

# The Resurrection of Jesus!

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah. It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself?

The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless.

Let's just bow our heads in prayer. Father, help us to have a great confidence in your Word. A confidence, Father, not only in our minds, and we would like to have that, Father, but also in our heart, in the very center of who we are. We invite and give you an unqualified permission and invitation that your Word, this Word, would enter into our hearts in a very deep way, and that your Word would form us, that you would change us by your Word. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son, and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated.

I wasn't taking a selfie, by the way. I'm turning on my phone to turn on the stopwatch so I don't preach for three hours. No, I wouldn't preach that long. You'd all be left the room by then.

You know, one of the things I love about the Bible, which is so, especially the Gospels, is they have all of these really human elements in them, just exactly the way we human beings act.

[ 2 : 1 8 ]     It's actually really funny. Not in every commentary, but some commentaries, the human bits of the story, they find problematic, but they're not really problems. There's constantly things in the Gospels that just show these are exactly how human beings act. It helps us to understand that while this is a story in time and place, and rooted in time and place, it's a story for every time and every place, because ultimately God is the author. But these human authors who were first used to write this, they have all these human elements. And we can see this right off the bat in one of the things which causes some people to be a little bit puzzled. In fact, it's the human parts that people often try to mock in the story. So let's look at it. What we're looking at today is sort of the second part of the early morning events of Easter Sunday, and it's John chapter 12, sorry, John chapter 20, and we're beginning at the 11th verse. John chapter 20, and we're going to begin at the 11th verse.

And just a context, once again, this is written by John, who's the beloved disciple. He was an eyewitness for almost everything in Jesus's ministry for three years, and he's writing this biography of Jesus when many eyewitnesses were alive to comment on it. And what's just happened, if you look at the four different ancient biographies together, you'll see that a group of women went to the tomb very, very, very, very early, while it's still dark, wondering how the stone, how they're going to get the stone removed so that they can deal with Jesus's body. You know, even this is a very, very human little bit of a gesture, and I hope, don't jump on me. I hope this, you don't consider this to be sexist.

But let me tell you, if you came to my house, and we were going to be sitting, and I wanted to try to set a very nice table for you, I wouldn't do as good a job as my wife. Maybe if she was away, I would sort of set the table, but she'd come, and she'd want to just make it, like, way better. And I'm betting that the reason so many women went on this Easter morning to go to the tomb is, yeah, these two guys went, and they wrapped the body, and I'm sure they're saying to themselves, I'm sure they didn't leave any flowers, there's probably spice all over the ground, they didn't tidy things up, and we're going to go and make it look really good, because they want to honor the corpse of Jesus. Anyway, they go, and they discover the soldier's gone, the stone has been blown away, and the grave is empty, and they all go running different things, and there's different accounts. And if you go back and you read all of the different accounts, there's nothing in any accounts that contradict each other, but there's different ways that you could put a chronology to it. But out of all of those events, eventually Mary Magdalene runs to Peter and John, tells them that the grave, that somebody's stolen the body of Jesus. And so Peter and John go taking off to go to the tomb, and Mary follows behind, maybe just a foot or so behind, or she walks, or whatever, we're not sure. And what we see here right now in the story is taking it up from that moment. Peter and John have gone, and look at this, verse 11, and this is just so human, isn't it? But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and she weeps because she loved Jesus, and he's dead. She weeps because of the oppression and the injustice of the occupying Roman forces that crucified Jesus and humiliated him through crucifixion.

She weeps because the religious leaders of her own people, rather than standing up for Jesus, had a role in capturing him, and they wanted him dead. And now she's weeping because, dang it all, they can't even look after the body. They've stolen the body, and she weeps. And then she does this thing, which, as I said, sometimes commentators find very puzzling, but you shouldn't be puzzled.

Look what she does next. Verse 11 still, but Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept, she stooped to look into the tomb. And lots of people say, that doesn't make any sense. Like, why'd you go and look in the tomb again? Well, let me tell you. Before we lost our building, and before the condos on the other side of our building were there, there was a place where Christian brothers lived. And the Christian brothers allowed us to have four free parking spots, all 24-7 in their parking lot. And on Sunday mornings, we could fill their parking lot.

