

# Crossing Into New Life

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Preacher: Jeff Kriesel

[ 0 : 0 0 ] This morning we have a guest preacher, since Matthew is on vacation, I'd like to ask Jeff Kriesel to come forward. Jeff is the RUF pastor at the Air Force Academy, and if you would like to know more about his ministry, I'm sure he would be glad to tell you about it, and he even has a sign-up sheet out front for his email newsletter, and he also brought swag.

So please welcome Jeff Kriesel. Good morning, everyone. My name is Jeff Kriesel. I'm the RUF campus minister at the Air Force Academy.

I'm excited to be here. I always love coming to Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church and worshipping with you all and bringing God's word to God's people here. So for those who are unfamiliar with RUF, it stands for Reformed University Fellowship.

RUF is the PCA's campus ministry. We're at 160 campuses, not only nationwide, but globally. God is doing some amazing things through RUF, and I'd love to tell you more about what he's doing at the Air Force Academy.

I will talk your ear off if you grab me after the service. RUF strives to bring the church to the campus because we believe that the campus is in desperate need of the church.

[ 1 : 1 7 ] That is our goal. That is our hope. So that is what we are after. So fun fact, the last time I preached at Cheyenne Mountain was the first Sunday in 2019.

And now I get to preach the last Sunday in 2019. So my year, your year, I guess, has been bookended with me being here at Cheyenne Mountain. It's kind of neat. A lot has happened this past year in my life, in our ministry.

We have made some difficult decisions. We have faced some very difficult crossroads. I'm sure you all have been through the same. As you think back over your 2019, what were some of the difficult decisions that you made this year?

What were some of the terrifying crossroads that you faced or the roads that you chose to take?

And have you been pleased with the roads that you have chosen?

Or have your choice has been accompanied by doubt and regret? Perhaps you started a new job. You accepted a new job this year.

[ 2 : 2 7 ] And it has far exceeded your expectations. It has been just a godsend. Or maybe you accepted a job and it has not met any of your expectations. And it has just drained you.

It has sucked the life out of you and your family and your marriage. Maybe you bought a new house in 2019. And you love this new house. It's perfect. Or maybe you bought a new house and it is falling apart.

And you're starting to regret that you didn't buy that other house that you were eyeballing. Or maybe you regret that you bought a house at all. Maybe in 2019, you stood at the reconciliation crossroads with one of your family or friends.

Perhaps you went down this one road and you pursued reconciliation and they rejected your offer. And that hurt really bad.

Or maybe you took this other road and you chose not to pursue reconciliation. You're going to kick that can down the road a little bit, maybe into 2020, which isn't a bad thing. But which road did you choose?

[ 3 : 3 2 ] We choose all sorts of roads day in and day out. So as you head into 2020, what are some of the crossroads that you're facing? What are some of the difficult decisions that are driving your New Year's resolutions?

That's one way to find out what crossroads you're facing. Perhaps you are like me and you are standing at that dreaded weight loss crossroads.

I feel it every year. You're looking down one road and you see a path that leads to sacrificing your time to work out consistently and to prepare healthy meals.

And there's sacrifice required for that road. Or you can take this other road, which is comfortable and it's familiar. You know, it's easy.

You love that road. But then at the end of the year and your pants are bigger and your waist is larger and you're like, man, I'm going to maybe take that other road in 2021.

[ 4 : 37 ] You know, maybe you are at a crossroads of a recurring struggle. A recurring struggle that just won't go away. Maybe you're struggling with alcohol or with porn or with workaholism or with greed or with materialism and you're tired of it and you're standing at this crossroads and you're wanting to know, you're trying to decide which path should I take.

You look down one road and you're like, this road requires me to have awkward community and vulnerability. And I have to be honest about my struggles and that's painful.

And I'm not sure if I want to go down that road, even though I know it would be for my good. Or I can go down this road, which means I'm going to retain a bad habit, something that I hate, but I simultaneously love.

Right. Which road are you going to choose? The challenge with any crossroads is that there's pros and cons to whichever way that you go. There is a cost that we so often are not willing to pay.

Each road looks bumpy. Each road looks less than ideal. Some roads lead to uncomfortable lifestyle changes. Right. Some roads are marked by the fear of the unknown.

