

## Signs of Life - Easter 2025

--Everywhere we turn there are signs—some are confusing, others are straight to the point, some are over the top, some are just a mess.

--Certainly not the first time we've heard the position that life is journey, a road, a highway, (all conveying the same observable reality) we are headed somewhere, we are where we were and we aren't where we're going and we aren't standing still.

--We're on the move, but to where?

If we plan to go somewhere we've got to follow the signs.

--Three purposes for signs: Information; Guidance; Warning

--According to "The Traffic Signs Manual" (there really is one!) signs have to meet 5 fundamental requirements: Fulfill a need; Demand Attention; convey a clear meaning; Command respect from travelers; Give adequate time for proper response.

--Given that, you'd almost think that God wrote that manual, because He follows those requirements as He gives us signs on the road of life: Meet our need; command attention; meanings are clear; command respect – at the end He will be giving you adequate time for a proper response.

### **1. Two signs that are very clear in the Bible: First of all, God tells us we are on a slippery road.**

--In fact, we've all slipped: **Rom. 3:23**

--Even though we may want to do it right: everybody has slipped

--If we are not cutting corners, we're veering into the other lanes.

--The Bible traces our sin back to the original drivers, Adam and Eve, who took us all with them when they slipped.

--They were the drivers of the bus called humanity and when they went into a ditch, we all did. We didn't get a vote, we just have to deal with the consequences.

--That slip and every slip after that has separated us from God: **Rom. 6:23** – Death is separation (body from soul, loved ones from those who love them, soul from the God who created it).

--Sin is no fender-bender – It's 100% deadly!

### **2. The Second Sign is that Jesus is the only way out of this.**

--Sort of like South Padre Island – There's only one way off that place – there's only one way out of ditch we're in – death is the ditch.

--Like the island, you don't have to believe it but it doesn't change the facts (drive down any road except the one that leads to the bridge and you will either come to a dead end or you will find yourself in the water) but you're not driving off this place unless you drive over that bridge.

--Interesting how often the Bible uses the word sign to refer to Jesus or something He did:

**Isaiah 7:14; Luke 2:12; 2:34-35**

--**John 14:6** – He's not just a sign, he's the very road itself – salvation is a person not a process or a ritual.

--**Romans 5:8** – When He died, a sign was placed on His cross, written in the three major languages of the area: Aramaic, Latin, and Greek. INRI is a Latin acronym for Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

--But this wasn't the last sign, in fact, the last sign was the one made the all the other ones worthwhile; the one that gave reality to all the others.

--Like a key that was turned that unlocked all the other doors or in this case, the final sign to let you know that all the other signs were leading the right way.

--This final sign was Jesus' resurrection: of what good were all the other signs if He couldn't come back, if He couldn't conquer death, if He couldn't carry through with the last sign, then all the other signs lead to nowhere.

--John 2:18-21 – Notice what He doesn't say, "my teachings", "my miracles", "my authority", he also doesn't stumble for an answer.

--The empty tomb was by far the most important sign; and what a sign it was; raised to life from a tomb in a garden—where had the whole thing gone into a ditch to begin with? In a Garden!

The last sign ties us to the first one and tells us that this is the only way out of this: the wages of our sin have brought us death, but He has gone into death's ditch and pulled us out—starting with Himself.

-There are a lot of names we could put forward who claimed either to be the way or to know the way of eternal life.

-Buddha, Mohammed, Joseph Smith, Jim Jones, David Koresh

-I've got one main problem with all these guys: They're all Dead!!

-**I don't have problem with living...I've got a problem with dying!!**

-Why should anybody give even 2 seconds of their time to anyone who cannot conquer the very thing that conquers all of us.

I want to tell you a story to conclude this morning, and I want you to listen to it carefully because it just might be your story. It is a story written by the famous inventor of thriller stories, Alfred Hitchcock. It's the story of a woman, a criminal, condemned to years in prison. She vowed that somehow, some way, she'd escape. As she traveled down the road entering the prison yard, she noticed a small cemetery outside the prison walls and an old man, a prisoner, covering up the grave a dead prisoner. Right then and there she hatched a plot to escape from prison. Once inside the prison, she befriended this old man. Come to find out he was going blind. So she made a deal with him. If he would help her escape, she would send him the money for cataract surgery so he could regain his sight. He agreed to help her.

The plan was to work like this: the next time she heard that a prisoner had died, she would sneak down to the place where the body was kept and climb into the casket with the corpse. The old man would take the casket out to the cemetery in broad daylight as he always did and bury it. When night had fallen, he would return and dig up the casket and set her free.

Before too long the word came that a prisoner had passed away. Excited with the prospect of freedom she hurriedly made her way down to the morgue and when no one was looking she slipped quickly into the casket alongside a cold corpse. An hour or so later she felt the coffin move and then felt the bumps and the casket was being rolled toward the gravesite. She smiled as the casket was lowered into the hole. She heard the clumps of dirt hitting the top of the casket. She had done it...she was out!!

She began to make mental plans of the things she would do and the places she would go once the old man dug her up. Time passed. It began to drag. It was surely well after dark by now, but there was no indication of any activity above her. She began to feel fear rise up in her. She began to sweat. She began to get desperate. In a moment of panic, she reached into her pocket and took out a some matches she had stolen from the kitchen. She struck a match to get a look at the inside of the coffin and caught the image of the face of the dead person she lay next to out of the corner of her eye. She gave the face her full attention and to her horror, the corpse was the body of the old blind prisoner!!

--The situation is no different for those who are trusting in dead men.

--Jesus is it, not just a sign to the way out, but He is **the** way out.

--Matt. 7:13-14 – the operative word here is "Enter" – it's not enough to know that Jesus is the way or that He's that Narrow Gate

--You have to take that way, you have to enter through the gate.

--The signs are all there, they'll take your straight to the gate, but you've got to choose to enter.