[ 6 : 58 ] And they did it all for free. And every Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving, Barbara Allen would remind me that we should send a thank you. And so I went and I bought, I don't know, eight bottles of wine or something like that. And I went and gave them to the brothers as just a token of our appreciation for them letting us have these parking spots. Anyway, one of my sons had borrowed the van one day, and I get a call. Dad, the van's stolen.

I probably said all the stupid, dumb things that Dad say in a situation like that. Like, how could it be stolen? Are you sure it's stolen? Like, completely stupid things. Because I didn't, you know, it's not as if we have vehicles stolen all the time. And I just say, oh, look, there you go. 53rd time this year. So anyway, I come down, and what's the very first thing I do? I go to see if the van's still there, if the van's gone. As if my 19-year-old son isn't capable of remembering where he parked and recognizing whether a van is still there, or a 20-year-old son, however he old. It was the first thing I did. And when I was in graduate school the first time, I had been gifted a really, really expensive racing bicycle, and a road bike. And I'd gone to the library one day, and when I came out of the library, the bike was stolen. And this was really crushing, because I didn't have insurance.

I could never afford a bike like that. I needed my bike to get around. And I must have gone five different times back to that spot. Every time. I don't know, I mean, what, the bike's just going to reappear? I don't know. It's just a very human thing. She's crying, and she looks in the tomb.

Now, this next bit in the story is also something that gets people's knickers in a twist. Like, look what happens next, verse 12. She looks in, and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. Now, this gets some people all in a bit of a frazzle, and there's ways that they mock it. And it's funny, the mocking and the puzzling that they have is over the simplest bit of the story, and what they miss is the momentous thing about the story. You know, so very simply, they say, ah, you know, how come Peter and John looked in there, and they didn't see angels? And now Mary looks in there, and she's, well, no, no, like, that's a stupid, that's not a very wise type of objection.

I almost said a word, you know, we tell our kids not to say. And, um, stupid, that's the word, not something really bad. Anyway, and, and, but the, I mean, the issue is, if anybody, I mean, you know, I mean, there's obviously a whole pile of people who don't believe angels exist, and we set those aside for a moment, but angels, by their very nature, are not creatures that we can just see by our own power. An angel has to will to be seen, otherwise you'll never see it.

[ 9 : 46 ] The angels might or might not have appeared there when Peter and John were there, but even if they were, they didn't will to be seen, but they willed to be seen by Mary when Mary looked her head in there. That's a very simple way to deal with the story. It's quite remarkable, isn't it? In fact, just as an aside, the Bible tells us that there are many angels here, that when we worship on a Sunday morning, we worship with angels. We can't hear their voices, but we worship with angels.

We worship not by ourselves, but also with angels in, in the company of heaven. It's really a glorious thought to think that, you know, but they, they remain unseen. But anyway, what's, but what's the big thing which is missed? And the big thing which is missed is how did she know that one was sitting where Jesus's head used to be, and the other one was sitting where his feet used to be? Well, if you go back and you read the part just before this, verses six and seven, you'll see, and this is the momentous thing, it's quite astounding, is that the grave cloths were still there, but Jesus's body was missing. So why was this, why is this a really remarkable thing? Well, it's remarkable for a variety of reasons. Let's say Frank and I decided that one day we're going to rob an ATM. In fact, we're going to rob several ATMs. Now, I don't know, maybe some of you, if I pick one of you to rob an ATM with, you know how to stick a card in, like in a science fiction, you know, spy thing. You type some things in, and all of a sudden it starts spitting out all of the \$20 and \$1,500 bills inside. But most of us aren't like that. Probably the only way to steal it would be to steal a backhoe, take that whole stupid ATM machine out of the bank, take it away, and then we could take, in our leisure, we could take chisels or whatever, crowbars, and finally open that thing up and get all the money out of it. That's how we would do it. Only the dumbest thief in the world would try to take the crowbar and the chisels and stand there while everybody could see them trying to break into the ATM machine. And even if you found a thief so stupid that he would stand by the ATM machine, hammering away at it, trying to break it apart so he could steal the money, even if he was that stupid, he wouldn't be so stupid that after he'd taken the money, he'd very quickly try to put the whole machine back together again. Like that just wouldn't happen. So it was very common in the ancient world for wealthy people when they had been, the corpses of wealthy people, that people would try to steal their bodies, at least in this time of Israel. And the reason they would try to steal their bodies isn't that they were gruesome, although maybe some of them were gruesome. It's because of two things of great value. The first thing of just a moderate value is that they have the body and they roll the body in a big piece of cloth and intermingled with rolling it up are lots of spices. And in the case of rich people, in the case of Jesus, because Joseph of Arimathea was wealthy, as was Nicodemus, and they're the two men who did this, 75 pounds of spices. And like in today's dollars, that would be worth like, I mean, that would be worth 50, 60 thousand dollars of spices, plus the cloth. So when they would steal a body, they weren't stealing the body, they didn't care about the body, the body would just be thrown away somewhere. They'd take the whole body and leave so that they could disentangle the linen, the cloth, and they could take out the spices and resell it, which I know is unbelievably gross. But that's a separate matter. That's what they did. Obviously, if they have no conscience to disrespect the grave, they don't have any conscience about selling spices that have been next to a decomposing body.