[ 5 : 51 ] Some roads take us back to the status quo. And then there are some roads that lead us to places that we know will harm us. But man, that road looks so enticing.

It's just painted with like fool's gold. And we want to take that road every chance we get. What do you do when you are standing at a crossroads and every direction looks terrible?

Or every direction looks like a dead end and you feel stuck? Are there any other options? Or are you stuck at that crossroads for another year? In our passage this morning, the Israelites find themselves at a terrifying crossroads.

Every direction looked like a dead end. It was a dead end. But God, in his great mercy, he makes a way. He makes another option. He paves another road.

And this road goes straight through the chaotic waters of the Red Sea. And he brings the Israelites from slavery to freedom. In a moment, he brings them from death to life.

[ 6 : 58 ] And that's where we are this morning in Exodus 14. So if you are willing and able, I invite you to stand for the reading of God's word. We'll be looking at Exodus 14, verses 5 through 22.

And it's somewhat of a long passage. So bend your knees. When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people.

And they said, What is this that we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us? So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him. And he took 600 chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.

And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them and camped at the sea by Pahaharoth in front of Baal-zaphon.

When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes. And behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?

[ 8 : 15 ] What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt? Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians, for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.

And Moses said to the people, Fear not. Stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.

The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent. The Lord said to Moses, Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.

And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them. And I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his hosts, his chariots and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I

am the Lord when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen. Then the angel of God, who was going before the host of Israel, moved and went behind them. And the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel.

[ 9 : 24 ] And there was the cloud and the darkness, and it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. This is the word of the Lord.

Let me pray for us. Gracious and good Heavenly Father, as we celebrated this Advent season, the coming of the Messiah, Emmanuel, God incarnate, we know that you are with us.

We know that you are present. We pray that we also would be present and attentive to your word this morning. We pray that you would focus our hearts and our minds on you. And it's through Christ's name we pray. Amen.

You may be seated. All right, so in Exodus 14, the Israelites are at this terrifying crossroads.

[ 10 : 31 ] After the 10th plague, the 10th plague was the one in which the Lord passed through Egypt, and he killed all of the firstborn sons who were not protected, who weren't sheltered under the blood of the Passover lamb.

Okay, the blood of the Passover lamb acted as a substitutionary sacrifice for them so that God could pass over. The Egyptians, though, were not spared.

They had had enough of these plagues. They had had enough of the Israelites. You see, the pros were now way down here, and the cons now outweighed the pros by a landslide.

Okay, and the Egyptians were like, we're done with the Israelites. Take what you want. They gave them this large spoil, and they kicked them out of Egypt. But not much time passes. The dust finally settles, and Pharaoh, he once again, he regrets his decision.

He realizes that he just pushed out their entire slave labor force out of their nation. And so he gathers his massive, powerful, superpower army, and he takes, it says, 600 chosen chariots, and then all the rest of his chariots.

[ 11 : 46 ] So he has a slew of chariots. And keep in mind, chariots were like the killing machines of the ancient Near East, right? They would be akin to like F-22s or F-35s or Bradleys or Apaches or whatnot.

These were like the killing machines of the day. And he takes all of them, and they start chasing after 2 million Israelite, essentially peasants, children and elderly included.

So keep in mind, the Israelites aren't going on some casual ruck march out of Egypt, okay? This is a hard, hard march, okay? They are carrying their children.

They are caring for their elderly. They are dragging along all of their possessions. And they just got a lot of new possessions when they were pushed out of Egypt. They got all sorts of gold and heavy items.

They were guiding all of their livestock through a desert, mind you, okay? This was not an easy hike. They were easy pickings for the Egyptian army.

[ 12 : 51 ] And so the Israelites are at a crossroads. They really only have four options, four directions they can go. They can try to run along the shore.

They can go left or right. But the Egyptians are in chariots. And so eventually the Israelites are going to be caught, and they're going to be forced back into slavery, okay?

So left and right don't look like great options, okay? Another option is they can do an about-face, and they can try to take on the Egyptians head-on, right?

They can try to go toe-to-toe with this great superpower. But they're a superpower. And the Israelites are essentially a bunch of non-military peasants. How were they going to defeat this large military?

So going backwards didn't seem like a great option either. The only other option they had was to go forward and try to swim across the Red Sea with all of their stuff, with all their children, with all of their livestock.

