

11.4.21 am

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Date: 11 April 2021

Preacher: Gordon MacLeod

[0 : 00] Well, good morning and welcome to our service this morning. It's good to be able to come together and to worship God and we welcome those that are with us, not just here in the church, but those that are joining us online.

Intimations for the coming week. The service tonight will go online at six o'clock and our preacher this evening is Mr. Stuart King, one of our deacons. We pray for God's blessing on that service this evening.

Prayer meeting on Wednesday evening at 7.30 and that will be on Zoom and we pray that again will be a blessing to us. The minister will be back with us, so we're on holiday this week with the family and be back with us to take the prayer meeting on Wednesday night.

And again, next Lord's Day, it will be the minister, David MacLeod, that will be taking our services both at 11 and at 6 p.m. Let us join together and Farkar will sing to us in Psalm 119.

Psalm 119 from verse 33, the fifth part of the psalm. Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way of thy precepts divine and to observe it to the end I shall my heart incline.

[1 : 23] Give understanding unto me, so keep thy law shall I. Yea, even with my whole heart I shall observe it carefully. And down to the end of the verse marked 40.

Turn thou away my feared reproach, for good thy judgments be. O for thy precepts I have longed, in thy truth quicken me. Psalm 119 at verse 33 to verse 40.

To God's praise. Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way of thy precepts divine And to observe it to the end I shall my heart incline.

Give understanding unto me, so keep thy law shall I.

Yea, even with my whole heart I shall observe it carefully.

[3 : 03] And thy law shall I. And thy law shall I. And thy law shall I. Make me to go.

For thy delight let in my heart enter.

Thy testimonies and not to greed incline.

Turn thou away my sight and eyes from you in vain.

And in thy good and holy way.

[4 : 09] Be pleased to quicken me. Confirm to me thy gracious word, which I did gladly hear.

Even to thy servant, Lord, who is devoted to thy fear.

Turn thou away my feared reproach. For good thy judgments be.

Lo, for thy precepts I have longed.

In thy truth quicken me. May that indeed be the prayer of each one of us as we come and as we bow before God.

[5 : 43] Teach me, O Lord, the perfect way of thy precepts divine. And to observe it to the end I shall my heart incline. Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can come into your presence this morning.

That, Heavenly Father, that as a body of your people we can gather. Not just here, Heavenly Father, in the church, but in our own homes. And we can come and we can bow before you and that we can acknowledge that you are indeed our sovereign Lord.

And unto you, Heavenly Father, we must give all glory, honour and praise. For, Heavenly Father, you created each one of us.

You created us in your image and in your likeness. And, Heavenly Father, even when we fell from you, you sent us your son. You sent us your son as the saviour of the world.

And, Heavenly Father, through his death and through his resurrection as we celebrated last week. That our sins can be washed away. And we can enter into your presence.

[6 : 58] And we can come with our prayers before you. Knowing that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, intercedes on behalf of each one of us. And we pray, Heavenly Father, that each one of us would know that this morning.

That we are not alone. That you have promised to be with us even unto the end. And, Heavenly Father, as we come and as we pray these words, our thoughts are indeed with those that mourn this morning.

And we think of the royal family, Heavenly Father, particularly the Queen. As they mourn so much the loss of a loved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

One that has been in the public eye so much. One that devoted so much not only to his wife and to his family, but to this country.

And, Heavenly Father, as the family gather and as they mourn this week. And as they look forward to a funeral on Saturday. We pray, Heavenly Father, that they would know that you are a God of refuge and a God of strength.

[8 : 09] That even though the world may be removed. That, Heavenly Father, you are indeed the rock that each one of us can stand upon. Even through the valley of the shadow of death.

You have promised that you are with us. That you will never leave us. That you will never forsake us. So, as they mourn this week and as many pray for them, Heavenly Father.

We pray, most importantly, that they would know you as the Good Shepherd. That guides them and directs them at this time. No matter what storms or troubles they may be going through.

No matter what doubts or fears they may have at this time as to what the future holds. And, Heavenly Father, that you have given us that promise. That you are with us if we trust in you.

And we pray, Heavenly Father, for families here that we know in these past months have mourned the loss of loved ones. That they would know that nearness, Heavenly Father, that comes only from being drawn close to you.

[9 : 15] And, Heavenly Father, that they would know your comfort. That they would know your guidance, your direction. As difficult as it can be, Heavenly Father, to lose a loved one.

