

Role Model

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[0:00] Oh, there we go, role model. Now, I was talking with someone recently about one of the biggest problems in our community! is a lack of good role models.! A lack of good role models. Nathan knows all about that.

One of the biggest problems in our community, isn't it? We see second and third generation unemployment. We see a loss of hope, a lack of a future, people in misery and pain, taking drugs, and it seems like they're just on a destination to nowhere.

And one of the biggest problems in our society is a lack of good role models. You know, I've seen in some Facebook profiles, actually, I don't think they're here present, but where some people describe themselves as Australia's best model.

So I don't know if you might feel that you're one of those, but ultimately we do need a good role model, don't we? We need good role models in our society. And I put to you that ultimately I'd like to present to you Australia's best model.

The best role model in the whole wide world, really. The whole wide world. Now, it's not this guy here. But you can see, here's a picture of a role model, if you like.

[1:13] What we aspire to, isn't it? Like a cat looking into a mirror and seeing a lion. There's something bigger than yourself, something bigger and better than yourself. A role model. Something you can copy and learn from.

Now, we see here, on the left you've got a man called Reg Park, and on the right you've got Arnold Schwarzenegger. And Arnold Schwarzenegger had a role model.

A mentor. Someone he looked up to. He wanted to be like. And he wrote about this in his autobiography at 15 years of age. 15. He was just a scrawny kid. Arnold Schwarzenegger decided he wanted to be the best bodybuilder in the world.

And when he saw a massive bodybuilder called Reg Park in a movie, he knew that he had found his hero. In Schwarzenegger's own words, from that point on, I was utterly dominated by Reg Park.

You know, this fellow on the left here. His image was my ideal. I found out everything I could about Reg Park. I bought all the magazines, published his programs.

[2:18] I learnt how he started his training, what he ate, how he lived, the kind of workouts that he did. And I became obsessed with Reg Park. He was the image in front of me from the time I started training.

And Schwarzenegger says, I pasted his pictures on all the walls of my bedroom. I studied every photograph of him. I could get my hands on.

I noted the size of his chest, his arms, his thighs, his back, his abdominals. And this inspired me to work even harder. And when I felt my lungs burning as though they would burst and my veins bulging with blood, I loved it.

I knew then that I was growing, making one step, one more step towards becoming like Reg Park. So wrote Arnold Schwarzenegger.

How we need a role model, don't we? A role model, someone we can look up to, to aspire to be like. In a world where many seem to fail and set such a poor example.

[3:22] We've seen recent news, haven't we? Of those who claim to be men of God and falling down into abomination. Many would agree, Christian and non-Christian alike, that the Lord Jesus, I put to you, the Lord Jesus is the best role model.

The Lord Jesus. Can we pursue Christ-likeness with the same passion that Schwarzenegger pursued Reg Park-likeness? Christ-likeness.

If you find a role model, you'll want to know that person. Number one, you want to know that person. Schwarzenegger wanted to know Reg Park. He wanted to know all about him. He wanted to know his training program. He wanted to know his techniques, his diet, his regime, to be as fit and strong as his role model. What about Jesus?

Do we know Jesus? Allow me to introduce him to you. He's been called the greatest man in history. Jesus. He had no servants, yet they called him master.

[4:25] He had no degree, yet they called him teacher. He had no medicines, yet they called him healer. He had no army, yet kings feared him.

He won no military battles, yet he conquered the world. He committed no crime, yet they crucified him. He was buried in a tomb, and yet he lives today.

He left the incomparable Christ. He laid aside his purple robe for a peasant's tunic. He left the heavens glory and became a man.

God manifest in the flesh. It says he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor. This man, he lived in poverty and was raised in obscurity. He received no formal education and never possessed wealth or widespread influence.

He never travelled extensively. In fact, he seldom crossed the boundary of the country in which he lived. But this man's life has changed the course of history. As was referred to earlier, we even date our calendars by his coming.

[5:29] In infancy, he startled a king. In childhood, he amazed religious scholars. In manhood, he ruled the course of nature, walking on stormy waves and hushing the raging sea to sleep.

Peace, be still. He healed multitudes without medicine, made no charge for his services. He never practised psychiatry. Yet he has healed more broken hearts than all the doctors far and near.