[ 13 : 53 ] And keep in mind, back in the ancient world, swimming wasn't exactly a popular pastime. Most biblical historians, they believe that very few in the ancient world were even able to swim.

So if they had even tried that option, they would have eventually drowned, okay? They were in quite the pickle. They were stuck. They couldn't go left, right, back, or forwards.

They couldn't fight their way out. They couldn't run away, and they couldn't swim their way out of this. They couldn't save themselves. And so the Israelites did the only thing that they could do. That is this. They cry out to God. They pray to God. Now, while this was the right thing to do, okay, it was right for them at this crossroads to pray to God, but they do it in a really twisted way.

You see, instead of crying out to God for deliverance, they cry out at God with accusations of abandonment. And there's a massive difference between the two here.

[15:02] They cry out at God for abandoning them. And they start condemning God through their mediator, Moses. And they say, essentially, what have you done bringing us out of Egypt?

Life was good back in Egypt. Don't you remember, Moses, how good life was back in Egypt? Yeah, they were harsh to us, and they treated us like lowly slaves.

And oh, yeah, of course, there was the whole incident where they were throwing our children into the Nile River. But that was on us. We were the ones being obstinate and disruptive. We'll be better this time.

We'll go back to slavery where it's familiar and safe, as if it's safe at all, to go back to slavery. And we'll be better this time, right?

And then they say this sarcastic line. They say, is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? That's such a low blow, right, to Moses, who has just delivered them from this wicked, terrible situation.

[16:08] You see what has happened here. The crossroads in which they are standing, the fear that they are experiencing has caused them to become delusional. They're starting to rewrite history, their own history.

If you recall, the night before Exodus 14, the Israelites are celebrating the fact that God has delivered them, that he has given them this Passover lamb to cover and atone for their sins, that he was going to make a way for them from slavery to freedom.

They're worshiping God. They're dancing. And now they're wanting to go back to slavery in Egypt because the fear they're experiencing at this crossroads.

They're looking down all of the roads and each road appears to be a dead end and their present fear has caused them to forget their past oppression. All right?

They have short-term memories when it comes to the oppression they experienced before. And the same is so often true for us. Like the Israelites, when we find ourselves at difficult crossroads, where difficult decisions have to be made, or when an old oppressor or an old struggle or an old bad habit is like hot on our tails, wanting to enslave us, wanting to bring us down, wanting to allure us back to our old behaviors, our old way of life.

[17:35] We are prone to look back at our old way of life and think to ourselves, it wasn't that bad. It wasn't that bad.

But it was that bad, right? It was that bad. We just so quickly forget how bad it was. We think that our old life, the familiar, can satisfy us when we know in our heart that it won't.

You see, your old life wants you to forget how bad it was before. It wants you to feel like there is no escape. It wants you to feel like your only option is to concede and start walking backwards.

It wants you to feel hopeless. It wants you to feel stuck. But don't forget what life was like before. Don't forget what the oppression that you experienced before.

My friends, there is no joy in jealousy. Ever. Why would you go back to that? There is no rest in rage. There is no peace and panic and there is no love and lust.

[18:44] Never. Right? Why would we go back to that? We know these things, but when we find ourselves at crossroads, like in Exodus 14, our fear, it causes us to forget our past oppression and then go back to it.

But I want to remind you that at these crossroads, you aren't stuck. Okay? You can look to the left, you can look to the right, you can look backwards and forwards, and they may all look like dead ends.

But thankfully, it goes to an out-of-the-box thinker. And in Exodus 14, we see him graciously pave another road that takes them straight through the sea.

Verse 13 and 14, Moses says these words. He says, Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you.

The Lord will fight for you, and all you have to be is silent. In other words, stand still and watch God work.

[ 19 : 53 ] You can't save yourself. You are stuck. But I can save you. Right? He's saying, I'm going to get you through this. I'm going to make another way.

All you have to do is just stand still and be silent. But here's the thing, we don't like standing still and being silent. Right? Especially when it comes to our salvation.

We feel like we have to contribute something, anything, to our salvation. standing still and being silent requires us to trust in God more than ourselves.

It requires us to relinquish the one thing that we hold so dear, and that is our sense of control.

