

The Testimony of a New Life

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[0:00] Turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 12.

! We're going to look in just a minute at John chapter 12, verse 9, 10, and 11. But before I have you follow that passage, I want to take just a moment and give you perhaps one of the most redundant statements of my ministry, and that is that I would plead with you to pray for me.

I think one of the things I've said more than anything else would be that I am dependent upon your prayers. I can't speak for other pastors, but I can tell you this, that for Tim Knoyer, an indication of where I am spiritually is how consistently and how persistently I beg for prayer.

It is a reflection of my confidence in God answering prayer, and it is also a reflection of my recognition of my own heart and the need of God's help.

So I trust that as I am preaching that you are multitaskers. What I mean by that is that you are listening, and along with listening, you are praying for me.

[1:36] And I am not the least bit put off if at moments you decide that you need to kind of ventilate and say it publicly. It wouldn't put me off in the least if one of you would stop in the middle of my sermon.

Don't stop, but just say, oh, Lord, help him. It's not going to bother me because I am aware that preaching the Word of God is not merely an intellectual or an academic exercise that is dependent upon an individual's ability alone.

That doesn't mean that preaching is not something that requires study and deliberate and careful thinking. But at the end of the day, preaching that is powerful and is used by the Spirit of God is something that is dependent upon God.

And I want you to remember that. I want you to pray for that. Now, with that said, I want to start out by having you just kind of mark this passage in your thinking.

We're going to be looking at verse 9, 10, and 11. And at the beginning of our lesson, I want to tell you ahead of time what it's about. The first thing that I want you to recognize is that Christ's power raises the dead to life and makes them incredible witnesses to His grace.

[3:01] Christ's power does something that people can't get their head around in one sense and allows the individual who has been saved by the grace of God to be a testimony to His power.

Secondly, I think another thing that we should see in this passage is that the blindness of sin isn't simply overcome by more evidence. I think we'd all like to think that just a little more education, a little more information is the undeniable key to life transformation, and that's not the case.

Ultimately, genuine conversion is not simply a matter of information, but it is the work of God taking information, driving it home in an individual's heart, and bringing them to the point of understanding, first of all, the absolute despair of the human soul and man's inability to transform who he is really inside that brings us to the point of saying, God, if you don't work, I'm lost, and I desperately need the work of Christ to change me and to save me.

So with these things in mind, let me read the passage, and then we'll pray. John chapter 12, verse 9, When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came not only on account of Him, but also to see Lazarus, whom He'd raised from the dead.

So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of Him, many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

[4 : 50] Father, this morning as we take this passage in hand, we are thankful that You've given to us the sure and settled scriptures that we may rely upon to instruct us, to inform us, to help us see the power of Christ.

We're thankful also, Father, that we may call upon You to work in us and in that request we confess that we in ourselves are not going to grasp the sweetness of the scriptures apart from Your helping us to see it.

And so, touch our hearts, open our ears, incline our thinking and our affections towards You that we would see wonderful and beautiful truths in Your Word, and that those who are here that know the Lord Jesus Christ would grow in their affection for Him and their clear and convincing pursuit of His glory.

And that those that are here that do not know Christ would be drawn to see their desperate need for the Lord Jesus as their only Savior, and that today they would call upon His name and be saved.

And we ask this in Jesus' name, amen. So now, as we take this passage in mind, the first thing that I want you to recognize is that as we look at these three little verses, what we are seeing is the powerful draw of a changed life.

[6 : 30] And we're going to see primarily Lazarus that was an attractive and magnetic individual, not by virtue of his personality, but by virtue of what Christ had done in him.

I think it's important to understand a little bit of the background because, as I commented last week, we're only a week away from the cross. We're not very far from Jesus dying on the cross for our sins.

And it is interesting that as Christ made His way methodically towards the cross, He set the stage for His public ministry as the Lamb of God.

Now, there's no specific text to actually support the idea, but you would have to recognize that it was not an accident that here is Jesus coming into Bethany that is only two miles away from Jerusalem.

And He came into Bethany to do a miracle that because of its proximity, how close it was to Jerusalem, it allowed for many of the people in Jerusalem, the absolute center of the Jewish world, so to speak, to come down to Bethany to sympathize with Martha and with Mary at the death of their brother.

