

# Nobody But Jesus, Part 3 (Life)

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Preacher: Kevin Smith, Senior Pastor

[ 0 : 0 0 ] We're finishing up a little mini-series in John chapter 14 verses 4 through 6. And we're doing that because this is one of the most important passages, I think, in the New Testament that all of us know.

So it took a minute. John chapter 14 verses 4 through 6. Jesus is speaking. He's finishing a statement about where he's going. He says, And you know the way to where I'm going. Now here it goes. Thomas, Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? I'm confused. Jesus then utters these words.

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. That is truly the word of the Lord. You may be seated. Thank you. Thank you. Praise to you. Thank you. As we saw a few weeks ago, Isaiah said, Truth has stumbled in the streets.

[ 1 : 1 2 ] Pope Francis, who recently passed into the next life, said some very controversial things about ecumenism. In a trip to Singapore last fall, he said these things.

If we start to fight among ourselves and say, My religion is more important than yours, My religion is true and yours is not, Where would that lead us?

It is okay to discuss because every religion is a way to arrive at God. Analogously speaking, Religion is like different languages is like different languages to arrive at God.

But God is God for all. And if God is God for all, we are all sons and daughters of God. But my God is more important than your God.

Is that true? There is only one God. And each of us is a language, so to speak, to arrive at God. Muslim, Hindu, they are different paths.

[ 2 : 1 4 ] Understood? Understood? When he said that, many Roman Catholics were upset with him. Because these statements went against traditional Catholic teaching, And I would say biblical teaching.

Pope Leo, by the way, has reversed that stance, just so you know. Many today say, Hey, I respect your faith. Your faith is cool.

But I'm spiritual, not religious. That's called the new paganism. It's the same way from ancient times.

No rules, no doctrines, But a vague sense of the supernatural According to one's own thoughts and ideas.

And this kind of paganism dominates our culture And world more and more. God is everything. And all roads lead to him.

[ 3 : 1 6 ] The problem with that is many, But one problem is that it does not separate the creator from his creation. God's in everything. But the scriptures teach that God created everything out of nothing.

And he is therefore distinct from his creation. The problem is humanity Led creation into rebellion against its good creator.

Death walked among us. Physical and spiritual. Death has come among us. This is why we say things like, All roads lead to God.

And we say things like, No rules just right. I'm spiritual but not religious. I'm making it up as I go along.

That's the nature of being fallen. The nature of spiritual death. But praise God, Our creator has taken on our human nature in Jesus.

[ 4 : 2 2 ] He has entered his creation. God has come to save us. God has taken up our humanity.

Dignifying it yet again, Our humanity. And he lived the life we should have lived, But could not live, And would not live.

And those who trust in him Will know, Will now walk with him On God's path to glory and to life. And lo and behold, One day, He will come again. And all of creation Will finally be made perfectly right In the light of his glory And coming and presence.

But for now, As Pope John Paul II said, For now we live in a culture of death. But Jesus has come Into this culture of death To tell us He is the way, The truth, And as we'll see today, He is the life.

[ 5 : 40 ] Life is only found in Jesus. To deny him Is to live In a culture And destiny Of death. To have him.

Oh, to have him. Is to truly live now. To truly live In the face of death. And to truly live For all eternity. For Jesus is The life.

So, When he says this, He means he is The only life. Jesus is the only life. The life.

He isn't just A life. Just as he was, He's not My truth Or your truth. He's the truth. Just as he is not A way Among many ways But the way He is also The life.

To not have him Is to not have life. John mentions life In his gospel a lot. It's one of the main themes In this great book.

[ 6 : 51 ] And he doesn't Usually mean Temporary, earthly life. Usually, John is speaking Of eternal life. Because that's what Jesus was speaking of.

We often tell people You remember, You know you do this. Especially if they're Getting on our nerves. Get a life! Right?

You've never said that? Get a life! Now what do we mean by that? What do we mean when you say Get to it? We mean Start focusing on that Which is trivial.