Right? We have to believe that God knows what's best for us.

We have to believe that God is for us, that he is with us, and that he loves us more than we can fathom. We have to believe that serving God is more life-giving, it is more satisfying, than serving Pharaoh.

[ 21 : 02 ] Everyone serves something or someone, right? Everyone serves a Pharaoh. My Pharaoh may be different than your Pharaoh, but it's the exact same Pharaoh. Right? It's a Pharaoh who wants to pull you back into an old way, an old pattern, an old habit.

It's a Pharaoh who demands your full allegiance, and then when you try to escape, he hunts you down and tries to put the shackles back on. Now, what is your Pharaoh this morning?

What Pharaoh are you prone to serve? To rephrase this question, what do you serve to give your life meaning? If it isn't God, it's a Pharaoh, okay?

And it can be a very good thing that we turn into God things, and when we do that, those things become worthless things. All right? Is it your job? Is that the thing that you are serving to give your life meaning?

Is it your reputation? Is it your hobbies? Is it your family? Is it your friends? Is it your looks? Is it your parents' approval?

[ 22 : 14 ] What is it that you serve to give your life meaning? After winning an Academy Award, Reese Witherspoon, she held her new trophy tightly to her chest, and she said these words.

She said, I'm just trying to matter, and you have all made me feel tonight that I might have accomplished that. You see what Reese Witherspoon has done?

She has made the opinions of others her Pharaoh. She was serving them to get meaning. Madonna says this about her life. She said, my drive in life comes from the fear of being mediocre.

I push past one spell of it and discover myself as a special human being. But then I feel that I am mediocre unless I do something else, because even though I have become somebody, I still have to prove that I am somebody, and my struggle has never ended, and I guess it never will.

She's swimming upstream. She's serving a Pharaoh that can't meet her needs. Exodus 14 shows us that the struggle that she faces, the upstream swimming, it can end.

[ 23 : 31 ] We aren't stuck at this crossroads, because God has graciously entered the crossfire. Did you see this in verse 19, what God does?

Verse 19 says, then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel.

I don't know why we missed that. We kind of glossed over that point. That God moved from being in the front to going to the rear to shield and defend them from the Egyptian superpower.

You see, God stands between the Israelites and their enemies. He says to Pharaoh with that action, if you want to attack, if you want to condemn my people, you have to go through me first.

You have to go through me and good luck with that. Right? And he says the same thing to your Pharaohs as well. He says, if you want to get to my child, if you want to condemn my child, you have to go through me first.

[ 24 : 38 ] And my friends, that is some really, really good news. That we have a God who shields us from our enemies. Now this may surprise you, but my favorite part about being a campus minister, it isn't going snowboarding with my cadets or beating them and bowling.

They're all so terrible at bowling. It isn't even officiating their wedding ceremonies, which is like such a joy. My favorite part about being a campus minister is when a cadet comes to me with tears streaking down their face with their head hanging low because they feel the weight of their guilt and their shame and I get to be the one who reminds them of Romans 8 verse 1.

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. I get to say that to them over and over and over again to press that truth into their soul so they believe it.

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. In other words, when God stands between you and Pharaoh and he says, you can't condemn my child, he is saying to your sin, you can't condemn them.

He's saying to other people's opinions of you, you can't condemn my child. He's saying to you when you try to condemn yourself, you can't condemn my child because there is no condemnation because I shield them from it.

[ 26 : 16 ] The other thing that God does here is he not only shields them from Pharaoh but his deliverance is decisive. Right? Did you notice this? In Romans 8 verse 1 it says, there is now no condemnation.

I love that word now. I love that Paul threw that word in there. That present tense reality that we now experience no condemnation. As Christians, we live in an objective no condemnation reality. Even if we live our lives as if we are still under condemnation, we're free from it. Okay? In Exodus 14, the Israelites' deliverance was decisive.

It was a now deliverance. Okay? In one moment they were doomed. In one moment they're on this side of the Red Sea. They're on the condemnation side.

And then in the next moment they're on this side of the Red Sea. They're on the justification side. In one moment it happens like that. It was a decisive shift from being in slavery to being in freedom, from being under death to being in life.

[ 27 : 25 ] And this is the paradigm of our salvation as well. The Red Sea is our paradigm. Okay? When we cross over decisively from life, from death to life.