That's a whole other thing, just a gross aspect of the story. So the point of it is, though, that what you see there and what you see here is that Mary's able to see the grave clothes. And so she can see that one angel is sitting where the headpiece was, and the other angel is sitting where the feet would be. Because the way it's described in the original language, it's if all of a sudden you have this body enwrapped with spices and cloth, and then the body vanishes from it.

The body vanishes, leaving behind the cloth and the spices. It's one of the many powerful pieces of evidence that Jesus not only did die, which isn't really a dispute, but that he really did rise from the dead. And also tells us a little bit about the nature of the resurrection, that his body could just be gone, that no longer had to stay there.

Now, here I've sort of taken this way, but I want you to notice that part of the story, which is really important. The thing about seeing two angels, that's a simple thing.

[ 14 : 41 ] Nobody should be particularly bothered about that. But then most of us would say, well, that's cool, like angels, like what happened? Like what did you talk about? One of the most common things that I have with my wife, I'm telling her about some things that went on, I want to let her know something that I learned that day, and I tell her the conversation, then she'll ask me a couple of very good questions. And I'll always tell her, well, the conversation just moved in a different direction. And that's sort of what happens here.

We'd like to know about the angels, but the conversation, well, look what happens. It's verse 13. So the angels are there, and before Mary can say anything, they say to her first, you know, woman, and it said with respect, why are you weeping? She said to them, they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.

And she doesn't end up talking about anything about the angels or anything like that. She just tells them, you know, I'm looking for Jesus's corpse.

You know, one of the other powerful evidences for the truth of the resurrection is that in none of the accounts, none of the ancient biographies, do Christians look good. They all look every single, like, as you continue to listen to this story, Mary doesn't believe that Jesus is risen from the dead.

Jesus died. Dead people stayed dead. And he is dead. He didn't rise from the dead. And Peter doesn't, you know, John, like the women, all the disciples, all the way through in all of the accounts until Jesus finally appears as resurrected.

[ 16 : 28 ] Even the empty tomb does not convince Mary that Jesus rose from the dead. She just thinks the body's been taken. She doesn't stop to think about it for that. You know, maybe later on she's saying, of course, that's so stupid. Of course he had to have risen from the dead because the way the grave cloths, and of course they must have been angels, and all these things she would have thought about later.

But in the moment, they're just continuing selling the story that Jesus is dead, and she's looking for his body. Now the next bit, which puzzles people, I can't be dogmatic, but I think there's a very plausible way and a very human way to understand what happens next.

I'll show you what the problem is. Look at verse 14. So she's just said to the angels, they've taken, you know, I don't know where they've laid Jesus. Verse 14, And having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Now the question is, like, why did she turn around all of a sudden? And I think the reason is like this. She's looking at the angels, and it's clear from the text that Jesus doesn't sort of walk behind her, sneaking up on her.

Jesus just appears behind her. And why did she turn around? Could have been that human sense of other people present. It could have been that human sense that you sometimes have that somebody's looking at you.