We say Do something Or Do something Meaningful With your life In time. Get a life! Jesus is saying To the world That there's nothing More meaningful In life Than him.

That's very Egocentric. But it's true. Until we engage With Jesus We tend to live In the trivial When compared to him.

[ 7 : 58 ] The trivial When compared to him Now Absorbs us. We'll get angry About the most Amazing things. You had to wait An extra Three minutes For your big whack I mean mac.

You had to wait An extra three minutes. Or Somebody Got in Got in line In front of you Or God forbid They passed you On the road And got in front of you Or If you're like me Why isn't this light Turning green?

I sat there For a whole Extra 60 seconds We are overrun By things That Ultimately Don't matter Who cares If your football Team lost?

Why are you Ready to commit Sepulco? That's Never mind Why are you Ready to kill yourself?

Why are you Ready to fight Somebody? The things That make us Angry Something you Think about When you step Back and look You go The things That That so many Of our young People Will harm Theirselves For Because their Hearts are broken Ten years From now They'll look Back and say What was I Thinking?

But in that Moment It seems like It's everything But it's not Everything But they can't See it Because Their lives Are tied up In something That's not Life You could I could go on You know You fill in the Blank Jesus Comes to us To show us The meaning Of life And how To live It Is that How you See him?

[ 10 : 03 ] Do you Do you Do you See Jesus As the Revealer Of truth? Do you Do you See Jesus As leading You in the Way? He's prophet He's the Ultimate prophet He speaks The ultimate Truth of God He is the The great King The ultimate King Who leads us In our lives Who leads us On our way Do you see Him that way?

Do you see Him leading You into Life? Do you Wake up In the Morning To enjoy Life with Him And through Him If he's The life That's all Encompassing But what Gives him The right To be That? What gives Jesus You know Muhammad Never said That Buddha Never said That What gives Jesus the Right to Claim To be The life?

First of All the Apostle John told Us In John Chapter 1 If you remember This Verses 1 Through 4 In the Beginning Was the Word And the Word Was with God And the Word Was God He was In the Beginning With God All Things Were made Through Him And without Him Was not Anything Made That was Made In Him Was Life And the Life Was the Light Of Man Listen That's Why The Word Is Another Name For The Son Of God The Word Is Made Flesh And we Call Him Jesus And He's If This Is True He Has Every Right To Be Called The Life Because He Is The Author And Creator And Sustainer Of Life If This Is True The Second Reason Is His Resurrection The Resurrection Screams

At Us The Resurrection In Time And Space And History It Was Not A Spiritual Resurrection It Was A Bodily Physical Resurrection From The Dead It If It Happened It Screams At Us That This Man Is The Life The Apostles Believed It Those Eleven And Then The Group Got Larger As They Saw The Risen Christ Spent Time With Him Touched Him Listened To Him Once Again And Then They Went Forth And Preached The Resurrection Of Jesus It Was The Heart Of Their Message In Chapter Three Of God Raised from the dead in his name, through his name, this man is made well in the name of Jesus because he rose from the dead. Jesus is the author of life whom death had to release.

[13:15] In Acts chapter 2, Peter's first sermon, 224, he says, God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death. Why? Because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Woo, my goodness. It was not possible because he's the life. Death tried everything it could. I can see death now holding on. He got him by the shoulders. Jesus keeps rising. He's got him by the waist. Jesus keeps rising. He's got him by the knees. Jesus keeps rising. He's got him by the foot. Then he's holding and Jesus keeps going. Death could not. It was impossible.

This is why Jesus is the life. If this is true, if he really did rise from the dead, there's no issue. And by the way, listen, I know this is weird, I know. But if God exists, if we are not all cosmic accidents who happen to bump into each other as molecules and become people, if God exists and he made us, why would it be an issue to raise the dead?

Why would it be? For God, I mean. Not for you. For God. If God is the author, if the big bang is God saying, let there be. Because you remember, you know, evolution says something exploded.