In Christianity, God brings us from death into life in a decisive act. every other religion says that justification, it's the process, it's being right with God, becoming right with God.

Justification is a process in every other religion except for Christianity. Okay? In every other religion it says, do this and do this and do this.

Follow all these rules and regulations and maybe you have what it takes. Maybe you're strong enough to earn your way into heaven or nirvana or enlightenment. This is what they essentially say. They say, okay, you can't go left, you can't go right, you can't go back. So start swimming even though you can't swim. Like how cruel do you have to be to like throw someone into water and say, swim your way to shore when they can't swim.

[ 28 : 38 ] That's essentially what every religion does. every religion entails telling its followers, try harder. Keep trying.

It's on you. And as a result, in those systems, there is never any rest. There's never any assurance of salvation because you never know if you've done enough, if you've swam far enough.

You never know if you've reached the shore. Every religion says start swimming. When Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, one of my favorite theologians, when he would, he would want to figure out where somebody stood spiritually, he wouldn't beat around the bush.

He wouldn't overcomplicate evangelism. He would just ask him this question. He said, are you a Christian? And if their response was, well, I'm trying, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones would go on to explain that their answer indicated that they had no idea what Christianity was all about.

What makes one a Christian is not a change in effort, but a change in status, right? It's your status that changes your effort.

[ 29 : 58 ] It's not your effort that changes your status. We can't get that backwards. This status change is decisive, right? On my wedding day, I went from being not married to married in a moment.

My marital status changed in a decisive declaration, I now pronounce you husband and wife. In that moment, my life changed.

Something decisive had changed in my status. Now, what if someone came up to me 12 years later and asked, hey Jeff, are you married? And I said, well, I'm trying.

That'd probably be a very confusing response for them to hear, and if my wife was overhearing, she'd probably smack me upside the top of my head. There's no I'm trying in marriage.

You are either married or you aren't married. There's no like middle ground called I'm trying. Okay? And likewise, you are either a Christian or you aren't a Christian.

[ 31 : 09 ] You're either on this side of the Red Sea or you're on this side of the Red Sea. You're either on the condemnation side or you're on the justification side. There is no I'm trying middle ground. The I'm trying middle ground is really called lost.

Through faith in Christ, you cross over from death to life. You cross over from being in Pharaoh's kingdom and under his rule and reign to being under God's kingdom, under God's rule and reign. When you cross over, you go from being out of God's family to being in God's family in a moment and you're in that family forever. You cross over from being under God's curse to being under God's blessing.

Have you crossed over? are you in God's family? Are you a citizen of God's kingdom? Are you a part of his church, Christ's bride?

I pray that you are. Have you crossed over? Listen, you don't cross over because of the quantity or the quality of your faith. You cross over because of the object of your faith. The object of our faith being the one who can part the waves, the one who is gracious, when we are faithless, the one who stands between us and Pharaoh and acts as our shield and defender.

[ 32 : 35 ] It's the object of our faith that matters. In Exodus 14, it shows us that crossing over from one side to the other, it's by God's grace alone. In that verse, it says, fear not, see the Lord's salvation, that he will work for you.

Look, it wasn't long ago. It was probably like, I don't know, a few minutes, 30 minutes, an hour or so before the seas part, that the Israelites are accusing God of abandoning them.

They're essentially mocking God and mocking his mediator. They're demonstrating how faithless they truly are. Faith wasn't exactly the Israelites' strongest attribute.

Right? But get this, they still crossed over. over. They still crossed over, and they crossed over with all of their mess, with all of their doubts, with all of their struggles, and guess what?

God still held back the water. Even though each Israelite had a different quality of faith, they were all equally saved.

[ 33 : 48 ] Likewise, in Christianity, you cross over with all of your mess. you cross over with all your doubts, with all your struggles. You don't have to clean yourself up first. You don't have to prove yourself worthy.

You don't have to swim a little bit first. As we're going to see next Sunday, I get to be here with y'all for two weeks straight, which is awesome. This week, we're really focusing on justification.

Next week, we're going to focus on sanctification. Next week, we're going to see that until you're on the justification side of the Red Sea, the sanctification process cannot begin.

