

# THE SERMON

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Ascension Sunday

Sunday, May 17, 2026

Stories That Matter  
*Living the Sequel*

Luke 24: 44-53

Beloved Church, believe it or not, we have come to the end of our sermon series ***“Stories that Matter.”*** Over the past six Sundays, including this one, we have journeyed together, exploring some of ***the post-resurrection stories***. Stories of ordinary people who experienced Jesus firsthand.

Stories of people like **Thomas**, who, in the midst of doubt, believe in the Resurrected Christ.

Stories like that of **Cleopas and the other disciple**, who encountered Jesus on their walk to Emmaus and recognized Him in the breaking of the bread.

Stories shared by Jesus Himself, teaching us to recognize the **Shepherd’s voice** amid other voices.

Stories that remind us that Jesus is the **Way, the Truth, and the Life.**

Stories of promises, like the **Holy Spirit, as a comforter**, just like a mother cares for us.

And not only that, all these stories merge with our own stories of faith. They are stories of real people who come to us as a way of remembering how God has worked in our lives. Therefore, we need to tell the story ... share the story ... pass the story on.

I don't know how many of you are familiar with a series called "**Game of Thrones.**" I know that many people waited week by week for a new episode. I have to confess that I was never into it, but I know that it is a fantasy series that centers on **political intrigue, shifting alliances, and brutal power struggles** among houses like the Starks, Lannisters, and Baratheons, all competing for control of **Westeros**, which is a continent where all these events happened.

Among all of these, I found a quote from one of the characters that made me think about the power of stories. This was said by **Lord Tyrion Lannister**, who is played by the American actor Peter Hayden Dinklage. Lannister is the youngest child of Lord Tywin Lannister.

He is a dwarf who uses his cleverness and intellect to overcome the prejudice he faces.

Lord Tyrion Lannister comes with a quote above in the final moments of the series and says, ***“What unites people? Armies? Gold? Flags? – stories. There is nothing more powerful in the world than a good story. Nothing can stop it. No enemy can defeat it.”***

In a way, Tyrion’s point is that a ***“good story”*** has unmatched power. A good story can inspire courage, justify sacrifice, create nations, and sustain hope. It shapes how people understand their past and imagine their future. That is why stories matter.

I always remember those moments with nostalgia when our entire family, from my mother’s side, gathered for my grandparents’ wedding anniversaries. For their 70th wedding anniversary, we were more than a hundred people, including sons, daughters, grandkids, great-grandkids, and more, all listening to, sharing, and reflecting on stories.

If you have ever sat around a dinner table with friends or family, you know how stories flow. Suddenly, in the middle of the meal, someone recalls a moment from childhood, and suddenly laughter or tears fill the air. Or grandpa tells stories of his youth. Or grandma shared

about her favorite stories with grandpa, as a way of passing them on to the new generation.

The stories matter not only because they're entertaining but also because they shape us. They tell us who we are, where we have been, and sometimes where we are headed.

Today, we stand on the edge of a story. A story that draws a line between the end of Jesus' earthly story and the beginning of something new. Jesus gathers His friends, the people who had walked dusty roads with Him, who had watched Him heal and teach and break bread. He tells them:

***"These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you ... that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*** (v.44)

Jesus reminds them that everything—every prophecy, every moment—has led to this, to that right moment.

Could you imagine this experience?

It is almost like an ***aha moment*** for the disciples! It is a sudden, unexpected moment of insight for them. It is a moment of comprehension and inspiration after they were confused; now Jesus is opening their eyes so they can see everything more clearly.

All the events that happened to Moses, David, Solomon, all the prophets, the Psalms, and more ... all of what they have experienced with Jesus for those three years... All of these have been done to show who Jesus really is – ***The Son of God.***

Then Jesus opens their minds to understand the Scriptures. He tells them: ***“You are witnesses of these things.”***

As I was reading this verse again, I thought about the importance of the statement, ***“You are witnesses of these things.”*** The disciples certainly experienced everything firsthand. But what about us? ***Are you a witness to the wonders of the Lord?***

We are not just witnesses; we need to be storytellers of God’s work among us. People whose lives have become entangled in the story of God need to share what they have heard and seen.

***How many times have you seen God act in your life?***  
Can you share those moments? Can you make your stories matter?

And that’s what I want us to see today. ***Ascension Sunday isn’t just about Jesus leaving.*** It’s about what happens next. It’s about how the disciples live out the story they’ve been given. It’s about how their ordinary

lives have been swept up into something that matters—something that will ripple through history, all the way to us.

So often, we imagine that the people in the Bible are somehow different from us. That their stories matter more. That their faith was stronger and their doubts smaller. But look closer! See the disciples, still confused, still uncertain, still asking, **“Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?”** (Acts 1:6). They’re just people. They’re people who have seen something and been changed by it.

And Jesus says to them, **“You are witnesses.”** In other words: **“Your story matters, because you have seen everything I have done.”** The things you have seen, the ways you have stumbled, the moments you have felt God close or impossibly far away—all of it matters. You matter. Your story matters.

After Jesus is taken up in this ascension moment, He blessed them as He went—the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Not because they have all the answers, but because they know they are part of a story bigger than their doubts, bigger than their fear, bigger than themselves.

That's true for us, too. Sometimes we feel our lives are too ordinary, our faith too weak, and our questions too big. Yet God has always used ordinary people to carry an extraordinary story. The story of hope. The story of resurrection. The story of a love that will not let us go.

***What would it mean for us to believe that our stories matter?*** Not just the stories of the apostles and the Early Christians, but the stories we are living now — the stories of struggle and hope, the stories of loss and new beginnings. Your stories of healing, your stories of being part of Charlton Church, and how God has blessed you with this community of faith.

What would it mean to tell those stories, to bear witness to what God has done and is doing?

My friends, Ascension Sunday is a call to remember that the story is not over. It is still being written—in us, through us, around us. We are witnesses. Our stories matter.

So, as we conclude this sermon series today. Let me challenge you to tell your story. Tell it honestly. Tell it bravely. Because you never know who might need to hear it. And you never know how God might use it to change the world. **Amen.**