[14:59] But something was nothing. Nothing exploded. Because we don't know what the something was. And we know matter is not eternal. So what exploded? We don't know. But we believe it.

It takes more faith to believe that, I think. No, God spoke. He created, what you say, ex nihilo, out of nothing. He spoke. And if God could do that, why is it so impossible for him to raise a man from the dead?

Now, the resurrection, the apostles saw it. The apostles believed it. It was the center of their preaching. That Jesus, in Romans 1, that Jesus was declared the son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead.

That was how Paul begins the letter of Romans. The son of God with power. And they preached that. And they preached that until they killed them for it.

That's exactly what happened. Most of them died for preaching this resurrection of Jesus. But they died willingly because they knew he is the life.

[16:26] The resurrection of Jesus also says he's coming again. And he will make everything new. Revelation chapter 21, verse 5. All things will be made new. Why?

Because Christ has risen from the dead. He demonstrates the newness. When you see the resurrection of Jesus, you see the future breaking into the present.

You see the future glory of the kingdom right there breaking into the present, showing us what will be. His resurrection will usher in a new age in the earth to come.

You know, I'm kind of a geek. And I thought about, I did, I really did. I thought about Sam Ganji. Lord of the Rings.

Remember Frodo had a buddy who kept him going. Without Sam, there's no Frodo. Okay? Sam kept him going. And at the end of the return of the king, where everything, the ring has been destroyed, and Frodo and Sam are, they thought they were dead.

[17:36] They're recovering. Remember, they're recovering in the great city. And they're sitting there, and they're waking up. And Sam looks up and sees Gandalf.

He says, I thought you were dead. Then he says something that was really beautiful. I thought you were dead. Is everything sad going to come untrue?

What's happening to the world? Is everything sad going to come untrue? Yes. Talking anew.

And he's telling us, the resurrection of Christ is saying to all of us that everything sad will come untrue because Jesus is the life.

Now, if that's true, he changes how we live now. Here we come to the third reason Jesus is the life.

[18:42] We will be raised physically at the end of time, but for now, we are raised spiritually. For you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked according to the prince of the power of the air.

You were trapped in darkness, spiritually dead. Spiritual death means unresponsive to God. When you heard the Bible preached, when you heard someone talk about the Bible, you went... But when he makes you alive, that's John 3, the born-again experience.

When he makes you alive, now you take God seriously. Now you realize, are you kidding me? That Jesus is real? That was my story.

He's real? It's true? And when that happens, you have entered into a spiritual resurrection.

Remember in John chapter 10, verse 10, Jesus speaking says, The thief comes only to steal, to kill, and destroy.

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. What is that life? That life he's talking about, that eternal life right now. It's a quality of life now. But that will never end.

[ 19 : 55 ] That will only get better when you close your eyes. That life that he's talking about, that he's come to give us abundantly, flows right into eternity, into the new heavens, into the new earth.

To be even clear, it's Christ's resurrection life living in us right now. You see, when Jesus, the power that rose Christ from the dead, is the same power that resurrected you, that made you alive to Christ.

Now watch this. The Spirit of God comes to make you alive. He doesn't then leave. He makes you alive and stays there. That's why your life is changing gradually.

You're learning. You're hungering for more of Christ. His word means something to you. You are putting away bad things in your life. And when he reveals stuff, you say, Oh, Lord, forgive me.

Keep me from that. You're walking. That's the resurrection life of Christ in you. It's a quality of life. What does it look like?

[ 21 : 05 ] It's living all of life attuned to the reality and the presence of Jesus with you. It's walking in his power and word.

It's kingdom living. You're not worried about who's in the White House. You have another king.

You're not worried about America. Not fully.

Because you have an eternal kingdom. We're trying to get people into that kingdom. We're trying to get people to submit to that king. Because we know that will take them.