And once each week, well, that used to be the case, the wheels of commerce ceased their turning and multitudes gathered to pay their respect to him. Of course, the Lord's Day is not so revered today.

It's not so considered today. This quote goes on. He never wrote a book, yet his life has inspired more books than any other man. He never wrote a song, yet he has furnished the theme for more songs than all songwriters combined.

He never founded a college, but all the schools put together cannot boast of having as many students. He never marshaled an army. He never drafted a soldier or fired a gun.

[6:31] Yet no leader ever had more rebels surrender to him without a shot fired. He is the star of astronomy, the rock of geology, the lion and the lamb of zoology, the harmoniser of all discords and the healer of all diseases.

The names of past proud statesmen of Greece and Rome have come and gone. The names of past scientists, philosophers and theologians have come and gone. But the name of the man abounds more and more.

This man, Christ Jesus, the God-man. Herod could not kill him. Satan could not seduce him. His enemies could not destroy him. The grave could not hold him.

After three days he rose from the dead, alive forevermore. He is the ever-perfect one. He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And this man stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed by God, acknowledged by angels, adored by his people and feared by demons as the risen Lord and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I put to you today to find this role model, know Jesus. Know Jesus. Not just about him. Not just of him. We can read and learn and know teachings, but to know him.

[7:50] To know him. Paul reckoned that this one was the most important truth to know. You know, I can't show you a picture of Jesus today, as much as someone paints such pictures.

But there's a tomb in Jerusalem that is potentially the tomb where Jesus was buried. And he's not there.

I've been in there. He's not here. He has risen. He has risen. Amen. You know, many philosophers and religious figures of past have got their tombs on planet Earth, but Jesus' tomb is empty.

He's risen. He's risen. And to know him. Paul reckoned this was the most important truth to know. Turn with me to the world's most hated book.

This is revolutionary stuff. To 1 Corinthians 2. The old rugged cross. Paul says, For I determined not to know anything among you, save this one thing.

[8:52] Jesus Christ and him crucified. To know him. Paul says this is the most important truth he could declare. To know him. To know him. Jesus Christ and him crucified.

To know him. To declare him. It is the most important thing to know. Of all the knowledge of Earth, to know him. And Pilate presented him one day before the masses. It says in John 19.

And he says, Behold the man. Behold. Behold Jesus today. Jesus came forth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.

And Pilate saith unto them. This massive throng. This mob. Ranting and scorning and mocking him. And he says to them.

Pilate. He says, Behold the man. You can imagine him here. Looking over the ramparts of his courtyard. And Caesar here. Looking on the.

[9:50] Not Caesar. Rather. Pilate. Looking on the throng of people that were gathered. And he says. As we just say it again. Behold the man. Look at him. Here he is.

They just whipped him. They bashed him. They bruised him. They made him bleed. He's a wounded man. Bearing a crown of thorns. Crushing into his skull.

Bleeding. And he's saying. Behold the man. And what do they say? Crucify him. Crucify him. You know. Just. Just hours before.

They were saying. Hail him. Hail him. As he answered. And they're saying. Hosanna to the son of David. And they're casting their palm branches. At his entrance into Jerusalem. Hail him. Hail him. Hail the king. Now they're saying. Nail him. Nail him. Nail him. Crucify him. They quickly turn. They quickly change their tune.

[10:45] And we see. This ranting mob. Spitting. And foaming at the mouth. Crucify him. Crucify him. They didn't want this man. To reign over them.

Then we see. He says again. He comes to them again. He's had a little interview with Christ. And then he comes to the people again. Hoping they've changed their tune. And he says.

First he said. Behold the man. Now he says. Behold your king. The king of the Jews. He's your king. And they said. No we don't want him. They said. Away with him.

Crucify him. Send him to the cross. Nail him. Nail him. Some people don't want to know him. They do not want to know him still. John the Baptist knew him.

Think of John the Baptist. What a figure he was. Pretty radical man wasn't he? Sort of a bit out of the ordinary. A bit of a. How would you put it?

[11:40] A misfit maybe. As the world would reckon it. And John the Baptist was there. Baptising people. And then he sees Jesus coming. He says. The Lord Jesus coming. And he says.

Behold. The Lamb of God. Behold. The Lamb of God. Which taketh away. The sin of the world. Pilate said. Behold the man. He says.