[7 : 52] And in that culture, you'll remember that the death of a loved one was something that was given a great deal of weight, and so many, many had gathered around.

They had come to comfort and encourage Mary and Martha as they were grieving, and they were witness to the fact that Jesus had finally arrived after a four-day delay.

And when He came into town, ultimately what He did was He asked that He be taken to the gravesite, and there it was. There was a tomb that had been cut into the rock, and there was stone rolled across the front of it, and in that little chamber was a body that now had been aging for four days.

And you'll remember that Jesus had made a statement to Martha about Him being the resurrection and the life, and she had borne testimony to her faith in Christ. And later, He had asked that they go to the gravesite, actually to the point where, the place where Lazarus was buried, and in the presence of all this audience that had gathered around Him, remember what Jesus said?

He said, Do you believe? Yes. Well, roll the stone away. What was the response of Mary and Martha, and what did the rest of the crowd think when He said, roll the stone away?

[9 : 14] Huh? Their very practical statement was, if you kind of rely on the King James, it says, He stinketh. You know?

There's something going on inside that we don't want outside. Just let it go. We're all right. And He says, roll the stone away. They rolled it away, and I want you to imagine the impression on the crowd that were kind of around Mary and Martha when they said, okay, okay, roll it away.

And after Jesus had had the stone rolled away, you remember what happened. He prays. By the way, who did He pray for? He prayed, it tells us in the passage, to bring information and insight into the lives of those who were listening, and after He'd finished His prayer, He shouts, Lazarus, come forth.

Question, could Jesus have brought Lazarus through the face of the tomb, through the stone, out into public, completely stripped of the grave clothes and with new clothes on and all?

Could He have done that? The answer is, not a problem. But He had called Mary and Martha to an act of faith, rolled the stone away, and then out He called on Lazarus, and out He came, and there He was with His grave clothes on, okay?

[10 : 34] Now, grave clothes, we're not talking about a three-piece suit. We're talking about a guy that basically had a sheet wrapped around Him, and then, you know, it's like they didn't duct tape Him, they didn't have duct tape in the good old days, but they had taken strips of linen and wrapped it around His legs, and so I gotta tell you, you can kind of have a little bit of spiritual fantasy here, kind of imagining how Lazarus had gotten out of the tomb, you know, hop, hop, hop, hop, He came to the front, and Jesus said, hey, let Him loose, and it was an impressive moment.

It was something that captured everybody's imagination. Now, stop with me just for a minute, and think about a couple other instances of Jesus dealing with dead people.

How many of you know that this was not the first resurrection that He had done? One of them is that He had stopped a graveside procession, and the widow's son, the widow of Nain, He had stopped the procession, and He'd spoken to the young man, and He'd risen up.

Another one, Jairus' daughter, remember, they'd called him, he'd gone down into the town, and he said, she's sleeping, and they said, no, she's dead, and they'd already gathered to kind of weep and mourn, but in neither case had the death been longstanding.

What I mean by that is that in Jairus' daughter and in the widow's son, because of the burial process in the ancient time, the burial happened very quickly, but with Lazarus, he had been dead for four days.

[12 : 26] There was no question that he was dead, to the point that when the idea of rolling the stone away came up, everybody was, whoa, don't go there.

That's not a good idea, Jesus. We appreciate what you did feeding the 5,000, and dealing with blind people, we're good with that, but let him stay. Roll the stone back, and out he comes.

Now, the takeaway on that is that Lazarus ended up being an undeniable and spectacular illustration of the power of Christ. Lazarus proved to everyone what Jesus could do and who he was.

He served as an undeniable proof of Christ's power and authority over sin and death, and I think it's important for us to get our head around that and recognize that Lazarus was an undeniable testimony to the power of Christ.

Now, let's take that and play it out a little bit more in our own personal lives recognize this. The reality is this, is that a painting is an illustration of the painter's skill.

[13:35] Isn't that right? I look at Thad, and Thad is an artist. He went to Columbus School of Art and Design, and anytime we have some artwork around here, we don't ask Tim Knoyer to do it because crayons are about the limit of my skill.

We ask Thad, and he does a good job. By the way, when you really want to figure out whether an engineer has any capability, what do you look at?

