m 54s):

Exactly what he was thinking. But it says that he was contemplating. He was really focusing and thinking. And it says that he wanted to divorce her quietly. They had to divorce in those days because engagement in those days actually required a divorce to break it off. So even though they're engaged, they're not married. This is going to be a major ordeal. And he wants to do it quietly. He's been saving himself. He's been working in art. He's got a job ladies. Okay. He can get, you know, but he was waiting.

1 (4m 21s):

He was waiting. He was a good

0 (4m 22s):

Moral, upright guy. And I'm guessing in that moment, he asked God, where

1 (4m 26s):

Are you now?

0 (4m 29s):

You know? And he went to sleep that night as he was processing this, thinking about it, worried about it. What is he going to do in this situation? And that's when God

1 (4m 37s):

Speaks to him and tells him actually that child inside of Mary was put there by the Holy spirit

0 (4m 46s):

Child is the savior. You will call him Jesus, that's his name?

1 (4m 50s):

He's the savior. And he will save his people from their sins. And then right at the end,

0 (4m 59s):

Joseph is told something powerful about this son. And in verse 23, this is our verse that we're going to focus on today. Verse 23 of Matthew chapter one, it says the Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son. And they will call him

1 (5m 15s):

Emmanuel, which means God with us.

0 (5m 20s):

So just at that moment, God, where are you? This is not what I planned for my life. This is not what I was thinking. And God says, no, no, no, no.

1 (5m 29s):

I'm with you. And your son is proof of that.

0 (5m 34s):

This verse here is actually referring back to Isaiah chapter seven, verse 14. If you're interested more in that verse or in this idea of w w the Virgin birth, why would God do it that way? I actually have a whole message on that two years ago in our series of light has dawned. It's the first message in that series called think small, you can go back and find that message. It's good if you're curious about that, but what that word a manual means is God with us, there's one word in Hebrew, three words in English, and it's this compound word. That means God is with us. Now, back in Isaiah's day, when that prophecy was given, it was in a very dark time. Things are going very bad for the nation of Israel, for God's people. And God gave him this sign. Hey, this, this young woman is going to have a child.

0 (6m 14s):

It's going to be a sign of hope. And in the same way, in an even greater way. Now it is fulfilled this prophecy in Jesus, who was not just a sign of hope, but is literally God with us. God, among us. This is God in human flesh, the incarnation, as we call

1 (6m 30s):

It, Martin

0 (6m 33s):

Luther would say, years later, the field login, he would say to this human being, you shall point and say,

1 (6m 39s):

Here is God. Here is God. Now this is profound

0 (6m 45s):

Because God's people, the Jews were not like all the other peoples in the ancient world. They were not like the Romans and the Greeks who had hundreds and thousands of gods. They were all over the place doing all sorts of stupid things. Okay. There was one God in Israel, they worshiped one God. There was only one. God, it was central to their religion. And yet somehow now from the very beginning, Jesus is seen as God himself

1 (7m 7s):

In human form. And from

0 (7m 8s):

The very beginning, Christians who had all been Jewish are starting to worship.

1 (7m 13s):

Jesus has God. Now this is a profound thing. How did it

0 (7m 17s):

Something like that happened? Well, it happened because of this miraculous birth. It happened because of the things Jesus said and did, and more importantly, how he died and then Rose

1 (7m 26s):

From the dead. But all

0 (7m 28s):

Of that, wasn't known by Joseph at the time. All that he knew is that he was told that God would be with us in the son, Jesus, Jesus would be called Emmanuel. It is not his name, but it's his title. It means that God is here with us, God in human flesh. Now I think that this is so important because up until this point, God had shown up lots of times

1 (7m 48s):

In history,

0 (7m 50s):

But whenever he showed up, it was in a powerful, fierce way. Think about it. Moses encounters, God, how through a huge fire on the man

1 (7m 60s):

Is boring Bush.

0 (8m 2s):

Okay. When he walked up, he had to take off his sandals because it was his Holy place. When God did come and decide to give God's people, the 10 commandments and Moses goes up on the mountain. There's this huge cloud that covers. Nobody can go up there except Moses.