[ 17 : 54 ] I mean, that's a puzzling thing in and of itself. Why does it sometimes we feel somebody looking at us? But I think more likely what happened is, we see it, Mary saw a change in the angels.

Maybe they all of a sudden stood and looked behind her. Maybe all of a sudden they smiled in a different way, looking behind her. Maybe there was a bowing of their head while they looked behind her.

But she sees the angels looking behind her. I mean, this makes complete and utter sense. This is the Lord of the angels who's now standing behind Mary. And so Mary turns around.

And it's caused lots of people problems over the years as to why she didn't recognize him. Some of the explanations haven't been, especially of older commentaries, weren't very complimentary of women.

They would say, well, you know, we know women have this hysterical type of nature, which, you know, is all just, you know, garbage. And some will say, you know, well, she was so crying she couldn't see.

[ 19 : 00 ] And others are saying, well, you know, maybe it's a bit dark still. And others are saying that there's a sun behind them. But it doesn't, in fact, the story makes it even more complicated than that.

Look what happens in verse, you know, in verse 14, she doesn't recognize Jesus. Verse 15, Jesus said to her, woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?

You might be able to explain away Mary's, you know, having some tears in her eyes or the sun streaming behind Jesus, but she'd recognize his voice. Like, good grief, I'd recognize Louise's voice.

Like, none of those things explain why she doesn't understand him when she speaks. You're right, and since the story makes it even worse. And then she does something here, look at this, that once again is very, very human.

Like, Jesus said to her, woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? And supposing him to be the gardener, that's so funny. Remember I said, yeah, this story keeps selling that Mary and the early Christians don't believe Jesus had risen from the dead.

[ 20 : 03 ] She says to him, sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away. And then Jesus said to her, Mary. She turned and said to him in Aramaic, Rabboni, which means teacher.

Here's the very human thing. Just imagine for a moment you're going to a reception. And at the reception, you're going to be meeting somebody. You know there's going to be a couple of people that you know.

And so I come into the reception, and I take my glass of wine, but I'm looking for Andrew. I want to hang out with Andrew and Victor. So I take it from the waiter or the waitress, and as I'm taking it, I'm looking around because I'd like to see Andrew and Victor and have a talk with them.

And so I turn away from the person. And so Mary, she just thinks it's the gardener. She's not going to spend all her time talking to the gardener. She's looking around like, where's Jesus? Where's the body of Jesus?

And then Jesus says Mary's name, and Mary now turns right back and looks. And as we see, look here in verse 17, what she obviously does is she doesn't just look at Jesus.

[ 21 : 11 ] She throws herself at Jesus and hugs him, grabs him. One of the reasons that, once again, we know that this is a physical resurrection.

It's not just a spiritual thing. It's not an hallucination. It's a physical thing. And just before we go any further, you know, if you go back and you read, I think it's John chapter 10, Jesus has this very beautiful piece about comparing himself to, you know, he says, I am the good shepherd.

And one of the things he says is that the good shepherd knows his sheep by name. See, this is one of the things that's so beautiful about the Christian faith.

He doesn't just say, I love middle-aged, white people with graduate educations who live in postmodern countries like Canada.

He says, I love George. You know, he doesn't just say, you know, I love engineers. No, he loves Uzo and he loves Tommy, right?

[ 22 : 14 ] He doesn't just say, I love lawyers. He says, no, I love Victor and I love Owen. And on and on. And so what happens is what we're seeing here is we're learning something about what the resurrected body is like.

On one hand, in a resurrected body, if you want to go through a barrier, you just go through a barrier. You're going to see that if you go and read the rest of the Gospels. And you're learning in a resurrected body that it's a body, you can hug it.

And later on, you're going to see that he can eat fish and there's still the wounds on his side. But the other thing about the resurrected body is that it's still very clearly the person, but there's also something different about the person.

But more importantly, that we now see that the resurrected body is a little bit like an angel, not in terms of being non-physical or invisible, but that Jesus has to will to be recognized, just like the angels have to will to be recognized.

It's so beautiful that the angels there and Jesus are in the same story, showing the same principle. Angels will that Mary can see them. Jesus now wills that Mary can see him, and he does it by calling her by name.