You look at what they've made. You look at what they've accomplished, and as you look at the machinery or whatever it is that that engineer has put together, you end up saying, man, that guy's got it.

I want you to realize that every genuine convert points to the power of Christ. Every genuine convert points to the power of Christ.

And I want you to recognize that Scripture is full of illustrations to this point. Stop and think with me of the passage in John chapter 4, and let's go back there just for a moment.

[14:42] John chapter 4, verse 28 and 29, after Jesus touches the life of the woman at the well. Look at what it says there in verse 28 and 29.

So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, and stop just for a moment. Here's a woman we know from the account was at the well because she was embarrassed with what people knew about her, and she was kind of shunned and put out by the society.

She was kind of on the outskirts of culture and community, and here she is transformed by the gospel, and after she has converted, what does she do? Go to look at verse 29.

Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ? I like the way in which it says that passage in the King James.

Is not this the Christ? Come, see the man who told me all that I ever did. Now stop and think with me just for a moment. How many of you have things in your life that you are really glad other people don't know?

[15:51] Okay? Here is a woman who goes into town and everybody knew pretty much everything about her because in a small town are there secrets? What's the answer?

In a small town are there secrets? Nah, not to, eventually you figure it out, right? And here is a woman who goes back into town and says, hey, you come meet the man who told me all about me. Underlying that is that he also loves me and has forgiven me.

Let me have you look at another passage in John chapter 9. John chapter 9 verse 10 and 11. So they said to them, this is the man that was born blind that Jesus heals and following that he ends up being brought before the Sanhedrin, before the council because of the fact that Jesus healed on the Sabbath.

verse 10, so they said to him, then how were your eyes opened? Verse 11, he answered, the man called Jesus, made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, go to Siloam and wash.

So I went and washed and received my sight. Third illustration I want you to see is over in Luke chapter 8. Luke chapter 8, you're in John, just kind of turn back a little bit to Luke chapter 8 verse 35 through 39.

[17:17] Now let me give you a little bit of background because I think it's important to understand the significance of what had taken place. Here was a man who had reached the point in his extreme captivity to Satan's power that he had not only been driven out by the town, but he was also living naked in the tombs and he was self-abusive as well as abusive to all kinds of other people.

He was an outcast by society. He was hated. He was disliked. And Jesus came to him and delivered him of all that baggage and that burden.

And we read there in verse 35, then people came out to see what had happened and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind and they were, what?

Afraid. And those who had seen it told how the demon-possessed man had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of Gazerines asked him to depart from them for they were seized with great fear.

So he got into the boat and returned to the man, verse 38, from whom the demons had gone, begged that he might be with him. But Jesus sent him away saying, return to your home and declare how much God has done for you.

[18:41] And he went away proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him. I love this story. Do you know why? Because I can identify as you can as well at what it must have been like to be an individual who was a little ashamed of their history and their past.

And here was a man who Jesus had radically transformed with the power of the gospel who says, hey, I would like to leave my past behind and I would like to go somewhere else where I can get a fresh start.

And what did Jesus say? You go back to town and serve as an undeniable illustration of my power to change a life.

I'll never forget many years ago in ministry, not here, I had a man come up to me in the church and say, so would you allow a convicted felon to come to church?

And the obvious answer from any of us would be what? Absolutely. The person went on and said, would you allow a convicted felon who was in prison for 10 years for child pornography to come to church?

[20:00] I said, absolutely. And I remember counseling that man when he came back to town after he had been sent away for 10 years and he said to me, how is it that you are willing to have me here?

I said, well, sinners need to be here to hear the gospel. He said, well, I'm saved. I have come to faith. I said, then I expect you here to be a testimony of the power of Christ to change a life.

Does that make sense? I got a call two weeks ago when I was in the hospital. Terry Wolcott called me three times.

Three times. He wanted to know how I was doing. And he brought it up. He said, Pastor, I'll never forget what it was when you were willing to let me come to the church.

Incidentally, over time, he ended up serving cookies in VBS with me standing at his shoulder.

Do you understand that? Later, he became a deacon in our fellowship. An undeniable, godly testimony to the power of Christ. Do you know what he's doing today?

[21:10] He's 72. He is traveling back and forth to prisons all over this state and he is telling people every chance he gets, Jesus can change a broken and ruined life.