1 (8m 16s):

And then when he comes

0 (8m 17s):

Down, his face is glowing. He has to wear a veil because he has been around the presence of God. God showed up with a pillar of cloud during the day to lead God's people out of Egypt, in slavery, and then a pillar of

1 (8m 29s):

Fire at night, God shows up

0 (8m 32s):

Fire. He shows up in these powerful ways. He shakes the earth. That's how God showed up again. And again and again to the old Testament, there's power. There's something fierce.

1 (8m 46s):

There's glory yet

0 (8m 49s):

Seen God who showed up in those ways. Again and again, and again. Now shows up

1 (8m 53s):

In a completely different way, comes in the form of a human being, even a baby.

0 (9m 2s):

And I think this is so important because we see that this God with

1 (9m 5s):

Us is still the same

0 (9m 7s):

Fierce, powerful God. And yet

1 (9m 9s):

He is also a little baby. You can cuddle a little baby. I cuddle right

0 (9m 15s):

Babies. We have twins right now. And even though they're year one-year-old, they still let us cuddle them. And I love holding our babies and giving them a bottle it's so it's like a comforting thing. You know, you comfort them, but they also comfort you. Let's be honest, right? When you're cuddling a baby, I mean, it's a soft there's there's love there's comfort there.

1 (9m 34s):

The fierce

0 (9m 34s):

God who shows up in fire and earthquakes

1 (9m 38s):

Is this God. Now that comes as a little human being a baby.

0 (9m 45s):

This is so important for us. And this is going to be a strange, big idea, man.

1 (9m 49s):

But I think you're going to remember it because

0 (9m 53s):

As this God shows up what we learn and what we learned from this, this verse, especially that phrase that Jesus has God with

1 (9m 58s):

Us is that Jesus is the lion on your side. I told you,

0 (10m 6s):

I don't remember this one. Jesus is the lion on your side. When he comes in the form of this human being for the first time, God, the same God who created the universe, who knit you together, who has all power. And all authority is also this

1 (10m 21s):

Human being who came to live for you to serve you, to love you and to die for you. And that's why I can say Jesus is the lion on your side. Now

0 (10m 34s):

Idea of God is aligned because the lion is of course the fiercest of all the land animals. And it wasn't the Bible too. But God is often referred in the old Testament to being a lion or like a lion. You can see this in particular, in Hosea, in the book of Hosea in chapter five, it says for, I will be like a lion to Ephraim. This is God speaking like a great lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces and go away. I will carry them off with no one to rescue them.

1 (11m 5s):

This is the

0 (11m 6s):

God. This is how he showed up in the old Testament. He was a God that would tear people, a shred in because God's people had been disobedient. He was taking them and literally ripping them out of their own home country and taking them away into exile. He's a lion and he's fierce. And even later in Hosea though, it's this same line. It says they will follow the Lord. He will roar like a lion. And when he roars his children will come trembling from the West and I will settle them in their homes. Even after the time of exile, when God is bringing his people back into the promised land, he still a fierce lion that's causing them to tremble because he

1 (11m 43s):

Okay. That that's

0 (11m 46s):

The God we see again and again in the old Testament is roaring. God can, can never be roar

1 (11m 50s):

Right now. Can we just do that right now? Okay. We

2 (11m 54s):

Got one good roar over here.

0 (11m 56s):

That was very weak. Okay. That was very weak. Let's let's do a roar. And I want the kids to hear us roar on, on three one,

2 (12m 3s):

One, two, three.

0 (12m 6s):



Okay. You guys were better than first service, but it was still a little bit,

2 (12m 10s):

Right? You're laughing. Kelly. I didn't hear you roar very loud.

0 (12m 14s):

Okay. Let's do it one more time. One,

2 (12m 16s):

Two, three.