[ 23 : 25 ] He does it by calling her by name. Look at verse 17. Jesus said to her, Do not cling to me. One of the unfortunate things is the old King James Version translates it as touch, which isn't accurate in the Greek, and it's unfortunate, because it causes problems to figure out why he's able to be touched later.

But it's not that Mary is just giving him the biggest hug in the world. I mean, and this is so believable, right? Because all the way through this, you see how much she loved him. She was one of the people there watching him be crucified.

She's one of the people who watched Nicodemus and Josephus, not Josephus, Joseph of Arimathea, take the body of Jesus to the cave, and she saw where the cave was.

She's one of the women going to prepare the body of Jesus even better on the third day. She's the one who goes and tells the apostle. She's the one who goes back to the tomb. She's the one who's weeping inconsolably.

She loves him, and so she hugs him. And then Jesus here, it's so beautiful, verse 17, Jesus said to her, Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

[ 24 : 40 ] But go to my brothers. So wonderful. He doesn't say, Go to those dirty rats who wouldn't stand by me. He doesn't say, Go to those dunces who didn't understand anything I taught them.

He doesn't say anything like that. He says, Go to my brothers. Go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father.

And he doesn't say, I'm not even sure if God would have anything to do with you because you've been doing such a terrible job. No, no. He says, I am ascending to my Father and your Father to my God and your God.

And Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples in the original language, I have seen the Lord is emphatic. And that he had said these things to her.

Now, I'm a sucker for action films. And just a bit of a side, I often like Gerard Butler in roles.

[ 25 : 44 ] If I see that he's in a movie, I'm more likely to want to watch it on Netflix. And there's a thing that just came on Netflix a little while ago. I think it's called Geostorm. And it's one of the things I love about this.

I love old disaster films like this because the beginning of the movie, I'm not going to give away any spoilers. Beginning of the movie, it all begins very solemn because of climate change and pollution.

The whole earth was completely and utterly almost uninhabitable in the year 2019. 2019, five years ago. Anyway, I won't go into a political thing right here.

And then, of course, they designed this thing that sort of saves the planet. And then several years later, the whole thing is starting to fall apart. And there's only one thing on the whole planet, only one person on the whole planet who can rescue humankind, and that's Gerard Butler.

And he has to go back up into space and fix it. And before he goes, he has a 13-year-old daughter. And his 13-year-old daughter doesn't want him to go because she thinks he's going to die.

[ 26 : 46 ] And he says to her, the classic action hero thing, don't worry, I'm not going to die. I'm going to come back. But then he says, in classic North American fashion, with great affection and a wonderful Scottish accent, he touches her on her chest and says, but even if I die, I'm always with you.

I'm always with you right here in your heart. Now it's supposed to be a moving thing, and it is a moving thing. But here's a couple of things about it.

First thing is, you see this all the time. You know, if you've ever come to a funeral that I get to preside at, if people want to say eulogies and stuff, I allow them to do that.

And I sort of sense at the beginning of the service, I do that. And then the rest of the service happens and I'll preach a short sermon. But I've heard many, many times where one of the people doing the eulogy will look at the people who are grieved and said, don't worry, they're looking down at you right now, they love you, they're with you, they're watching over you.

I've heard it said many, many times. So on one hand, this is a very good thing. It shows that in North America and I think around the world, there is a very, very, very, very strong intuition in people that life is stronger than death and that death is not final and that there is a way to survive death and continue to live.

[ 28 : 13 ] There's a very strong intuition that that's the case and there's a very strong longing that that would be the case and for secular Canadians it's expressed in that thing about don't worry, I'm always going to be with you, I'll be looking over you and all of those types of things.

It's very, very, it shows this very deep longing and this very deep intuition and as Christians we would want to say you should follow those longings and those intuition.

You should think about it more deeply and the reason you need to think about it more deeply is that there's a couple of problems. There's three, I'll tell you two right now. The first one is this, there's no evidence for what you've just said.

There's absolutely no evidence that that's true. In fact, I would also say to my Hindu and Buddhist friends there's no evidence in reincarnation.

Like there's zero evidence for it. To our Muslim friends, I'd say there's zero evidence that the Muslim description of life after death is true. There's no evidence for it.