And you know what? When Terry tells his story, I want to tell you something. He's not the hero in it. Lazarus wasn't the hero in his story either.

He was proof of the power of Christ. Isn't that what we see? I want you to recognize that. So here is Lazarus and you look at the passage there, go back to John chapter 12 and it says that people came, verse 9, not only account of him but also to see Lazarus.

Yes, people wanted to see Jesus but here's the deal. They really wanted to see the evidence of the power of the gospel to do something incredible in the life of a person who at one point had been dead.

They wanted to see the power of Christ on display and evident. And I wonder this morning whether or not your life bears similar testimony to the power of Christ to change you from who you used to be to who you are and who you someday will be.

[22:40] You know, I wish the fact of the matter is is that conversion made us go from absolute dark to absolute light with no in between, right? Okay?

It's like nothing else to be done to continue the process of growing in grace but here's what conversion does. Conversion brings life to a dead heart.

Conversion changes a person's eternal address. Conversion gives to a person a new interest. Conversion gives to a person a different desire.

And Lazarus bore testimony to the power of Christ to change a life. So let me ask you a practical question. Here is Lazarus who as a result of the power of Christ was undeniable, irrefutable proof of the power of Jesus to change a person.

How clearly? How clearly does your life point to the power of Jesus to save and change a heart? How clearly? Are you different today?

[23:45] Are you growing? Are you different than you used to be? And can you see the evidence of progressive sanctification, the process of Jesus changing you to be more and more like Him and less and less like you used to be?

I've got to tell you something. One of the convincing facts, it's interesting, I asked the question last Wednesday night in our Bible study, I said, so what are some of the theological truths that you are firmly convinced of?

One individual said, I'm convinced of the, he used the word soteriology and that's kind of like heavy duty. He said, I'm convinced of the power of Christ to save. Are you convinced of that?

Are you convinced of the power of Christ to save because you know what He's done for you and you're not who you used to be? That's what should be going on in your life.

And Lazarus was such an illustration of that power that the unbelieving world came to see it and they came to bear testimony to it. Now that brings up something else that I want you to see.

[24:57] Look there at verse 10. So the chief priest made plans to put Lazarus to death as well. There is a hateful desire to destroy evidence.

Do you follow that? We like to believe that all people need is proof and proof would stand by itself and do its job on its own. No. The unbeliever is not going to be persuaded necessarily by the proof.

In fact, when the proof is on the table, one of the things that often happens in the heart of an unregenerate person is they end up disliking what is convicting.

And so as we move a little further into this scene, we see just how dark and how hard the hearts of unregenerate people can be. Here the highest authorities of Jewish culture had decided that the appropriate thing to do was not only murder Jesus, who was the Messiah and the Savior, and was doing all these miracles, but they decided that not in addition to murdering Jesus, they were going to murder Lazarus.

Why? Because he was evidence of the power of Christ to change a life. And so here, we recognize that the leaders of the nation of Israel had become a law unto themselves.

[26:14] They saw themselves not as the law teachers, but as the lawmakers. And as a side note, one of the things that you should recognize and just understand about culture is that when a nation turns its eyes away from the truth of the law of God, ultimately what happens is those who are there to support and encourage or respect for the law end up being a law to themselves and not applying the law to themselves.

So don't be surprised at what we see in our culture and the cultures around the world where people have turned their back on the word of God and turned their back on the law of God. It happens. It happened here.

Nor should you be surprised at the sinfulness of an unregenerate heart. What I want you to see here, it says there in verse 11, because of an account of him, talking about Lazarus, many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus and as a result of the impact of the life of Lazarus, the people who were in leadership thought, hey listen, we got to get rid of Lazarus as well as Jesus.

And so recognize that sinners are going to hate the light and their hatred of the truth will always seek to suppress its convicting power. That's what happens.

I want you to look at another passage with me just to kind of firm this up in your thinking. Go back in your Bible to John chapter 3 verse 19 and 20. John chapter 3 verse 19 and 20.

[27:43] He'd like to believe that all people need is light. Ah, get enough light, the problem solved. That's not necessarily the truth at all.

Sometimes all that light does is give a clear picture of the blackness and the darkness of the human heart and it leads to a rebellion against the light. Look at John chapter 3 verse 19.