0 (12m 19s):

That's better. I think they heard that upstairs. Did you hear that up there? Yeah. God roars like that. If you, if you're online, you can type in a roar and maybe give me a little lion emoji in the comment section. Let me do that please. Cause God is like that. So often this fierce lion, he roars, we're afraid that he'll rip us to shreds. He's a powerful God. He used greatly to be feared. Yet. We learned in the new Testament, this God shows up as Jesus and Jesus doesn't stop being a fierce lion, but he is also a human. It says in revelation, chapter five, about Jesus don't cry.

0 (12m 60s):

Don't cry. Look, the lion from Judas tribe, the great descendant of David has won the victory. So you know what? We know that Jesus, he came in human form and he was still the lion. And when he died and Rose from the dead, he is that lion still. And he has brought the victory through his death on the cross. He's victorious. The line that the descendant of David, who we know is Jesus himself. The lion became human form. He became like a lamb. And this is why I want you to know that Jesus is the why. And on your side now she was here in the first service, but we have a new woman in our church named Alice and Alice.

0 (13m 43s):

Todd is a zoo and aquarium instructor. Okay. I think that's fascinating job. I've been talking to her about it a bunch, because I'm like just curious. So whenever you go to the zoo, you go to the aquarium and they like have the animals out and they show you different things, you know, instruct the animals and all that construct instruct the people about what the animals, that's what she does. And I have a couple of pictures of her. Here's her with some turtles. And then I have one picture of her with the tiger. I don't know if you can see that, but it's a gigantic tiger, right? Cause I asked her this week, I said, Hey, if you ever worked with lions and if so, what are they like? 'cause I was, I was just curious. And she didn't have any pictures of lions, but she'd have one with the tiger. And she has spent some time and this is what she wrote. This is what she said. She said it was a little intimidating at first because it is a very large 800 pound cat looking at you.

0 (14m 30s):

You just imagine that I've been pretty far away. Okay. I am not the American furniture warehouse guy. I am not tiger King. Okay. Lions are over there for me right there. Fierce. She says, however, cat behavior is the same, whether they are big or small. So they do a lot of the same things. A house does. They tend to be pretty vocal when they want something roaring and they are very powerful and their paws are huge. One of the things you were first told when working with big cats is to be aware of where they are because they are very keen to their surroundings. They see and hear everything.

0 (15m 11s):

You're also told to be very deliberate with movements, they harness strength and power and can use it very

1 (15m 19s):

Quickly.

0 (15m 22s):

But she said, they're also very gentle and take, can take care of things. I think that's fascinating. She said like, they're like a house cat, and yet they're also fierce. Right? And she said, after working with them for awhile, she said, this is interesting. There is a trust. There is a trust that builds you learn their behaviors and needs. There's something powerful and respectful. She said, after working with them for a while, I knew my place in the cat knew there's fascinating, right. Is fierce lion. But you got to be careful with don't make any sense,

1 (15m 58s):

Right. And also be like a house cat. You can, the purse that you can rub. And

0 (16m 6s):

I, I just find that so interesting that, that we see that this, this gigantic line who is fierce is also a lion that you can learn to trust.

1 (16m 16s):

And when you trust,

0 (16m 17s):

You know, that that lion is on your side. I mean, you don't have to worry about the lion attacking you. Although there still is a healthy fear, right? You're careful.

1 (16m 27s):

And yet

0 (16m 27s):

Also with that lion, if you know that they're with you, you're in a sense of protected too. They're on your side. And that's why I'm saying in this message. Jesus is the lion on your side. And that's what God with us teaches us.

1 (16m 41s):

One of my favorite books as a kid was the horse and his boy

0 (16m 45s):

Seeing the Chronicles of Narnia. It's not one of the more popular books, but it was my favorite still is in that series. And that series of seven books and

1 (16m 52s):

CS Lewis wrote that series and

0 (16m 54s):

The book, the horse and his boy tells about a young boy named Shasta and Shasta had been, had, had no parents. He didn't know his parents. He was an orphan. And he had floated on a boat, up to the shore. And a man found him, took him into his home, kind of treated him like a child, but really treated him like a slave. So he had grown up in this household. And when he was a little bit older, he discovered that this man who was kind of his dad was going to sell him to another master who was very cruel to be his slave. So he ran away. And of course he ran away with the talking horse