You have given us your promise that you have a plan and you have a purpose. And you are working your plan and your purpose out. As year succeeds to year. We do not know, Heavenly Father, what it is that you are moulding and shaping us for.

But, Heavenly Father, we pray that we would indeed trust in you. Trust in you and not be afraid. Trust in you, Heavenly Father, and not turn back.

Trust in you and fix our eyes upon you. For you are indeed the author and perfecter of our faith. We pray, Heavenly Father, for those that are going through sickness at this time.

We pray in particular for our member here, Ian Davidson. We pray for your hand to be upon him and to be upon Shona. And, Heavenly Father, that they would know your hand stayed upon them at this time.

[10 : 29] As they seek guidance and direction for the way forward for Ian's illness. And we pray most of all, Heavenly Father, that Ian would know you. That he would know you as Lord and as Saviour.

And, Heavenly Father, we heard so clearly last Sunday. That in knowing you that we would testify for you. And, Heavenly Father, that we would indeed know.

Truly through our testification of you. And, Heavenly Father, that each one of us knows and loves you as Lord and as Saviour.

That we do not hide our light under a bushel. But, Heavenly Father, that we put that light on a lampstand. And be a living witness to those round about us.

That we may be an encouragement. And, Heavenly Father, that we may be a beacon for you. Not seeking any glory for ourselves. But, Heavenly Father, that we would fulfil that catechism that so many of us learnt as young ones.

[11 : 34] That our chief end is to glorify you. And enjoy you forever. So, as we come into your presence this morning. Heavenly Father, may we know that we are in your presence.

And, as the angels filled their faces and as they cried, Holy, Holy, Holy. And, Heavenly Father, that each one of us would indeed recognise that you are holy.

You have taken us to this place this morning. Yes, we may have got a phone call. We may have got an email asking us to come. But, Heavenly Father, it is you that has guided and directed these things at this time.

And, for each one of us. And, for each one of us. Those, Heavenly Father, that come as members. Those that come as adherents. Those that preach.

Those that pray and sing. Each one of us comes, Heavenly Father, to hear what you have to say to us. You have given us your word to guide us, to direct us on how we may glorify and enjoy you forever.

[12 : 48] And, we pray, Heavenly Father, that as your word is opened. That we would indeed open our ears. And, Heavenly Father, that we would listen to what you have to say to us.

That our hearts would indeed be stirred. And, Heavenly Father, that we would recognise. That if we do not know you as Lord and as Saviour this morning.

That even now, you stand at the door of our hearts and knock. And, Heavenly Father, we pray that those that have not opened their hearts door to you yet.

Would not leave this place without considering their walk with you. Their need of you as a Saviour. That they would know the blessing of walking with you each and every day.

So, guide us as we gather. And, may we know your hand upon us. Your hand upon us for good. In Jesus' precious name. As we ask all these things, we've forgiven us of our many sins.

[13 : 52] And, our many shortcomings. Amen. Boys and girls. There are one or two of you here this morning.

It's nice to see you. I'm going to tell you about a wee problem. That's not really a wee problem. It's a problem that I encountered over the last couple of weeks.

And, to be perfectly honest with you. It's a kind of annual problem. It happens around about this time of year. As the grass starts to come through.

You've maybe got an idea of what I'm going to talk about. But, this problem became quite noticeable. The thing about it was, it wasn't noticeable to me, first of all. I didn't actually see the problem.

But, I got a phone call. And, I got a phone call from our minister. Who's also my neighbour. And, the phone call went something like this.

[14 : 53] Hey, Gordon. David here. Sorry to bother you. But, I thought I'd better let you know. You've got sheep in your garden. But, that's not all he said to me.

He said, I thought I'd better let you know. In case it damages your car. So, after thinking about it.

And, thanking him for the phone call. I hung up. Put my jacket. And, my boots on. And, I went out. To try and find this rogue sheep.

There it was. Grazing quite nicely. On the grass. Around the garden. It saw me. And, it took fright. And, as many of you will know.

There's a steep bank. Down the side of the. House. Just above the pontoon. That everybody in the village. Has. Sight of.

[15 : 54] So. I thought. Right. How am I going to do this. Without embarrassing myself. And, ending up. Running back and forth. Trying to chase this.

Rogue sheep. So. Thinking back to my childhood. Playing commandos. I decided to stealthily move. Down the. The bank. And, lo and behold.