Listen. When I close, when I go here to close my eyes for the last time on this world, you know what I will not be thinking? Who's in the White House?

I will not be thinking I'm so glad to be an American. What I will be thinking is King Jesus.

[ 22 : 03 ] King Jesus. I'm coming. I'm on my way, Lord. Open the door. Here I come. Red Fox. The big one has got me.

I'm coming. I'll be thinking about him. And my family. And yes, you. But I want to die a good death. I want to die in a way that says, He really believed, y'all.

He really believed. Death is not the end. We're not terrified. You don't know. And watch this. That's King. That's his resurrection life in me now. Death is not terrifying anymore.

And you are no longer rule. Listen. You are no longer ruled by the passions or fashions that are made up by people in this world. The world does not dictate your identity anymore.

Does not tell you what you should love. Does not tell you how to live the good life. When I was growing up, I'm going to be honest.

[ 23 : 08 ] When I was growing up in my neighborhood, everybody wanted to be a pimp. Meaning, all the guys want to have many women in their lives. Pimp life.

That's what we talked about. I had a friend of mine. They called him the pimp. At Temple University. I'll never forget. Because that's what we thought about. Many women in our lives.

You know. Yeah, we're going to have a harem. That was our mentality. And don't look at me like that because it ain't going away. Talk about rims.

What's yours? Your 401k? How's it doing? You're living for how much you have stored up.

Remember what the parable of the rich man and Jesus, you know, what happened to him, right?

Okay, that's another story. See, we all got our idols. Some just seem more respectable than others, but they're all deadly.

[ 24 : 10 ] They're all false gods that promise you the good life and they will not deliver. Or if they do deliver, it's temporary. You see, Jesus is the life.

Resurrection life is recognized. You begin to recognize those idols. You begin to recognize those things that are holding on to your heart, that are trying to claim you. Jesus does this for you and much more, revealing those idols.

He becomes your life. You see, resurrection life, when you say Jesus is the life, he then becomes your life. Colossians 3. If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died. Your old life is gone. And your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Christ, who is your life.

[ 25 : 19 ] What makes me tick is safe. That cannot be touched by the fashions or politics or sociology or psychology or nationalism or racism or whatever thing you want.

My life cannot be touched. It is hidden with Christ in God. When you put your faith in Jesus, he kills off the old you, the old life.

You still struggle. Watch this. With aspects of that old life, but it's not controlling you. It should not. You're not. Don't believe it. You are not in control by your old sins.

You may give in to them and submit, but you're not in control. You have a new life principle. You have a new life. You have a new person living in you who's made you new because he is the life and your life.

So knowing and pleasing him now is your great passion. Knowing him is your security. Knowing him is your identity. You know, this hit me last week in my study leave.

[ 26 : 37 ] One of the things that is so beautiful about being alive in Christ is that every good thing that happens to me, I know it's a gift from him. Every good gift.

Every good experience that happens to me, I know it's a gift from him. But watch this. And it's only a pale reflection of the better to come.

If I'm enjoying a good steak, medium, juicy, I know that my taste buds are excited now, but boy, oh boy, they're going to be truly excited in the new heavens and new earth.

I love my family. But I know that, but they have to, my girls have to leave me. They go home and I hate that when they leave me. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

My family is beautiful and I love it, but oh my goodness, there's come a time when my family will never leave me again. There's come a time where I will know, I will know my family and know my brothers and sisters in ways that I could never know.

[ 27 : 45 ] We will be closer than we ever have been. Every good gift now will be on steroids in the life to come. It's a gift now from God.

Everything that happens to you that's a good thing is a gift from God. But so worship the giver, not the gift. Worship the giver.

I mean, how many of you have been to an art show? Museum? Any museums? Yeah. You walk in there and you see all these beautiful things. I'm going to say art. Paintings, wonderful.

And you go, oh, this is so beautiful. Oh my gosh. Oh, look at that. Oh, that's magnificent. Oh my goodness. What's the next question? Who made it?