[ 29 : 17 ] Like zero evidence for it. And the second thing about it is that if you think about it for a second, it's what that intuition or that what's said in funerals is actually the plot of a horror movie.

You go, what? How could that be? Just think about it for a second. Would you like to be in a world where all of a sudden dead people watch you all the time? Like all the time? When you go to the bathroom?

Like when you're intimate with your spouse? Like they're always there watching you? Don't you see, that's actually the plot of a horror movie. It's not actually something that is really good.

So if you could put up the first point, Claire, that would be very handy. And that is this. And this is why these stories are so important. There is only one who has vindicated his authority.



Sorry, the only one who has vindicated his authority to talk about life and death is Jesus. Why? Because he is the only one who has tasted all there is to taste of death and then been resurrected.

[ 30 : 28 ] He's the only one. And in fact, you know, this is so powerful is that when you see these stories and see that Jesus has tasted all there is to taste of death and that he's resurrected on the third day, he's defeated death, he's on the other side of death, he's still alive, only Christianity explains and grounds our intuitions and our longings around surviving death.

Only Jesus can talk about it. Now, there's another problem with the, I said there were three, there's probably, there's a lot more than three, but I was just going to share three this morning about the Canadian view on death and life after death.

And that's, the other problem is this, that it actually unconsciously reveals that we believe that we're the center of the universe. It unconsciously reveals that human beings believe that they're the center of the universe.

Well, why do I say that? Imagine on a day, by coincidence, a man and a woman who used to be married are divorced and by coincidence they, they've been divorced for quite a while and they, by the way, we all know people like this, they hated each other's guts.

Let's be frank. A man and a woman who'd been married for many years, they hated each other. They loathed each other. Probably if you had talked to them and if you said that, you know, you know, my, your, your ex-husband Joe is on his deathbed and she says, I hope he has a long and painful lingering illness and then he rots in hell.

[ 32 : 05 ] We've all met people who would say that about their, their ex-spouse. And then, by coincidence, their funerals are opposite ends of the city in the same day. And somebody for Bob gets up and says eulogy and says, oh, you people who miss Bob, he's up there looking down on you.

And somebody who goes to Sue's funeral says, don't worry about Sue, she's up there looking down at you. And if people put two and two together, they say, what, Bob and Sue are going to have to live together after life, after death?

They're going to hate that. That's a description of hell, not heaven to each of them, that they're going to have to spend time with each other. But the other thing is, no, no, see, here's what people mean when they say this.

What they really mean is, listen, all those other terrible people, they just die. But I'm always going to be with you. My ex-wife, my ex-husband, no, no, no, no, no, no.

They're just, they're going to be in hell. I'll always be with you. Like, actually, it unconsciously reveals our self-centeredness. If you could put up the next point, that would be very helpful.

[ 33 : 14 ] There is no way to be with others in the new heaven and earth without always being in the full presence of the triune God. There is no way to be with others in the new heaven and the earth without always being in the full presence of the triune God.

See, that's the thing which is seen in this text, which is so beautiful. You know, Jesus says, tell my brothers that I'm ascending. And, and the implication there, by the way, with all of Jesus' teaching, you read the Gospels, you realize that one of the things which is so profound is that Jesus' death on the cross accomplishes something that when we put our faith and trust in Him, that in a sense, His death becomes ours, His resurrection becomes ours.

My hope in having a new body and being resurrected in the new heaven and the new earth isn't based on anything I can do, anything I can accomplish. It's all done by Christ. He finishes everything.

He accomplishes everything. And He also gets around this issue of our pride because somebody might say, okay, George, so in the new heaven and the new earth, you can't just sort of go up into the new heaven and the new earth and, or you can't survive death and somehow maintain your pride that God has to stay distant.

Like that just, it can't happen. And it matters. A couple of months ago, I had a really good friend from out west come to visit and he asked me if I wanted to spend a couple of hours with him in the afternoon.

[ 34 : 47 ] So I did some rearranging of my schedule. I don't get to see him very often and I went to spend some time with him. And I have to confess, as soon as I arrived, my face fell because he brought his dad with him.