Behold your king. John the Baptist says. Behold. The Lamb of God. Who takes away the sin. Of the world. Behold him. Know him. When you find a good role model. You want to know him.

Know Jesus today. Know him. Know all about him. Know who he is. The king of glory. The God manifest in the flesh. God clothed in human skin. God such that you can't.

He's not God far far away. Unreachable. But God made visible. God made flesh. God made such that God wears human skin. Such that we can touch him.

[12:35] And he can touch us. Know Jesus today. Secondly. I put to you. To follow Jesus. If you find a good role model. You want to follow them. You'll follow them through hell and high water.

If you find a good role model. And I put to you. The Lord Jesus is no better. There's no better role model. He it is who speaks to you. And he says. Follow me. Follow me. Follow me. He said this many times.

For example. He came to Philip. And he said unto him. Follow me. Follow me. He walked by the sea of Galilee. And he said to the fishers there.

He said. Follow me. Follow me. And I'll make you fishers of men. Imagine them there. Busy with their fishing. With their occupation. With their industry. With what they were up to. You know. It was a busy time. Bringing in the load of fish. And Jesus says. Follow me. And it says. They left their nets. And they followed him. Then he walks by the tax collector's office.

[13:35] You can imagine. Here's a picture of Matthew. As it were. At the tax collector's office. Sitting at the receipt of custom. It says. And Jesus says unto him. Follow me.

And Matthew arose. And he followed him. I put to you. Follow Jesus. That's a critical factor. For our lives. I know. It's a favorite. My dad's. That. That.

That. That. Challenge of Christ. Follow me. Very simple. But how. Hard it is to. Actually say. Yeah. I will follow him. I will follow him.

I'll stop. Going my own way. And I'll follow him. You know. There's a. A famous place in America. Called the Alamo. And. In San Antonio. Texas. And.

There's a. A plaque there. To a man called. James Butler. Bonham. And. This fellow. James Butler. Bonham. I don't know. What he was famous for. But he was famous for something.

[14:29] And. And. He did something at the Alamo. That made him a very famous person. But there's no picture of. Of this man. James. Butler. Bonham.

So what they did. Was they said. Look. We're going to put this portrait up here. James Butler. Bonham. It says. There's no picture of him exists. This portrait. Is of his nephew. Major James. Bonham. Deceased. Who greatly resembled his uncle. It's placed here by the family. That people may know. The appearance of the man. Who died for freedom. We don't have a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But. We've got. Those that are in his likeness. Those that are in his likeness. His own people. There's no literal portrait of Jesus. If there was people. We'd be bowing down to it.

And. And. And. Idolising. A picture. A picture. But God doesn't want us to idolise a picture. He wants us to know the real Jesus. To follow the real Jesus. And the likeness of his son.

[15:28] The likeness of Jesus. Is in his people. Those who know him. The likeness of the son. Is in those who are his followers. He is the perfect role model. So follow him.

Be those people that we call to be. As God's own people. As God's own precious beloved. Men and women. Sons and daughters of the living God. We should want to follow Jesus.

So closely. That we start acting like him. Now a big thing. A big thing that people search for. Is finding their purpose in life.

You know. Everybody talks about the purpose. What's the point? Why am I here? What's our ultimate purpose? Is to find and follow Jesus. Is to find and know him. This is the ultimate plan. And it says in the word of God. Be followers of God. As dear children. We should follow him. We should follow God. Walk in his steps. Follow Jesus.

[16:24] And as we follow Jesus. We become more like him. Now I look back in my life. The people I know were genuine Christians. Genuine. And you could tell they were Christians.

There's just something about them. You knew that they were like Jesus. They were like him. And that should be our aspiration. Shouldn't it? For all of us to be like him. It says in 1 John 2.

He that says he abides in him. Ought himself so as to walk. Even as he walked. If we say that we belong to Jesus. We should walk like Jesus. We should talk like Jesus.

We should be Jesus to our world. And this one. This ultimate role model. Says follow me. Follow me. Trouble is many fail to follow. Or follow him very poorly.

Mahatma Gandhi said this. I like your Christ. I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ. Isn't that true? What a reproach on the people of God.

[17:25] I like your Christ. But I don't like your Christians. You know Christians. We're meant to be people who are shining and brightly pointing people to Christ.