1 (17m 30s):

Because that's what you do

0 (17m 32s):

In the land of Narnia. And they weren't actually in Narnia, but they wanted to escape to go to Narnia because they thought they might be safe there. So they were on horse. He was on horseback. He was getting out and there was all sorts of journeys. That's what the book is about the journeys and all the people he meets, the friends he makes and that, but there's one point in the journey when he gets left behind by his friends, he's left behind and he's there on, on his horse. And he's in the mountains and things are getting dark. There's a cloud coverage. There's mist all around him. So he can't even see through the fog. And he is left behind at night in a place he's never been. And he starts to feel sorry for himself. He's feeling real bad.

0 (18m 13s):

And he starts to cry. Tears are coming down his face, but then he noticed something right next to him. He doesn't know how long it's been there, but it's been there for a while and he senses this thing and he's terrified. And when this thing is out there, finally, he can't hold it back any longer. And he just says, who are you to the thing? And in response, the thing says myself twice, myself. And then he finally just says, you

know, I am the unluckiest person in the whole world. He's feeling sorry for himself, he's alone, he's struggling.

0 (18m 54s):

And this thing that's out there says, well, tell me, tell me more. So he begins to unload and he tells about how he doesn't even know his parents. He was abandoned on this boat when he was just a little boy before he even knew anything. And that he was being sold as a slave. And he escaped. And when he was on horseback, he tells some of the journey about how there was lions that chased him and forced him to go in a different direction. And then there are some other things that happened. And even one of his friends got attacked by a lion and had been wounded. And he says, I've been running into these lines again. And again, and again, to which this thing that's out there says, I don't think you're very unfortunate.

0 (19m 34s):

And she asked to respond to, what do you mean? How could someone be so unlucky to run into all these lines in their life? To which the thing says there were not many lines. There was only one. And then he says, this line says, I was the lion who forced you to join with Elvis? That hurt his friend. I was the cat who comforted you? I was the lion who drove the jackals from USU slept. I was the lion who gave the horse the new strength of fear for the last mile. We get the next line. And I was the line. You do not remember who pushed the boat in which you lay a child near death so that it came to shore where a man sat wakeful at midnight to receive you.

0 (20m 18s):

I love this scene because Shasta realizes there was just one line. And it was that thing out there. The light shown shines in the, and then he realizes this gigantic line and he's afraid, but it's a completely different type of fear at this point. And what he realized is right then this lion was there through all of the different times. He was there and forced him to go a different direction. He didn't want to go. He was there to comfort him when he was at his worst moment. He was even there and wounded his friend. And there was also the line at the very beginning before he was even aware of things, pushing him into a certain direction. I love that this analogy, because God is like aligned.

0 (20m 59s):

Jesus is like a lion. Who's fierce and powerful. And yet when he's on our side, he will also comfort us and protect us and watch over us. So I want you to think about your life. Maybe you can think back into your own life and some of those moments and you, and you can look back and you say, wow. I felt like I was forced to do that thing that I didn't want to do. I went to this place. I didn't even want to go there. I moved. I was just going, kicking and struggling the whole time I quit this job, I shouldn't have, I started this new job. I had to switch schools. I had to leave that relationship. But now you look back and you say, wow, that was so much for the better than had I gone that other direction. I wanted to see.

0 (21m 39s):

Sometimes God is the lion who forces us or leads us to a direction that we don't even want to go think of my own life. And I am so grateful. I did not marry some of those other girls. And then I've married. The love of my life. Melissa is upstairs with her kids right now. Right? So grateful. God led me that way. Sometimes God is the lion who leads us and forces us to go even a different direction than we wanted. Sometimes he's also, God is the lion that comforts us like the big cat comforts us at a moment of need when we're struggling, when we're down in the dumps, when, when we're just depressed and maybe we open up the Bible and it just speaks to us like never before, or you come to a worship service and the preacher just says something, wow, that's what I needed to hear.