I managed to get the sheep. Caught in the corner. Grabbed it. And, put it over the fence. Into the other field. Thought. Job done. Back inside. Cup of coffee.

Got up the following morning. Not only was there one sheep. There was two. He'd brought his mate with him. So. Back out.

Down the bank again. Managed to. Corner the two of them. With the help. Believe it or not. Of. Orak.

[16 : 50] Our golden retriever. Who. Although not a sheepdog. Did a very good job. Of helping me. Corner them. However. I managed to catch one. And. In the excitement.

For Orak. Thinking it was a game. He spooked the other one. And it ran off. So. Had one sheep. And I managed to put it over the fence. Couldn't get the other one. After a bit of towing and throwing.

It went underneath the fence. And I thought. Pfft. Got it. I know what I'm going to do here. I'll fix the fence. I thought. It went underneath the fence. I thought. Pfft.

Got it. I know what I'm going to do here. I'll fix the fence. I know what I'm going to do here. so it's a bit of metal lying there put it across the bottom of the fence thought that's it went back out on Friday morning and the two sheep were back in the garden same thing again this time although one of them thinking it was an Olympic high jumper managed to jump the fence so then I noticed that the fence was lying slightly to its side so spending a wee bit more time I fixed the hole in the fence found another hole in the fence fixed that and then got some props to put the fence back up to make sure that the sheep couldn't jump over it unfortunately for the last two days the sheep haven't been back in I did however notice it looking at the fence the other day and thinking no I'm not going back over why did I tell you about the sheep problem

I had this past week well we all have a problem and that problem is sin and the difficulty can be that we don't always see it now I was fortunate I didn't see the sheep the other day but David did and he phoned me and he told me and I was able to deal with it now I couldn't deal with it the first time because I didn't really think about it too much but I was able to go out and persevere and manage to fix the problem now why do I say sin is a problem now if I was to ask you what question 16 of the catechism said I'm sure many of you would be able to answer that sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world he created not being or doing what he requires in his law if we turn away from God and we turn to satisfy ourselves that's when sin comes in to our lives and like my sheep problem it may be noticeable to others before it's noticeable to ourselves now if you think back to my telephone conversation with David he told me what my problem was the sheep are in the garden but not only did he tell me what my problem was he told me what the consequence might be if I didn't deal with the problem that was that the sheep might damage the car so I had to take action to deal with the sheep not just once or twice

[20 : 13] I had to identify where they were getting into the garden and then work out how to stop them so they couldn't do damage I could have ignored David thinking well sheep aren't really doing any harm in fact they're saving me having to get the lawnmower out and cut the grass but failure to hear that warning could have been far more costly particularly if the sheep had decided to fight with itself when it saw itself in the side of the car and then managed to damage all the panels of the car as we've seen happen before if we have sinned in our lives and we've learnt before that we must come we're learning the Lord's Prayer that we must come and ask forgiveness we have to remember that we have to do that each and every day the same as I had to go out daily to try and see if I could fix the fence and keep the sheep out we have to come before God daily and confess our sin if I had ignored David and left the sheep to graze

I could have had a far bigger problem if we become comfortable with sin in our lives and choose to ignore it the problem might become far greater not just for us but for those round about us now I had to go out and fix the fence problem myself but in terms of our sin that's already been sorted for us remember what we learned last week we learned in Sunday school how Jesus came and he died on the cross for each and every one of us and it tells us that our sins although they are red like scarlet they'll be made as white as snow it's been great last few mornings getting up and seeing how white the place was how clean it all looked with the white snow round about us imagine our hearts all the sin that's in our hearts been taken away because of Jesus and that offer is there for each and every one of us if we come and we ask Jesus into our lives just one final thing to think about before you go through to Sunday school