Who's the artist? Because if you're smart, you recognize something. The artist is more important than the painting. Because if the painting is destroyed, the artist can recreate it.

[ 28 : 44 ] And guess what? He can make something. The artist, he or she, can do even better than that. So what you want is not merely the creation. You want to know the artist.

Every good gift that God gives us is crying out to us. Look at the artist. Resurrection life puts you in touch with the artist.

And when you have the artist, his gifts are not enough anymore. Because you want him. You want that artist. You want to be close to that artist. Because you know he's got everything.

This artist, this great artist, this ultimate artist has everything you could ever need or want. I got up late, but I'm going to finish.

I'm going to wrap this up. Because I don't want to keep you past the buffet hour. What resurrection life shows us ultimately is what is our real passion?

[ 30 : 00 ] What is our ruling passion? If I would ask each one of you, most of you would say, knowing Jesus and making him known.

Loving Jesus. Obeying Jesus. And I would say, praise the Lord. Amen to that. But there's something underneath that too.

And you find out what's underneath that when you get in a jam. Or a decision needs to be made. And you have all these other ideas coming towards you.

And yet you don't choose Jesus. That's called sin, by the way. So we're all guilty. Why do we do that? When we know who he is, why do we choose sin?

What is going on? There's something underneath. You have a ruling passion, a new one, that's Christ. He is that ultimate passion.

[ 31 : 00 ] That one that draws, that pulls you and makes your life. You give your life and your energies to that passion. That's a ruling passion. You give yourself, you make it happen.

You want that. But if it's Jesus, then why do I still sin? Well, it's because there are other things in your life that pull on you. You can see them sometimes by the vows you made to yourself.

I made some vows to myself. You ever make a vow like this? I'll never be hurt again. You ever make a vow like this? I will never disappoint others because you were embarrassed.

Have you ever, I will never trust another person. I will never trust another church. I will never trust another pastor.

Let's bring me in there too. I will be successful no matter what. I'll never be poor again. I'll never be broke again. I will be the smartest person in the room.

[ 32 : 09 ] You see, those are the things underneath. And the reason we choose sin, because those things are pulling on us. You see, if you will never trust anyone again, or you never, that's going to color your whole life.

And you're going to be hard to get along with. Because you don't trust, you won't trust. Because you got hurt some time ago, and you vowed, I'll never trust anyone again. Well, guess what? That's going to color you. And when people come into your life, you will have trouble.

They will have trouble getting into you, talking to you, being close to you. Because you're saying, I will never be hurt again. I will never trust again. I will never, fill in the blank. And so those become ruling passions.

That protect you. That, I will never be alone again. And so, if that's a ruling passion, you will do everything you can to make sure that doesn't happen.

If that's a rule, if I will never trust, I will never trust people again. People let me down. Then you, everything, you will do everything in your life to make sure you don't get burned by people. Which means you won't trust them.

[ 33 : 26 ] Which means if you can't trust people, guess what? You can't love people. I made a vow some years ago to myself.

I got banged up one time in this church, church planter, young pastor. And some pastors, some elders that thought they were doing me a solid and they hurt me bad.

So much so that I never forget that Sunday I had to preach. And one of them came to apologize. And he said to me, how could you preach like that after what we did to you? Now they repented, thank God.

The whole team repented. And what I'm saying right now, there's someone in this room who can verify exactly what I'm saying. I won't tell you who. So I'm not making anything up. But I promised myself.

I'm not going to tell you the vow because it might get ugly. But I made a promise to myself. You know what happened? God wouldn't let me keep the vow.

[ 34 : 25 ] I was trying to protect myself. But you know, when you grow a little bit in Jesus, he begins to say to you, that vow you made ain't no good.

That vow you said about never being hurt again, you protecting yourself from everybody. Nobody can get close to you. Now, no, no, no, you want to, I'm going to crack that shell. Come on in here. When you grow in Jesus, he begins to take those vows, those ruling passions, and show them to be idols that are trying to protect you.