This is the judgment. The light has come into the world and people love the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his work should be exposed.

Now by the way, there may be some of you here that are in the process of kind of thinking through who is Jesus and what's he all about? I can't think of a better thing for you to do if that is a curious question in the back of your mind.

Who is Jesus and what's he all about? The ideal thing for you to do would be take the gospel of John. In fact, you can take the Bible that is in the pew right in front of you. We have stacks of in the back room and if you don't have a Bible, take it home with you.

[28:54] You got me? How many of you understood what I said? You want a Bible? Take it. Read the gospel of John and keep on asking yourself this question. Who is Jesus? Why did he come? Jesus said, I am the light of the world.

So when the light becomes clear, the unregenerate heart, apart from the grace of God, has a tendency to dislike what they see and react against it.

I want you to recognize that as we read this passage, we see a clear picture of how the unregenerate respond to the light.

Now, beloved, I encourage you to recognize that in the culture in which we live, we ought to not be surprised if when we serve in humility and tenderness and serve as the light, there's going to be a little bit of pushback.

I want you to recognize at the same time when we think about the issue of serving in the community and culture where God's put us, that we are careful at the same time that we are light, that we're not brassy and arrogant in being that.

[30:00] I want you to look at a passage just for a moment to kind of confirm that in your hearts. You're there in John, but go to 1 Peter 3. 1 Peter 3. I'm just going to read this passage and let it kind of soak in to your own thinking for a later time.

1 Peter 3, verse 8, it says this, Finally, all of you have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Stop just for a moment. Everybody smile at me so you know I'm talking to you.

The unbelieving world completely understands not really getting along. Do you follow that? The unbelieving world completely understands really not getting along.

The thing that is stunning is when people stay in relationships despite the frailties of the flesh of other people in the circle with them.

Wouldn't it be nice if every sinner in the canoe with you was better than you are in their heart? The problem is is that all of the people that are in companionship and community with you are struggling with some of the same things.

[31:11] And here is Peter as he is coming towards the end of his life and he says this, hey, he says, Have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

Verse 9, Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called. Why were you called?

To be a blessing, to give a blessing. Then it goes on there in verse 10, Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil.

Now, how do you keep your tongue from evil? Question. How many of you don't need practice at being stupid with what you say? Okay. I think one of the distinct privileges of being a little older is that I have suffered adequately for stupid things I've said that I at least think more carefully than I used to.

Well, in addition to that, the grace of God should teach us to be more gentle and patient and cautious in what we have to say. And here it says, Hey, keep your tongue from evil. Verse 11, Let him turn away from evil and do good.

[32:25] Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. Now, who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them nor be troubled. But in your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

Now, mark the end, yet do it with gentleness and respect. Listen to me. We are living in a day when the belligerence of the unbelieving world is just like it's on steroids.

And I would appeal to you who are believers that that kind of spirit should not characterize your Facebook posts, your little comments that you make on Snapchat or Twitter or wherever else, or even things you say in the office.

Or here, let's go one better. Or things you say to companions professedly in the gospel. I gotta tell you, I'm tired of snarky statements from believers.

[33:50] How many of you heard me? You know what snarky statements are? Critical, sarcastic little comments that belong in a bar room, not in the family of God. And all God's people said, okay.

So next time someone does it, and I do drift left of center occasionally, here's what I want you to do. Put your arm around me and say, Pastor, you just preached on that. Stop. Help me.

By the way, I'm here to help you. Okay. Now we got that out of the way. Let's talk about practical textual fruit. In other words, when you preach the word, there's gotta be something to do with it, and that's where we're at.

I am struck, for one, by the evidence that a witness to Christ's power is simply that. There's no indication that before the woman at the well scampered into town to talk to people about Jesus, or the man who once had been blind, or Lazarus, took a 12-week course in how to share the gospel before they waltzed in and did their thing, right?

All they did was say, I used to be blind and now I see. Come meet the man who loves me despite the fact that I've been a skunk. So, I can't tell you how many times I've heard people say that they just don't witness because they don't know how.

[35:17] I'm not convinced of that. I don't think it's true. Witnessing is not about training. Write that down. Witnessing is not about training. Witnessing is about being evidence of His power to change a broken and ruined life.

That's simple. The woman at the well, the blind man, the demoniac, Lazarus, all they did was bear testimony of what Christ had done in their lives.