I was thankful for David phoning me and telling me about the problem he saw the sheep in the garden before I did and can I just say to you it's good to have friends who are like that who when they see something wrong come and tell you it's far better for each one of us to have friends that we can depend upon and who are taking us closer to Jesus than having friends who take us away from Jesus so when you're growing up be careful who you choose as friends choose people who know and love Jesus and who are going to take you closer to Jesus and who when the time comes maybe help you by pointing out things in your life that may be wrong that allow you to get back and walk closer with Jesus and we'll just pray before you go through to Sunday school dear heavenly father we thank you for the young ones that we are blessed to have within our congregation each and every one of them heavenly father precious to you and our prayer for them is that as they grow that they would indeed remember their creator in the days of their youth that heavenly father that they would grow in wisdom that they would grow closer to you and heavenly father that as they have that wisdom that comes from you that they would indeed choose friends that will help them to walk close with you each and every day we pray for them heavenly father and pray for teachers as they go back to school tomorrow that after this time of restrictions and this time of being in and out of school that heavenly father that they may get back to learning back with their friends and back heavenly father to some kind of normality but our greatest prayer for them is heavenly father that they would know and love you and that they would walk close with you for each and every day of their life in Jesus precious name amen enjoy sunday school this morning and as we had in the prayer meeting on on wednesday night the road to emmaus the sunday school lesson that's been prepared by kirsten mcdonald from the garibust congregation the camps coordinator for the free church as the road to emmaus we pray that that will be a blessing to the children this morning as it was to us on wednesday night as we come now we're going to read in john the book of john john chapter 20 and we'll read the whole of the chapter on the resurrection of jesus john chapter 20 and we'll read from verse 1 now on the first day of the week mary magdalene came to the tomb early while it was still dark and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb so she ran and went to simon peter and the other disciples the one whom jesus loved and said to them they have taken the lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid

him so peter went out with the other disciple and they were going toward the tomb both of them were running together but the other disciple outran peter and reached the tomb first and stooping to look in he saw the linen clothes lying there but he did not go in then simon then simon peter came following him and went into the tomb he saw the linen clothes lying there and the face cloth which had been on jesus head not lying with the linen clothes but folded up in a place by itself then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in and he saw and believed for as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead then the disciples went back to their homes but mary stood weeping outside the tomb and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting where the lord where the body of jesus had laid one at the head and one at the feet they said to her woman why are you weeping she said to them they have taken away my lord and i don't know where they have laid him having said this she turned around and saw jesus standing but she did not know that it was jesus jesus said to her woman why are you weeping whom are you seeking supposing him to be the gardener she said to him sir if you have carried him away tell me where you have laid him and i will take him away jesus said to her mary she turned and said to him in aramaic rabboni which means teacher jesus said to her do not cling to me for i have not yet ascended to the father but go to my brothers and say to them i am ascending to my father and your father to my god and your god mary magdalene went and announced to the disciples i have seen the lord and that he has said these things to her on the evening of that day the first day of the week the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the jews jesus came and stood among them and said to them peace be with you when he had said this he showed them his hands on his side then the disciples were glad when they saw the lord jesus said to them again peace be with you as the father has sent me even so i am sending you and when he had said this he breathed on them and said to them receive the holy spirit if you forgive the sins of any they are forgiven them if you withhold forgiveness from any it is withheld now thomas one of the twelve called the twin was not with them when jesus came so the other disciples told him we have seen the lord but he said to them unless i see in his hands the mark of the nails and place my finger in the mark of the nails and place my hand into his side i will never believe eight days later his disciples were inside again and thomas was with them although the doors were locked jesus came and stood among them and said peace be with you then he said to thomas put your finger here and see my side and put out your hand and put it on my side do not disbelieve but believe thomas answered him my lord and my god jesus said to him have you believed because you have seen me blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed now jesus did

many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book but these are written that you may believe that jesus is the christ the son of god and that by believing you may have life in his name amen let us pray once again before we turn to god's word our gracious and our blessed lord we thank you that we can come into your presence once again and as we come and as we open up our hearts to you we pray heavenly father that each one of us would open our ears that we would be able to lay aside the many things that so often cloud our minds worrying about what this week may bring to us worrying about what the next day may be to us or how our health may fare your word teaches us heavenly father that we should not worry about tomorrow for our life is but a mist so by this time heavenly father may we focus on you what your word says to us and what you are teaching to us and heavenly father how you are calling each one of us to you we pray heavenly father for your guidance as we break down your word that nothing would be said amiss and heavenly father that the efforts that we make to break down and understand your word that you would indeed use and that you would bring to glory for yourself and heavenly father that your word will achieve all that you have predestined for it to do where we know that you have given us a promise that your word will not return unto you void so bless us as we gather this morning teach us each one of us that we may learn more of you but most of all heavenly father that if we do not walk with you at this time that you would draw us closer to you that we would indeed be able to cry out like