That we are a magnet to draw people to Christ. That people should want that Christ that is in us to be in them.

That the Christ that we know, that we profess to follow. That we have him and know him and follow him such that the world can see that. They can see that we are genuine.

Fair dinkum Christians. How can we become more like Jesus? Peter says, you're called to this. He says, Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow his steps.

There's some steps on this planet left by the Lord Jesus Christ. There's footsteps that he's left here on this planet. And we are to follow his steps.

[18:23] He calls to Matthew the fisherman. Follow me. He calls us to follow. Follow me. What does it look like to follow him? It says, let this mind be in you.

Which was also in Christ Jesus. We had that before. It tells us that we should have the mind of Christ. So what's that saying? It's saying that our actual mind, our thinking, our thought patterns should be like God's thinking.

We should think such that eternal things are more valuable than material and temporary things.

That what really matters, what we really dwell on, what we think about, what matters to, what occupies our attention and our thinking is that which is eternal.

That which God would count as important. And it says to be like Jesus, we need to be renewed in the spirit of our mind. There's a total mind shift that happens when you become a Christian.

There's a mind shift. There's a heart shift. He takes away the heart that is anti-God and he gives us a heart, a new heart, a brand new heart, a brand new start.

[19:31] He gives us the mind of Christ, the heart of Christ, the spirit of his mind, that constant renewing. And we know it's easy to say it in theory, this renewing, this changing of our mind.

Of course, we know we're still flesh. We're still human. We still fail. We're still subject to the struggles of the flesh. But God wants us to keep that renewing going on.

That thinking changing, to be more like Christ, to have his attitude. What was his attitude? This one we call the Christ. What was Jesus? Who is he?

What's his character traits? Consider the qualities of the man. If we should be Christ-like, what should we be like? We look at the Gospels. We see the example he set at the time of the washing of the disciples' feet.

He is a servant. As the disciples, they met with him and he acted as the servant. He takes the lowly place, even washing their feet. We see in the times of the day that there was a necessary custom of washing the feet of those who came in to the home.

[20:41] And this was the work of the lowliest of servants. This was the scummiest, lowliest, dirtiest job that anyone could have, washing people's feet.

And Jesus took a towel and he girded himself and he took dirty feet and made them clean.

And he says, after that act, he says, I've given you an example, that you should be, as it were, a servant, as I have done to you. A servant. Can we have that servant attitude?

That we really want to serve? A heart to serve. That's the Jesus heart. And he is committed to mission. We see, after he washed the disciples' feet, we see that he was committed to his mission, to seek and to save the lost.

I like to think that his mission should be our mission. Why did he come? To seek and to save the lost. We have that same mission today, don't we? We should have that same mission, shouldn't we?

[21:42] Amen. We should have that mission. And Jesus said, peace be unto you, as my Father has sent me, even so send I you. The Lord Jesus was sent and we are sent by him.

He says, so send I you. He was committed to his mission. And so should we be. We should have a commitment to mission. And he was committed to do what was right, what was godly, what was truthful.

He confronted hypocrisy. I saw a kind of funny picture that I won't show you, but it was a picture of the Lord Jesus with the whip in the temple as he went after the money changers and those that were kind of making merchandise out of religion.

And he went, he had the whip and in this picture I saw on the internet, the Lord Jesus was there with this whip and the Pope was there and he was running away from him. And I thought, you know,

the Lord Jesus, he confronted hypocrisy.

He drove the money changers out of the temple and Christ is our model. He says, so send I you. He is the perfect one. May we develop godly habits like Jesus. Think of Jesus.

[22:50] He prayed. He made a point of praying. He spent time in communion with his father and he showed us how to pray. He set the example. He set the example of what we should be like, like him.

It was his custom to attend worship. It says that that was customary for him. May we learn to treat other people like Jesus did. You know, look through the gospels and get a handle of how he treated people.

The scorned, the derided, the lowly, the weak and sickly. Those that didn't fit. The mould. They were kind of outsiders. The Lord Jesus, he loved them.

Consider his love. He says, greater love have no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. That love, that knows no bounds. It knows no limitation.

He was full of grace and truth. Such that he loved the enemies that even crucified him. Notice how the Lord Jesus treated the woman caught in the act of adultery. She should have been totally guilty.