0 (22m 23s):

That song was exactly what I needed to sing. It spoke to me or, or perhaps it was a person God put in your life. I remember when we were struggling with a, with a miscarriage and, and we were in Moab, just struggling and just happened to show up Melissa's pastor from her hometown, the guy who had married us 10 years before. And he just happened to come by and come in and talk with us and offer counsel and just listen to us. I know God sent him to comfort us in that moment. Sometimes God is the lion who comforts us. Sometimes he's also the lion who protects us. Maybe if we don't even know it, you can probably look back in your life and say, wow, God protected me.

0 (23m 4s):

I should have died there. That shouldn't have happened. I was about to take that job. And I'm glad I didn't because the company went bankrupt and I would have been losing everything. So glad God saved me from that. Or perhaps God sometimes is the lion who wounds you. Sometimes it hurts. Sometimes it's really difficult, but God is like the surgeon. He, he does make a cut, but he does it for your good and those moments are some of the hardest, but looking back, perhaps you can see, yes, maybe God was in those moments.

0 (23m 44s):

And I didn't even notice you could not even be a follower of Jesus. You may look back at your life and say, wow, how did that happen? And you may have moments that you say, wow, I did encounter God in the horse and his boy, the way that Shasta first finds out that that lion is with him is when it breathes on him, he's freezing cold. And he just hears a sigh, a big sigh and warm hot

1 (24m 6s):

Breath on his cold arm. That's

0 (24m 9s):

When he finally recognizes that this line is there,

1 (24m 12s):

But it had been there the whole time.

0 (24m 15s):

See, I think we have these moments in our life that are like the breadth of the lion. We can look back. Some of you aren't even Christians yet, but God was working in your life. He was near you. He was moving. He was protecting you. He was even wounding you, but it was him the whole time

1 (24m 30s):

For your good in acts, chapter 17,

0 (24m 36s):

27 and 28. It says, God wanted people to look for him. And perhaps in searching all around for him, they would find him. But he is not far from any of us. It is through him that we are able to live, to do what we do and to be who we are.

1 (24m 52s):

We are, God is near to all of us.

0 (24m 57s):

And if you look around and seek for him, you will see him. If you open up your senses to be aware that the breadth of the line is there. You can't sense it all the time, but sometimes you're just made aware that God is there in that moment

1 (25m 13s):

Of your life. And he was there for you. He wants you to find him.

0 (25m 19s):

Some of you are saying, well, well, Matt, I think I felt it in the past. I can look back and say, wow, that was a powerful moment. I know God was there for me. That, that one desperate night, but I don't feel him right now. I don't feel right now. I haven't felt him in weeks, months, years.

1 (25m 35s):

Where is he? Well, here's, here's the truth. God's presence is not dependent on your feelings. Let me say that again. God's presence

0 (25m 46s):

Is not dependent on your feelings.

1 (25m 49s):

It is an objective fact. He is there.

0 (25m 54s):

He's not far from any one of us in some versions that says in him, we live, move and have our being. He's the very air we breathe. He's around us and inside of us and

1 (26m 2s):

All around us.

0 (26m 4s):

At certain moments, yes, you can feel the breath of the line, but other times you don't even know he's there. He's protecting you behind this

1 (26m 9s):

Scenes, but God is always there

0 (26m 12s):

Always near. He's always with us. He's always the lion

1 (26m 16s):

On your side. That's what we need to know today. Some of you

0 (26m 23s):

Going through such difficult times, even right now, and you're saying, how could God be with me when that happened, Matt, my daughter

1 (26m 28s):

Wasn't spared. Where was God then?

0 (26m 36s):

And the reality is we, sometimes we cannot see, and maybe we'll never fully see why those woundings had to happen

1 (26m 41s):

Those difficulties, but God was there.

0 (26m 45s):

He was in the midst of it. He did not leave you. He did not forsake you. I read the story of Steven Curtis

Chapman. And this happened a few years ago, but of course it's very famous Christian musician. And he went on a mission trip to China. And before he left, his wife told him whatever you do, don't look at any of the orphans because we're not adopting one. And of course, he went on this trip, met a young girl, named Maria and orphan. And he fell in love and they adopted her and, and they brought her into the family. They loved her, they made her one of their own kids. And then just a few years after that, she died in a tragic accident.