[33 : 14] Thomas my lord and my god and heavenly father that having heard that we would indeed believe so guide us now we pray and forgive us for our sins and our shortcomings in Jesus precious name amen last week and I would certainly encourage you if you haven't had the chance to listen to last week's service to listen to it as David broke down to us Luke chapter 8 the disciples in the storm the healing of the demon possessed man the healing of the woman with the issue of blood and the raising of Jairus' daughter how in each and every occasion he was able to show us how it pointed to the storm that Jesus would go through on Calvary how he would defeat Satan on the cross how through the shedding of his blood there would be cleansing for our sins and how through the raising of

Jairus' daughter we saw a foretaste of the resurrection of Jesus as we come this morning and think on the chapter that we've read which outlines some of the things that happened when they found the tomb empty and then Jesus appearing to the disciples following his resurrection we see the disciples running to the tomb finding the tomb empty and then the disciples move on and Mary is left weeping wondering what they have done with her Lord and just a comment on that before we move on to the main thrust of the sermon this morning looking at Jesus' interaction with the disciples Mary was there and she met with

Jesus everyone else had deserted but Mary was there and Jesus said to her do not cling to me for I have not yet received ascended to the father but go to my brothers and say to them I am ascending to my father and your father to my God and your God Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples I have seen the Lord and that he has said these things to her despite having been deserted by the disciples Jesus still refers to them as brethren Matthew Henry comments though Christ be high yet he is not haughty not withstanding his elevation he descends not to disown not to own his poor relations he then makes his comment on Mary who had been given the message to take to the disciples

Mary Magdalene was the one out of whom had been cast seven devils yet now thus favoured this was her reward for her constancy in adhering to Christ and inquiring after him and a tacit rebuke to the apostles who had not been so close as she was in attending on the dying Lord nor so early as she was in meeting the rising Jesus she becomes an apostle to the apostles and Warren Wiersbe comments similarly Mary's meeting with Christ made her a missionary how close are each one of us looking for Christ waiting for Christ desiring to be used by Christ Mary was there and she was used as it said there she was an apostle to the apostles and took that message to them so

Mary having been commanded to go to the disciples she went and she shared the message with them and we find on the evening of the first day the same day as they had found the empty tomb Jesus went to them he didn't leave them on their own he went to them we read that the door was locked the disciples were inside they were in fear of the Jews the rumor had started to circulate that disciples had stolen the body of Jesus instead of running in fear they came together had they not been together we may never have heard or read John's account of what had happened the doors were locked and Jesus came and stood amongst them it's much written in commentaries about how this came about different interpretations of what may have happened but what

[38 : 41] John tells us here what he's been inspired to write is what we have the doors were locked and Jesus came and stood among them Jesus greeted them what must that have been like as he sat there in fear fear for their safety and suddenly Jesus is in the room with them we don't read of their being disorder or that they were taken with fright and Jesus speaks to them and reassures them the only thing I could think of was if you remember his children might have been sitting watching television playing a game and all of a sudden the power goes out and you're cast in to utter darkness within the house that initial fear as your heart starts pumping thinking what's happened and then you hear the reassuring voice of your mother or your father saying don't worry it's only a power cut

I'll get the candles hearing somebody else's voice reassuring you that all is not lost that things are going to return to normal the disciples were sitting there in fear and Jesus spoke to them peace be with you any fear that they had would have gone as they saw Jesus and as we read when he then showed them his hands and his side they were glad the fear turned to gladness there is no record in the story that we have here or in the account that we have here of them sitting chatting and asking questions about what had happened verse 21 tells us Jesus said to them again peace be with you as the father has sent me so

I am sending you and when he said this he breathed on them and said to them receive the holy spirit if you forgive the sins of any they have forgiven them if you withhold forgiveness from any it is withheld Jesus had been sent into the world he was now sending the disciples out into the world he had come to save lost sinners he was sending them out with a message of salvation he had breathed on them we read here and again what does that mean to us when he says here he breathed on them and again looking to the commentaries Matthew Henry comments Christ Christ here seems to refer to the creation of man at first by the breathing of life into him as given in Genesis 2 7 and to intimate that he himself was the author of that work life into those he was sending out what a blessing it was for them to be there receiving that from