[23:56] You know, there's no question. Guilty. Sentence her. She's been caught in the act. There's no question that she's guilty. And Jesus said, he that is without sin, cast the first stone.

He was that one, wasn't he? The only one. And he did not. And he says, go and sin no more. He treated her with grace as he is, full of grace and truth.

We see how he says, the spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because the Lord hath anointed me to preach. Because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted.

To preach deliverance to the captives. And recovering of sight to the blind. To set at liberty them that are bruised. Notice who he came to. The poor. The brokenhearted. The captives.

The blind. The bruised. Sounds like Elizabeth, doesn't it? Sounds like our world, doesn't it? People brokenhearted. People in captivity. People blind and bruised.

[25:00] Hurting people. He was generous. And he came to heal. He came to deliver. He came to set free. He's full of compassion. And he's generous.

He understands people. He knows us through and through. He knows your heartaches. He knows where you're at right now. He knows you who are brokenhearted here this morning. And he knows where you're at.

And he heals your heart. He meets with us. He touches us. He helps and heals the hurting still today. And notice his forgiveness.

This one that we should aspire to be like. This perfect role model. As he was there on the cross.

Looking down at these bloodthirsty people. That have just nailed his flesh to the cross.

And he looks down at them as they're gambling for his garments. As they're there just to take what he had left.

[26:00] The cloak that he had. The raiment that he had. And he says, Father, forgive them. For they know not what they do. Just while they're gambling for what little he had.

Father, forgive them. The forgiveness of our Lord. Even as they were crucifying him. He was kind. Can we be more like him? Can we be more like Jesus?

How can we be more like Jesus? It's always been his plan. It's how he created us at the beginning. In Genesis. At creation. We were made. In God's own image.

That's the perfect aspiration, isn't it? God's own image. At the very creation. We are made in the image of God.

That's a wonderful truth. That you are something more precious and valuable than any other creature. That you are precious. And at creation he made you.

[26:58] In his image. And then at the close of human history. As the world. As we know it. When Christ returns. We shall be like him. It says. We shall be like him.

And he says follow me. Follow me. So we can do so in our lifetime. If he says follow me. You can follow him. He won't tell you something that you cannot do.

And his best for us is our transformation. That one day we'll be like him. We'll be transformed into his likeness. How can we be more like Jesus? Let's make that our goal.

Let's make that our longing. Our wanting. To reflect his glory. The very glory of God. In 2 Corinthians it tells how we with open face.

Beholding as in a glass. The glory of the Lord. The glass speaks of like a mirror. We see the glory of the Lord. We see what Jesus is. We see who he is. We know him. We follow him.

[28:05] It says we behold him. Behold the man. Behold the. Your king. Behold. The lamb of God.

And we behold. The glory of the Lord. He's so perfect isn't he? The Bible says. All have sinned. And come short of the glory of God. The glory of the Lord. It's beyond our estimation. This glorious one. This perfect one. The spotless precious blood.

The perfect lamb. The perfect God man. Christ. God in human flesh. Behold. The glory of the Lord. How can we ever. Be like him. Yet it says here. We are changed. We are changed. Into the same image. From glory to glory.

[29:09] Even as by the spirit of the Lord. He changes us. Such that we will be like him. That we can be more like him. We are being changed. You know.

I like to say to. Especially my brother Don here. That he's more like Jesus than he was. When I first met him. You know. He just looks more like Jesus every day.

Amen. Amen. Doesn't everyone agree with that? You know. Despite our failings. We'll be more like Jesus. More like Jesus than we used to be.

Tomorrow we'll be even more like him. And then one day. We shall be like him. We shall be like him. Because he'll ransom us. And change us. Even physically. And give us a new resurrection body.

Such that we'll have a new everlasting body. And we'll be changed into the same image. From glory to glory. Even as by the spirit of the Lord.

[30:08] How can we be more like Jesus? The perfect role model. Sometimes it happens through the time of affliction. And suffering. Could be in the crucible. It could be in the refining fire.

Of the times of affliction. They might be the times that make you. They're the making of you. Those times of testing. And trouble. And trial. And challenge. And stepping over the line.

Doing something that's sacrificial. And hard. It's been said that the most Christ-like people. Always graduate from the school of conflict. Never the school of convenience.

It's the school of hard knocks. Isn't it? The school of hard knocks. That teaches us how we can be like him. To graduate from that school of hard knocks. As it were. Those times of trouble.