So, if there is a consistent lack of witnessing opportunity in your life, it's fair to ask a couple questions of yourself. Number one, you may not really be convinced of His power to change life.

Years ago, I remember I hurt myself, my back, serious injury, and I had numbness down the left leg and it got to the point that I was staggering around and I went to a doctor and said, yeah, you need an MRI and the doctor said, you have a herniated disc and there's no solution but surgery.

My wife was working for a group of attorneys that specialized in lawsuits for malpractice, etc., and I said, find out who the best surgeon is in Columbus. Does all that make sense to you, right?

[36:42] And, she found out that Dr. Janet Bay was top of the line. I begged, borrowed, and whatever else and got into Dr. Janet's office and she did my surgery and I have never had another, I'm good, my back, I mean, that's 25 years ago, do you follow that?

So, I am all the time ready to talk about the best surgeon I know when it comes to back surgery. It may be that you don't understand the power of Christ and that's the reason you can't speak to the power of Christ and I would plead with you that if you're here this morning and you do not understand the power of Christ, it might be that you've never really come to faith.

Do you follow that? The blind man put it this way, I don't know who he is and what he has to do but I'll tell you, I was blind and now I see.

I do think sometimes that believers can get caught up in things that are of no eternal purpose and their lives can be compromised. I think about a passage in 2 Timothy where it says this, Demas has forsaken me having loved this present age.

we can be seduced as believers who are on our way to heaven to be so caught up in the things of this present life that we just lose sight of the glory of Christ.

[38:18] Isn't that right? I've got to tell you, the most important thing is not what I'm going to leave behind or where my vacations were or whether or not my children put a bunch of trophies on a shelf that later go in a cardboard box that end up in a garage that my grandchildren have to dispose of.

Do you got my point? The point? The truth of the matter is this, we have been saved for His glory and we are to bear testimony to His power to change a life.

Don't get caught and seduced by the things of this world. There's one other thing. I think about that statement in Revelation where it says, you've lost your first love.

Some of you may have forgotten what Jesus did in saving you. Some of you may have forgotten the darkness and the misery of your heart.

And as a result of forgetting the blessing of His salvation, you no longer share it with affection and passion. And there is no remedy apart from rekindling your spirit with humility and saying, Lord, restore to me the affection and the love that I had for you at that time when you saved me.

[39 : 53] I want you to think also of the fact that witnessing is about being an evidence of His power but here's another thing. I want you to know that you can count on the fact that over time being living proof of His power will lead some to faith.

That's what happened in John's passage here. Lazarus, by virtue of the life that he lived, ended up drawing people to Christ.

That's what we see happening in the Bible. Do you know that as a result of practical, quiet testimonies of faith, people are coming to faith all over the world?

All over the world. The most powerful testimonies are generally in the hottest crucibles and under the greatest suffering. Do you know where the gospel is having some of the greatest impact today?

It's in Iran. People lose their lives for their faith in Iran. Do you know that Christians in China numerically are going to surpass Christians in America?

[41 : 00] And it isn't because you have all kinds of Christian radio and all kinds of Christian music and all kinds of Christian preaching. It's because you have Christian witnessing. Lives that are changed by the power of the cross.

So my question to you this morning is this. Where are you in your testimony? Are you like Lazarus who by virtue of the power of Christ to change a life are being used by Christ to draw other people to see and to hope and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior of the world or are you someone who is here today and does not know Christ?

If you're here and you know Christ I would plead with you that what you do is repent if you've not been the testimony and witness that you should be. And if you are here and do not know Christ then I would plead with you now is the hour now is the time to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in whom is salvation alone.

Let's close in prayer. Our Father God we are thankful for the little reminder of Lazarus and a life that was changed by the power of Christ and the magnetic witness that he was and the testimony that that is to us that we who know the Lord Jesus are to bear testimony to his power.

That that's the purpose of our life. And I pray this morning that as the word of God sits on the hearts and lives of your people that it would be used to draw people to obedience and to being godly witnesses.

[42 : 51] Also that those who are here this morning that do not know the Lord Jesus Christ would be drawn to the cross by the power of the gospel that Christ Jesus might be exalted here as he is in eternity.

And we ask this in Jesus name. Amen.