Jesus the fear that had been about them earlier in the evening had gone and Jesus was now blessing them and sending them out this passage recorded elsewhere in scripture is often referred to as a great commission where we hear of go ye into all the world and make disciples and that same commission is given to each and every believer today we're called to be living witnesses in this world and to go and make disciples what we must remember is that while this is a commission to go it's also a co-mission we're not on our own Jesus said to the disciples as the father has sent me even so I am sending you the memory verse that the children had a couple of weeks ago in

Sunday school was from Deuteronomy 31 and verse 6 be strong and courageous do not fear or be in dread of them for it is the Lord your God who goes with you he will not leave you or forsake you no matter where you are going no matter what you face Jesus came to his disciples and he gave them a blessing and they received that blessing because they were there together and I should have said that that was the first point that I was going to cover and it was a blessing received which takes us to the second point which is the blessing doubted as we go on and we read Thomas was not with them at the time of Jesus appearing for whatever reason

[44 : 46] Thomas hadn't been with the disciples had he not been there because of fear was he angry was he disappointed we know that Thomas is referred to as the doubter he often asked the questions that nobody else wanted to ask we're not told why he's not there or all we're told is that he wasn't with them the question might be did he miss out on the blessing that the others received some commentaries speak of and refer back to the passage in Numbers 11 26 when the 70 that had been selected by Moses went out side the camp and received a blessing two remained inside

Eldad and Medad and yet they received the blessing in the camp and carried on prophesying and it said probably he breathed upon them all together not just upon each severally and though Thomas was not with them yet the spirit of the Lord knew where to find him as he did Eldad and Medad so although Thomas wasn't with the disciples he may have been aware of the blessing we don't read we don't have an account that Thomas felt a stirring within him at the same time as Jesus breathed in the disciples he may well have done how many of us have felt a stirring or a moving within us whether it be due to pray to somebody write a letter to someone or phone someone and we often just discount it that it maybe isn't coming from the Lord we don't know what we do know is that Thomas would not believe the report he received from the disciples he doubted he wanted proof for himself there's nothing worse than missing out on something and then having to listen to your friends tell you just how amazing and how awesome it may have been somebody comes and tells you a story that's almost too good to be true that's the very words that you'll use

I don't believe you it sounds too good to be true there's no way that happened when Thomas met the disciples the disciples must have been absolutely beaming they had seen Jesus risen they had proof for themselves we have seen the Lord they testify can those of us that are here as Christians this morning say that we continue to have that burning within our hearts that we have seen Jesus the disciples went out and they sought Thomas and they testified to Thomas what they had seen are we testifying that message still today with those that we come into contact with Thomas was one of their own he hadn't been there he hadn't seen what had happened but they sought him out and they shared the message who do we need to go and share that message with who do we need to seek out that is close to us and share that message

Thomas doubted the validity of the message he wanted proof for himself if you're not a Christian here today you may well be in the same position as Thomas you want to know that blessing for yourself you want proof Thomas had been there with Jesus throughout his ministry he had heard the message preached about the death and resurrection we have the account in John 14 where Thomas sought clarity and asked Jesus a question we can just read there in John 14 let not your heart be troubled believe in God believe also in me in my father's house are many rooms if it were not so would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and will take you to myself that where I am you may be also and you know the way to where I am going and Thomas said

Lord we do not know where you are going how can we know the way and Jesus said I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through me if you had known me you would have known my father also from now on you do know him and have seen him how often have you heard the gospel proclaimed how often have you walked away thinking I still don't believe or how often have you been sitting under the preaching of the gospel and your heart has been stirred heard and you felt good you've recognised that you need a saviour but then you walk out the door and life hits you and you forget everything that you have heard don't leave today if you don't know

[50 : 52] Jesus as your saviour don't continue to doubt the blessing that is available to each and every one of us if we call upon Jesus as we read there he has gone before us to prepare a place he's coming back he is the way he is the truth he is the life are we going to walk in his way are we going to accept him as the truth and are we going to have eternal life through him don't continue to doubt the blessing and then we see the blessing believed he didn't have to wait too long if his fear had kept him from the first gathering it's possibly fear of missing out that kept him from missing the second meeting I'd heard people talking about

FOMO so as like anybody else I googled it to find out that fear of missing out is a recognised anxiety and it says it's an anxiety that an exciting or interesting event may currently be happening elsewhere it goes on to say that often aroused by posts seen on social media there's no social media in the time of the disciples but Thomas had heard that Jesus had appeared to the disciples he was going to make sure that he wasn't going to miss out a second time while I was googling fear of missing out there was also recommendations is probably the best way of putting it as to how we overcome fear of missing out top ten list of what we could do number seven on the list spend more time with the people that matter most for whatever reason