They teach us to trust him. They teach us to lean on his strength. And he says to you. Carry your cross. And follow me. Carry a cross. And follow me.

[31:06] You know. It's changed lives. Christianity. It's about changed lives. Conversion. It's a changed life. It's a new life. If any man be in Christ.

He's a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold all things. I'll become new. And he says. If you're going to come after me.

Deny yourself. Take up your cross. And follow me. Take up your cross daily. And follow me. That's a hard thing to do. Isn't it? You know. Not everyone likes to carry a cross.

It's heavy. It's hard. It's bulky. It's inconvenient. It's ultimately your death. The dying of self. But then. It's a raising to life. There was a man.

He told of a Christian woman. She was getting quite elderly. And she used to know the Bible. Bible verses. In her memory. She memorised lots of the Bible. And it came to a point.

[32:05] With this older woman. That she came to a point in her life. Where she was starting to lose some of her memory. Things were starting to fade a bit. And there was just one precious verse. That she. Had stayed with her.

And it was this one. I know. I know. Whom I have believed. And that he is able to. I'm persuaded. That he is able to keep that. Which I've committed unto him. Against that day.

I know whom I believed. And I'm persuaded. That he is able. To keep that. Which I committed unto him. Against that day. But gradually. As she started to.

Her memory faded further. And it started to slip her mind. She came. It narrowed down to. That which I have committed unto him. That which I have committed unto him.

And she just would repeat those words. And then. As her memory faded further. And she was at the close. Of her life. And she just repeated over again. Him. Him.

[33:01] Him. Him. Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. I'm persuaded. That he is able to keep that. Which I have committed unto him. Against that day. That which I have committed unto him. And then just. Him. Him. Him.

Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. She'd lost the whole Bible. But that one word. She held onto him. Onto him. Know Jesus. Know who he is. Know him.

There was a woman. Who went to a diet centre. To. Try to lose some weight. And the. Director had this big. Full length mirror. On the wall. And as she walked in. He outlined a figure.

On her. Reflection. He outlined a smaller figure. And he says. This is what I want you to be like. At the end of the program. And days of intense dieting. And exercise followed.

And every week. The woman. Would stand in front of the mirror. She was discouraged. Because of her bulging outline. It didn't fit the director's ideal. This outline. He'd drawn on the mirror. But finally. One day.

[33:57] She conformed to the long for image. One day. She did conform to the image. And it's like that for you and me. Isn't it? As we want to be more like Jesus. We know we fail. We know we lack.

We know we're not. We don't match that glory. But we changed into that same image. From glory to glory. Follow him. Such that you will become. More like him.

And just lastly. We see. Trust Jesus. We see. We should know him. We should follow him. We should trust him. If you find a good role model. You want to know about them.

You want to know them. Know them personally. You want to follow them. You want to follow their example. And then you want to find a role model you can trust. Someone you can trust. We're living in a world where people aren't very trusting of others.

Isn't that true? People don't trust anybody. You know. You see the politicians. You see the stars of screen and song.

[34:52] And we know. And the sport. They're all the same. There's always some failure of conduct. Some failure of behaviour. And people have broken trust. Now we know the surveys that people conduct.

And one of these is Australia's most trusted professions. You can see this. They do this every year. They conduct this survey. Who can you trust the most?

And they ask the Australian public. Who do you trust? And they give you a whole long list of occupations. And ask them to kind of rank them. And one article I saw. This was dating back to 2016.

It said federal politicians. Real estate agents and lawyers are rising. In the esteem of Australians. But car salesmen still remain the nation's least trusted workers.

I'm trying to sell a car at the moment. But I'm probably too honest to tell people what's wrong with it. But you know. Car salesmen are on the bottom of the list for trustworthiness. And another one is telemarketers.

[35:51] Now I used to be a telemarketer. And I think it's a bit nasty picking on telemarketers. But they're saying that car salesmen and telemarketers. Are among the least trustworthy.

And then at the top of the list you've got people like nurses. Health professionals. Pharmacists and doctors. They're right at the top. Nurses are number one. They're right at the top of the people that people tend to trust.

The ministers of religion have dropped in trustworthiness. You know. There was an article in 2017 saying ministers of religion have dropped in six of the last nine years of surveys.