But here's the thing. You can't cross over the sea on your own. And we know it, but we try so hard to get across. To get across, you need a mediator.

You need someone who's going to obey God's word and who's going to part the waters and is going to make a way when there was no way before. You need someone who would be faithful for you.

[ 34 : 52 ] You see, when the Israelites were standing at this crossroads and the Egyptians are right on, like they're hot on their tail, their first reaction, it's like their natural response was to start accusing God, to start blaming God for abandoning them.

They essentially say, you did this to us. Like some gods you are. You brought us out of Egypt just to die in the wilderness. We'd rather serve Pharaoh than you.

That's what they say to the God of the universe who just delivered them from Egypt. And how does God respond to their faithlessness? He turns to Moses, the one person who was faithful, the one person who wasn't accusing God of abandoning them, the one person who was faithful throughout this process, and he rebukes Moses on behalf of the Israelites' faithlessness.

The one person who didn't deserve to be rebuked was rebuked because of his role as their mediator, as their representative. And as a result, he essentially takes upon himself the Israelites' faithlessness, and he gives them his faithfulness.

He gives them the favor that God has bestowed on him so that he could part the waves and that they could walk on dry ground. Moses was a great prophet, but we know on this side of the cross that Moses was ultimately a foretype of a greater prophet who would bring about an infinitely greater redemption.

[ 36 : 32 ] It was the night before Jesus' crucifixion, and he retreated to the Garden of Gethsemane, and he found himself at the most terrifying crossroads.

Moses. His enemies surrounded him. In a sense, he was stuck. He was boxed in, but unlike the Israelites, Jesus had the power to save himself.

This was the man who fed the 5,000. He created nothing. He created something from nothing, right? This is the guy who walked on water, who healed the lame, healed the blind, who raised people from the dead and cast out demons.

That's how powerful Jesus is. Jesus could have snapped all of the, all of his enemies out of existence. He could have snapped them into dust, but that wasn't the road that he chose.

Instead, he took the road that led to a cross where he would die in our place. You see, in Gethsemane, Jesus cried out to God. But unlike the Israelites who cried out to God in an accusatory way, Jesus cries out to God in this faith-saturated prayer in which he relinquishes control and he says, not my will, but your will.

[ 37 : 58 ] And he knew what that prayer meant. With those words, he chose a road that would take him to a cross. He chose the road of a criminal so that we could take the road of adoption.

He chose the road of a slave so that we could take the road of freedom. And he chose the road of death so that we could take the road of life.

He chose the road that would lead him into the chaotic waters of death. In order to construct an imperishable road with his blood that leads us to new life.

It's the great deliverance story. As you head into 2020, you have a lot of difficult decisions to make. There aren't many guarantees in life, but this is one thing that we all know is certain, and that is that trials will come your way.

The Christian life does not promise an easy life. In fact, it promises the exact opposite. In 2020, you're going to face some difficult, terrifying crossroads.

[ 39 : 09 ] You're going to have to make decisions that are costly. You're going to have to make decisions that are painful. You're going to make decisions that may alter the trajectory of your life and those around you.

But if you're a Christian, when you find yourself at these difficult crossroads in 2020, and you feel the enemy closing in, you feel that old way of life luring you back, I pray that you will let these words that Moses said to the Israelites wash over you again and again, day after day.

Fear not. Stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you. Through faith in Christ, you are standing not on the condemnation side of the sea.

And that changes the way that you do life. You're on the justification side. So strive to make decisions in 2020 that is in accordance with that reality.

Make decisions that say, I believe that my justification is true. You can face the most terrifying crossroads with confidence and you can make very difficult decisions because you know that the God who sent his only son to die for you, he will not leave or abandon you now.

[ 40 : 39 ] He will make a way because that's the kind of God that he is. And that's the promise that he makes to us each and every day. Have you crossed over? Amen.

Let me pray for us. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this paradigm of salvation that you have shown us in Exodus 14. Because of your overwhelming grace, that you have decided to free us from a life of oppression and bring us into a life of freedom.

Not because of anything that we have done, but because of your sovereign grace alone. We pray that you would continue to shield and defend us from the enemy, that you would keep us from the allurements and the enticements of this world.

Keep us from Pharaoh's grip. We thank you that you love us so much that you would send your only son to pave a new road with his blood into life.

We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.