0 (27m 31s):

And they talk about he and his wife, Mary Beth, talk about how that moment was one of the most difficult, terrible moments of their life, pure grief. They had no idea how they would get out of that spiral. And in those moments, I'm sure they wondered where is God now? And yet they realized through that, that in just a few years, they had taken this girl who did not know any love from parents. And they loved her so much in those few years. And they knew that there were so many other orphans that needed help as well, that needed hope. So they decided to really focus their efforts on a ministry and a nonprofit. They started called show hope. They built an orphanage the next year in China.

0 (28m 13s):

And they started working more and more to get families connected with kids who especially had special needs to get them adopted. And since then they've worked in over 60 different nations and seen 6,800 children adopted into those forever families. See God had somehow worked in that terrible tragic moment when they wondered, where is God now to do something incredible, to provide hope to so many more. So maybe you're in that moment. You're in that desperate point right now, you're struggling and you don't know how things can get better. You don't have hope, but if you know, the God is with you, if you know that the lion is on your side, you can get through it because that lie in that fierce line is fighting for you.

0 (28m 59s):

And he will make things right. He will make things good. You know, we were looking at this verse that comes at the very beginning of the gospel of Matthew. But Matthew writes about the rest of the story of Jesus, that he was born in a manger, that he became a young boy who grew in obedience and became a perfect righteous man who loved others and served others and gave everything of himself to others. But then this same Jesus to the people he came to love and save and serve. They arrested him and beat him. They punished him and then they put him up on a cross to die.

0 (29m 39s):

The lion had become a lamb and that lamb was sacrificed in our place. The lamb of God who had come to take away, the sins of the world was slain in our place. But we know that's not the end of the story because Matthew also tells us that three days later there was a roar. There was a rumble, the earth shook and a stone rolled away. And Jesus Rose from the dead to prove to everyone that God has power, that he is still the lion who roars. And when Jesus died on the cross for us, he proved that he's on our side.



0 (30m 22s):

And do you know the very last words in Matthew's gospel? See the very beginning. It says that Jesus means God is with us, Emmanuel God with us at the very end. The very last words are Jesus himself saying, surely I am with you always to the very MPH. Jesus knew we needed that encouragement. Matthew made sure didn't let us know God is with us at the beginning. He's with us at the end. Jesus. He's the same yesterday, today and forever, he will never leave us. He will never forsake us. I am with you always till the very end of the age, Jesus is the why. And on your side, let's pray, Lord God, I know there's someone in here today. There's someone watching that needs to be reminded that you are with them.

0 (31m 5s):

They are in depression, they're struggling. They've lost a job. They don't know how they're going to get through this season. There they're worried about being lonely. Lord God, would you let them know that you are with them? Even if they can't see how to get through to the future, that in this moment, they would know that you're on their side. Maybe this moment, they would feel the breadth of the lion. And in that powerful, profound way, they would know that you are fighting for them. And you always win that you are victorious with everybody's eyes closed and heads bowed. Maybe if you're here, you don't have that line on your side yet, but you've known looking back that he has been fighting for you. He's been there at different moments. If you're ready to make him your Lord and savior and accept his gift of eternal life.

0 (31m 45s):

I want you to learn to trust that line today. So say this prayer with me, dear God, thank you for loving me. I'm a sinner. I need a savior redeem me. I declare that Jesus is Lord. Fill me with your Holy spirit. Help me to follow you and serve you for all my days. Amen. Now, if you said that prayer for the first time, I want you to go to a rise, [denver.com/follow](https://denver.com/follow). Fill that out. I want to encourage you. Pray for you. I'll even send you a book because I'd love to encourage you on this journey now for all of us, Lord God, I just pray again over us.

0 (32m 34s):

Maybe in this moment, someone needs to feel that breadth of the lion again, would you fill their soul? Let them know that you are with them

3 (32m 40s):

Inside them, fighting for them on their side. Lord God, we're so glad that you sent Jesus, who is both the lion and the lamb. Amen.