Idols that are trying to give you life. Idols that are trying to make life worth living. And you find out they're not Jesus. And if they're not Jesus, they will kill you.

They will hurt you. Because that's what idols do. But aren't you glad that in this resurrection life, he exposes the idols of our hearts and crushes those idols so that we can live?

Maybe you were hurt before. Believe me, I understand. I do. But if you cut yourself off from people to protect yourself, you cut yourself off from love.

[ 35 : 40 ] You cut yourself off from being known. You cut yourself off from being able to know other people because people open up to you as you open up to them. I have to trust that Jesus will protect me.

I have to trust that Jesus will be my security. And that frees me up now to trust you. I may not want naturally to trust you. But because Jesus is my life, I can.

And if you do, and if things happen that I wish hadn't happened, Jesus is my life. Nothing you can do can touch my life.

Because it's safe in Christ. I want to say, I'm sorry. I got to wrap this up. Is it tracking?

Do you kind of see what I'm saying? If he's the life, he then becomes your life. If he is your life, trusting and walking with him allows you to live and enjoy all of his creation.

[ 36 : 54 ] And to deal with ups and downs and people and even death, which is the ultimate downer. So my question to you is, is he the life for you?

Or is something else the life? If he's not, something else is. And I'm going to tell you something. Whatever that thing is or person or whatever, it's going to let you down. It probably already has. But you keep trying. Because you don't know anything else. But I'm trying to tell you, there is someone else.

There is something else. His name is Jesus. He's the way, the truth, the life. Him. He is it. He will pick you up. He will make you fully human.

He will give your life meaning. Doesn't mean you won't go through heck. You will face heck. You will face problems and trials and illnesses and pain. But you will never be alone.

[ 37 : 54 ] And he will strengthen and walk with you through it. And in the end, you win. In the end, you win because he's already won for you.

I will end with this C.S. Lewis story. And this is my story. Some of you know this story already.

I was in Australia some years ago. And I had a chance to do some street preaching. Only time I've ever done it in my life. Don't plan on doing it again.

Terrified. But I got drafted. I got voluntold. Everybody stepped back but me. Downtown Sydney, Australia.

Downtown business district. Shopping. Light turns red. They put the mic in my face. Here's what jumped in my mind. Some of you have probably heard that Jesus said he was the way, the truth, and the life.

[ 38 : 58 ] You're probably wondering, who is this Jesus? I'm not lying. They all turned around. And started looking at me. I'm like, ooh. And I told him the C.S. Lewis story.

I gave him the short version. I'm going to give you the full version. C.S. Lewis said this. You, you, I paraphrased it, but he gave this back. He says, I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Jesus, about him.

I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. He says, that is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.

I am the way. I am the truth. And life. He would even be a lunatic on the level of a man who says he is a poached egg.

Or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Even if this man was and is the son of God, or else a madman or something worse.

[ 40 : 12 ] You can shut him up for a fool. You can spit at him and kill him as a demon. Or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher.

He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. Later he says, now it seems to me obvious that he was neither a lunatic nor a fiend.

And consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that he was and is God.

Who is this Jesus? Who is he? That's the first question.

Second, who are you in relationship to him? Father, thank you for loving us so much that you opened our eyes.

[ 41 : 18 ] We could not open our eyes ourselves. You opened them that we would see that Jesus is neither liar nor lunatic. But he truly is the Lord of glory.

Come among us. That he is the second person of the Trinity. God in human flesh, oh Father. Thank you for sending your son. That we might be delivered from the fashions and passions of this world and life.

That we may have a new identity. Not what the labels the world puts on us. But we may have a new identity. And it's called son of God. Daughter of God.

Christian. New creation in Christ. That is who we are. We are your children. And help us to live each day out of that place.

Living in your resurrected life according to your truth. Walking in your way. And may we do it with great joy.

[ 42 : 19 ] In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen.