

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Amen.

It was perhaps one of the most heroic acts made in the midst of the tragic event. Jeff Bauman, in the hospital, both of his legs blown off by one of the bombs that went off at the Boston Marathon a couple of months ago, but through the intense, unimaginable pain, he had a message to relay. He had looked one of the bombers in the eyes right before he placed his backpack behind Jeff and left, that backpack which just a few moments later exploded near the finish line. What Jeff knew, what he had seen, what he shared was one of the most incredible and important pieces of information used in identifying the Boston Marathon bombers.

Jeff wasn't just a hero. He was a witness, someone who saw something so important that he had to, he wanted to share it. You're a witness as well. Not that you've seen a crime take place, but you've seen something way better. You have an awesome message to tell...about Jesus. And he wants you to Tell It on the Mountain Because You Are His Witness!

You certainly aren't the first. If you look through here (show the Bible), you can see countless eye-witness reports about Jesus and what he's done...from the disciples, from the apostles, like James and Paul and others who wrote books of the Bible, and from other followers of Jesus as well.

They had a story to tell. A story of a man, who seemed just like any other man, but he wasn't. He was Jesus, the Son of God. He is God.

That's what the children learned throughout the week, starting with Moses, who talked with God on Mt. Sinai, God, who gave him the Ten Commandments, which show us just how much we sin. Then there was Elijah, who saw God's power firsthand when the real God, the true God, burned up his sacrifice, God who is powerful to do anything, even save us.

And then Jesus, whom God himself declared to be his Son, true God. Jesus, who did something about our sins at the climax of the story, on the Mount of Golgotha, where he saved us, where he died on the cross to pay for all sins, yours and mine included.

That's the story, the true story, that so many have witnessed, here, in the Bible.

Ok, so that puts us at a disadvantage, right? Or...does it? I mean, not one of us can brag that we got to physically touch Jesus, maybe give him a hug or a high five, or even touch the holes where the nails went through his hands and his feet, like his disciple Thomas got to after Jesus rose from the dead, or sit at the feet of the great Teacher and just listen to him.

None of you have ever seen one of Jesus' heart-wrenching stares when you do something wrong, like Peter did after he sinfully denied knowing Jesus or being associated with him three times...or one of his smiles that can just chase away the gloom, like when he talks about the love of God, the same love he would show by dying on the cross to save us.

And yet, in our lives, we witness his love every day. Probably the easiest way is by looking at everything you have, all your blessings, they come from our loving God. Or this past week, over 45 children got to

hear about their Savior, Jesus...what a witness of God's love! Or just the fact that you and I screw up, we sin and commit wrongs every day and yet Jesus forgives us unconditionally...have you witnessed that? That's God's love. And best of all, we have a book, the Bible, where we can look and see God's love in action and hear about how that same love he gives to us. Oh yes, we have seen so much from our loving God and Savior, and now he calls us to share, to tell others what we have seen, what we have heard. God sends to go and tell and be his witnesses.

You know how the saying goes, "There's no time like the present"? There are people in our world who are dying each and every day without ever hearing about Savior and his love. That's scary. But you and I have the power to do something about that. It's time to be a witness of Jesus right now. It's time to tell others about Jesus our Savior right now.

So what's stopping you? Oh, I know, we can all sit back here and talk about how important it is to get the message out so that precious souls can be won for Christ, but so often, for so many of us, that's as far as it goes. We talk the talk but don't walk the walk.

So, what's stopping you? You know what? There's really only one answer to that question. What's stopping me, what prevents me from being a witness for Jesus? It's me. What prevents you...is you.

You know the excuses. You've probably made some of them yourselves. Excuses like, "I have no time" (even though I'm guessing you rub shoulders with people who don't know Jesus, who need Jesus probably every day. So many missed opportunities.).

Or, "I wouldn't know what to say." I think the Bible's a pretty good place to start. We'll talk more about that excuse later.

"I'm not a very good speaker." Is that a good enough excuse to stop you from sharing the life-giving message of Jesus with souls who are perishing and going to hell?

Or, "I'm afraid that they won't listen to me, they'll make fun of me, they'll reject me." As if being a witness is all about me, instead of being about Jesus.

And I'm sure there's tons of other excuses as well. But make no mistake, the reason behind every one of those excuses why you and I don't go out and be witnesses is sin. Us, taking God's command to "go and tell," and by our actions, or our inactivity and apathy, we're really saying, "No thanks, God. I'd rather not." That's sin.

But, those are sins Jesus died for. I hope if there was only one thing your child learned this week, it was that. Jesus is God's Son. Jesus is our Savior. Jesus loves us. Jesus saved us. Jesus died to pay for our sins. It's true. You know, the Bible sums it up so well when it says, "God so loved the world that he gave one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus, to live a perfect life where he never sinned. But Jesus, the perfect man, took on all our sins, died on the cross for them, and washed them away, forgave them all. And then, the story doesn't end there, but Jesus came back to life, rose from the dead on Easter Sunday,

his final victory over our sins, over Satan, and over death. Yes, for us and for our sins, Jesus lived, died, and rose.

That is the good news, not just what God wants us to share, but it's good news for you and me as well. We are God's witnesses of that fact, of that love of Jesus. Every time you see a baby baptized, God, their Father, washing their sins away and making them his own child, you see the love of Jesus. Every time you see your child forgive a sibling who did something mean to them, a wonderful example, you see the love of Jesus. Every time you see children, like all of the ones here this morning, standing up and singing praises to their God, you see the love of Jesus! Every time you confess your own sins and know that by the blood of Jesus, you are forgiven, you see the love of Jesus.

And that is the incredible love you get to be a witness of. You know, just a couple of minutes ago, we talked about an excuse for not going is that "I wouldn't know what to say." I think the VBS kids could help us out here. We learned some Take-Home points this week. Do you remember what they are? I'll help you...

God is with us! Our God is the one true God! Jesus is God's Son! Jesus is our Savior! Jesus Christ is Lord!

Each one of those, a wonderful message, a wonderful fact to give witness to. Sharing Jesus with someone is as easy as saying, "I have a Savior who loves me and he loves you too. Here's how much he did. Jesus lived. Jesus died. Jesus rose."

You know, you may not think you're saying the right words, you might stumble as you talk, you might be so nervous that person can see the beads of sweat running down your face. But God promises us if we go and tell, he works through us. When we're his witnesses, he works the results. And he provides an awesome mission field for us. This past week, our mission field was here, with almost 50 kids hearing about Jesus every day. And then we let them go, to tell family, friends, anyone, that Jesus Christ is our Savior and our Lord. And the mission field is just as bountiful for you as well.

If you're looking for a great example of a witness, Jeff Baumann, he's it. He saw something, and then shared what he could so others would be safe once those perpetrators were arrested. You're a witness as well. Your message is even better. Your message is even more urgent. You have a life-saving message, a message of Jesus, our Savior, who died to save all. And now, all that's left for you is to go and tell, that Jesus is Lord.

You don't need a mountain to shout it from. You have your own. It might be your workplace, at a family gather, even at the hedge on the edge of your property where you have conversations with your neighbor who doesn't go to church. That is your mountain.

So go! It's time to tell. And you know, seeing what Jesus has done for us, we're more than happy to be his witnesses. He's our Savior. He's our Lord. And we want others to know that, so we go. Amen.