Thomas hadn't been with the disciples the first time he recognised that he needed to be with the disciples thereafter if he was going to receive a blessing and as I say he didn't have to wait too long as we read eight days later now again reading and counting principles in biblical times apparently when you were counting you counted the day that you were in so eight days out would have been the following Sunday and if we go by the Easter calendar that would have been the equivalent of today you're here today God's word has been opened God's word has been preached Thomas doubted the blessing he came with the disciples when Jesus appeared to them the second time eight days later are you going to listen to

God's word being read recognize that it's read for you that it applies to you applies to each and every one of us and are you going to believe the blessing Thomas was shown the hands of Jesus he was asked to put his fingers into the print of the nails doesn't tell us that he did it but as soon as he saw the hands of Jesus he testified my Lord and my God he had seen with his own eyes it was absolutely true each and every one of us needs to have a personal relationship and a personal experience with Jesus Thomas couldn't go just on what he had heard from the disciples he had to have that personal experience himself and each of every one of us that are gathered here this morning whether it be in the church or be in our own homes needs that personal experience with

Jesus Jesus came and he died on a cross for us his hands were pierced his side was pierced for our sins Thomas recognised that in the resurrection body of Jesus and cried out my Lord and my God are you going to cry that out this morning we read that on both occasions the disciples were gathered the door was locked but Jesus came in and stood in their midst they were the disciples of Jesus he had called them before he was going to make them fishers of men they had answered that call and he came in and met with them brings us to our final point the blessing that is offered the blessing that the disciples received is offered to each and every one of us the doors were locked on the two occasions that

[57 : 13] Jesus met with the disciples but scripture teaches us that Jesus stands at our hearts door in Revelation 3 and 20 it says behold I stand at the door and knock if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come into him and eat with him and he with me you didn't have to knock on the door you didn't have to unlock the door where the disciples were because they were already his in times gone past house doors would have been left unlocked neighbours would have gone from door to door put their head in the door hello it's me and they would go in but if they were strangers they would knock the door and wait until they were asked in is

Jesus a stranger to you is he knocking on your heart door are you going to open your heart door to Jesus the disciples were blessed and coming together and Jesus being amongst them that blessing is offered to each and every one of us gathered here this morning as I say either within the church or on television are you going to open your door and let Jesus come in and be your friend your friend that sticks closer than a brother your friend that has promised that he will never leave you nor forsake you my prayer is that you will answer that call that you won't leave here this morning without considering where you are with Jesus and having opened your hearts door as we were encouraged last week then let us testify as the disciples went out and testified of their meeting with

Jesus let us go out and testify that we have seen the Lord and that he is our saviour let us pray dear heavenly father we thank you for your goodness to us we thank you heavenly father that you have indeed blessed us with your son we pray heavenly father that if our hearts are closed to him this day that our ears would be open to his knocking and that heavenly father that we would open our hearts and that we would know what it is to have fellowship that we would know what it is to have blessing that we would know what it is to cry out my name amen we close our service this morning listening to

Farkar singing in mission praise 988 mission praise 988 how deep the father's love for me how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure how great the pain of searing loss the father turns his face away as wounds which mar the chosen one bring many sons to glory I will not boast in anything no gifts no power no wisdom but I will boast in Jesus Christ his death and resurrection why should I gain from his reward I cannot give an answer but this I know with all my heart his wounds have paid my ransom may that indeed be the prayer of each and every one of us that we know that the wounds of Jesus his blood being shed for us are what's paid our ransom that our sins are like scarlet can be washed as white as snow may we listen as far our sins to us how deep the father's love for us how vast beyond all measure that he should give his only son to make a wretch his treasure how great the pain of searing loss the father turns his face away as ones which mar the chosen one bring many sons to glory behold the man upon a cross my sin upon his shoulders ashamed

I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished his dying breath has brought me life I know that it is finished I will not boast in anything no gifts no power no wisdom but I will boast in Jesus

[64 : 07] Christ his death and resurrection why should I gain from his reward I cannot give an answer but this I know with all my heart his ones have paid my ransom I will stand for the benediction now to him who is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory and with great joy to the only God and our saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory majesty dominion and authority now and forever more amen