And in fact, if he had said, would you like to hang out with me and my dad, I probably would have said no. Not that his dad's a bad guy, but I, it just completely changed the whole time, right? I don't know the dad at all from Adam and all of a sudden there's this, you can't just sort of talk the way you can with your friend.

Well, in the new heaven and the new earth, Jesus is always going to be there. His presence is going to be overwhelmingly felt. But the fact, you see, here's what's so wonderful about the gospel.

People, it's not that somehow or another I've gotten over my pride. pride and my self-centeredness or that I've, in my own power, have developed a human love for God so that I can fit in heaven.

Too bad the rest of you can't because you're all still so proud and self-centered and think the universe revolves around you and haven't developed a love of God. That's just sort of being proud, looking down your nose at other people.

[ 35 : 55 ] No, I stand at the foot of the cross and say, Jesus, I can't get away from my pride. I can't get away from my self-centeredness. I have to confess, I don't necessarily want to know that you can see everything in my life all the time.

And all you can do is say, I can't fix this, I can't stop it, I can't... And you see, it's when you... And that's part of it. Part of the growth in godliness is you realize more and more and more just the wonders of what Jesus has done for you because you confess that to him and the next thing you do is you feel his arm around you and he says, George, I know that you can't.

I know that you can't put your pride to death. I know you can't stop your self-centeredness. I know that there's part of you that still doesn't want my presence. I know you can't fix yourself.

I've done everything that needs to be done to be made right with God. I've done it all for you. You just have to receive it by grace, by faith. It's a pure gift. Just two things really very, very quickly.

If you could put up the first point. I mean the next point. One is, just very briefly, Christian, your body matters on this side of the grave but you will have a resurrection body in the new heaven and the new earth.

[ 37 : 12 ] Just to remember that. Your bodies matter on this side of the grave. Take care of them as best you can. But God has blessed some of us with spectacular bodies and some of us have not been blessed with spectacular bodies and all of us if we live long enough will have problems with disease and illness and conditions.

But this body that we have is not the final body that we will have. We should care for this body as much as we can and we should respect the body and the integrity of bodies of other people as much as we can.

But in the new heaven and the new earth we will have a resurrected body. One that will not age. One that will not die and grow old. One that will not be feeble.

Final thing if you could put it up Claire that would be very helpful. You know one of the things which is so beautiful about this story is that Jesus doesn't say to Mary Mary you know how come you're so clueless?

I told you all these times I was going to rise from the dead. And Mary why are you so clueless? Like couldn't you figure out from the grave clothes that something no no no he doesn't say that.

[ 38 : 19 ] He doesn't say to Mary I think I need to make you have a three year course in theology and biblical studies where I'll teach you before you can go and tell anybody about the fact that I've risen from the dead.

He doesn't say that all of the apostles have to go back to school for five years and then have a coach before they can do anything for him. Jesus is patient while you grow and uses you even when you are a baby Christian or an immature Christian.

That's so what's wonderful about this story. I mean you know we pointed out the things in Mary that you know are less than good but Jesus uses her.

He says you go and you tell them what you've seen and the implication is that the apostles have been forgiven for their sin and and and they're told to go ahead and so God even in this story you see that God uses you even if you don't know a whole lot of theology even if you don't know a lot and your life isn't perfect God still uses you at every point in time in your life he can still use you for his good for his glory.

Let's stand. Bow our heads in prayer. Father we thank you for Jesus we thank you that he tasted all there is to taste of death we thank you that he not only conquered death but he conquered that which caused death which is our sin and our pride we thank and praise you that he will help us that he alone can fit us for heaven we give you thanks and praise that he is patient with us he knows our frailty he knows our weakness he knows our inadequacies he also knows our strengths and excellencies that he is patient with us that he uses us even in the midst of our inadequacies that he still loves us and will use us Father we thank you for your great patience with us and we give you thanks and praise that we have a strong that you desire us to have a strong and living hope that death is not final that we will be with you in the new heaven and the new earth that we will have resurrected bodies and it's not because of our worth but because of what

[ 40 : 41 ] Christ has done and we ask Father that these truths would be deep in our heart and we ask these things in Jesus' name Amen Amen Amen Amen