That's terrible isn't it? In nine surveys, six times ministers of religion, they dropped down the list. They're less and less trustworthy.

People trust ministers of religion less and less. And no wonder. Think of recent media articles and you can imagine such rankings dropping even further.

[36:50] But I put to you today there's one person. One. One person who is deserving of your entire trust. Of your entire trust.

He's entirely trustworthy. And Thomas was one who first doubted. He didn't see the risen Lord in the first time round and he doubted.

But then Christ appeared to him. He said put your hand in my side, in my hands. And Thomas said, my Lord and my God. My Lord and my God.

At first he doubted but then he trusted. He trusted and confessed Christ. My Lord and my God. He bowed the knee and he trusted him. My Lord, my Master, my God.

I trust you. I confess you. You can trust in Jesus.

[37:49] You can believe him. He's entirely trustworthy. You can trust him with your whole heart and life and your eternity. Trust Jesus. That's my final challenge to you today.

Believe in him. Believe in him. Thomas was there. At first he doubted. You see pictures of doubting Thomas. That's what they call him now, isn't it? Still. Doubting Thomas.

But no. Doubting Thomas became believing Thomas. And he answered and said unto him, my Lord and my God. And the Lord Jesus says still. He says, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

He that believeth on me. Verily, verily. This is truly, truly. Believe in him. Make it your study. Make it your learning. It's what the word disciple means. He says, you're a learner.

You know, we've still got the L plates on. Don't we? I've still got an L plate hanging around my neck. I'm still learning about God. I'm still learning how to be a Christian. As much as he's made me one.

[38:49] But I'm learning to be a better Christian. I already am a Christian. Because it says, if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart, the Lord Jesus, you shall be saved.

It says that we are saved. As we trust him. But I've still got the L plates on as far as being more of a disciple. And disciple, as I say, the word disciple means learner.

We're all learning. We're still on that journey. And it's a growing, it's a learning process. Peter says at the close of his second letter, but grow in grace.

Grow in grace. And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It's a growing, it's a process. It's like a seed planted. And then there's a growing that happens such that we've got some seeds that we're going to be given shortly of some sunflower seeds.

And those little seeds, just tiny little seeds can become beautiful, radiant, glorious flowers. And God says to us, grow in grace.

[39:52] It's a growing thing. He plants that seed. The Lord Jesus talks about the gospel as being like a seed. Let's plant it. And then we see that it brings life and fruit and vibrancy.

And just like that, we can grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. So I put to you this morning, there's a role model. The ultimate, the best, the greatest, the one who will not let you down.

He cannot disappoint. Know Him, Jesus. Follow Him. Even if it be taking up your cross and following Him. Even if it's going to be hard being a Christian.

And we know it can for some. It's very hard because their family are not Christian. Because the nation they live is not Christian. It's a hard thing to say, I want to be a Christian.

I want to follow Jesus. And trust Him. He'll see you through. He'll help you to grow. And you'll be changed from glory to glory. You'll be changed into that same image. And there'll be a conforming to the image of Christ.

[41:02] It's God's ultimate. You are made in His image. And He wants you to be changed into that image today. And we can be mindful as we can look to human role models such as Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Look to a man to copy. And he ultimately became like that man. If we can know Jesus, follow Him, trust Him, we'll be more like Him. We'll be better examples.

And the world won't say, oh, there's a Christian. Look what he's done. Or she's done. And, oh, that's Christians. We won't be a poor example. We'll be a godly example.

And God helping us, He'll make us such. I urge you today to put your trust in Him. Put your trust in Him. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And you shall be saved.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for everything you are to us. The King of kings. The Lord of lords. Lord, the Lamb of God. The Saviour of the world.

[42:07] God manifest in the flesh. Lord, our words can't put in human language. We can't paint with a paintbrush who you are, Lord.

But yet we know one day we will be like you. Help us to know you more, to follow you more, to trust in you. And to know that saving grace that makes us a Christian, even in that simple confession, my Lord and my God, like Thomas cried, Lord, even as it were, we'll trust God.

That cross in all of its ugliness can be a place of great beauty and blessing because it's there that you paid the price for our sin.

And we can put our trust in you to save us, to be our sacrifice in our place, to know your saving grace, Lord. We thank you for it in Jesus' name.

Amen.