

Jesus is Personal, Powerful, Pastoral and Perpetual

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 November 2015

Preacher: Rev Alasdair I Macleod

[0 : 00] I'd like you to turn back, please, to John's Gospel in chapter 20 and also 21. I want, for the moment, just to read three half-verses, really.

John 20, first of all, beginning of verse 16. Jesus said to her, Mary. And then, verse 27.

Then Jesus said to Thomas. And chapter 21 and verse 15. When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon.

Now, here we are gathered once again on a Sunday evening. And we meet on the Lord's Day, as every one of you knows, because it's Resurrection Day.

Because Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. And that forever made that day special.

[1 : 23] Because that was the day that changed everything forever. Now, in these last two chapters of John's Gospel, we read about the risen Jesus.

The Jesus who had been truly dead and buried. But the Jesus who rose from the dead, triumphant over the grave.

I know for all of you, this is a basic doctrine. I remember when I was, I think, first year in university.

And I was back home here. I only spent one year here, in sixth year, in the Nicholson. Then I was away. And I was back here on a holiday.

And I remember one night having met with friends in town. People had been with me in sixth year at school. And asking myself, why am I a Christian and they're not?

[2 : 36] What is it that I believe that is so important to me? And why do I believe it? Now, I know there are lots of answers to that question. But I thought to myself, I remember driving through Stornway and thinking this.

I'm a Christian because it's true. But then I asked myself, why do I believe it's true? And I began to think of all the various reasons and possible arguments people use.

And for myself, I came to the conclusion that the most important thing for me was my absolute belief that Jesus rose from the dead.

And that there was no other explanation for what happened on that first day. You have the empty tomb. And people have all kinds of theories to explain away the empty tomb.

I think they all self-destruct. They're all wrong. Then I went through the resurrection appearances. And the theories people have for them.

[3 : 43] They self-destruct. It's true. And then the transformed disciples and the way people try to explain that away. And I went through that in my mind.

And again, I regarded every other explanation as nonsense. For me, this is absolute bedrock. I can't get beyond it.

I go back to what happened on that first Lord's Day. In that place on this planet. On a particular day. With real people.

And I believe that the tomb was empty. And that Jesus appeared. And that his disciples were transformed. And that there's no other reason.

No other explanation. That makes sense of all the evidence. But that Jesus really rose from the dead.

[4 : 41] So I'm saying for me. This is personally absolute apologetic bedrock. That Jesus rose from the dead.

And he is the Jesus who is alive today. He's a contemporary. The ever-living, ever-contemporary Jesus. Who really rose from the dead.

And who can really be met. And who's encountered in the here and now. As a living saviour for anyone.

So let's think about this Jesus. This risen Jesus. I want to think about four things. I don't usually like alliteration.

But the letter P just fell from above. First of all. He is the personal Jesus. The personal Jesus.

[5 : 43] Each of the four gospels. Tells us about a very relational Jesus. Somebody who loves people.

Who relates to individuals. Who loves speaking to people. And spending time with people. And who touches individual lives.

In a very personal way. And that I want to point out. Is just as true of the risen Jesus.

He is just as personal. In his dealings as he ever was. We see him here. As I've read these three texts. We see him with three individuals.

Whom he already knows. Mary Magdalene here. In verse 15. He speaks to her as woman. And then verse 16.

[6 : 46] He calls her Mary. Then Thomas verse 27. Then he said to Thomas. A direct. Personally relevant encounter.

With Thomas. And then Peter. 21.15. Jesus said to Simon Peter. Simon. I know it's obvious. But it's so important.

To grasp this. That Christianity. Was personal. And that Christianity. Is personal. And that Christianity.

Always must be. Personal. It's actually just the other day. I got a book. On the gospel of John. Written by. A man called Richard Bochum.

Who used to be a professor. In St. Andrews. When I was there. Recently. He's retired a year or two ago. And he was talking about.

[7 : 43] The importance of. The individual. In the gospel of John. And individual relationships. With Jesus. And Jesus emphasis. On the individual. And he's.

Counted up. Some of these sayings. And he says. There are. 67 sayings. About the individual's relationship. With Jesus. In the gospel of John.

And he says. They come in different ways. For example. He says. 37 times. We have. A saying like this. The one who. The one who. You know.

The one who believes in the son. Has eternal life. The one who does not believe. Does not. It's all about what the one does. With Jesus. 14 times.

There are sayings like this. If anyone. You know. If anyone. Keeps my word. 12 times. There are sayings like this.

[8 : 41] Everyone. Who. For example. Everyone. Who looks to the son. And believes in him. Will have eternal life. And so it goes on.

He's saying. It's just so important. To notice this. And I'm saying tonight. This is so important. Also. About the risen Jesus. It's all about.

Jesus. And. Mary. It's about Jesus. And Thomas. It's about Jesus. And Peter. It's about Jesus.

And me. It's about Jesus. And you. Christianity. Is not about. Religion. It's not about. Ritual.

It's not about. Rules. It's not about. Regulations. It's about. A personal. Relationship. With a personal. Saviour. Jesus.

[9 : 35] Offers. Himself. To. Us. He wants us. To ask. Him. Into our lives. To commit. Ourselves.

To him. As. My. Saviour. And my. Lord. And then. To go on. Trusting him. And loving him. And obeying him.

And listening to him. And talking to him. The Christian life. Is about. Getting to know. Jesus. Better. And better.

And better. You all know. That there's all the difference. In the world. Between. Knowing. About. A person. And knowing.

A person. Actually. Knowing. That. Person. I don't know. Why now. That I'm. Much. Older. A lot. Of my memories.

[10 : 30] Go back. To. When I was. Much. Younger. And. The other day. This memory. Came back. Of. The only time.

I was ever. In the house. Of commons. I was down. John Nichols. Was minister. Of the free church. In London. That time. And I'd go down.

To do something. In the free church. And he said. You're down. For a couple. Of days. With us. Is there anything. You'd like. To see in London. Or do. And I said.

I've always wanted. To go to. To the house. Of parliament. To the house. Of commons. And. I don't know. When this was. Maybe the mid 80s. Because he knew. Donald Stewart.

Donald Stewart. Attended. The free church. In London. When he was down there. So. John Nichols. Knew. Donald Stewart. And he said. I'll talk to Donald Stewart. And I'll get you in. And we went.

[11 : 24] On the appointed evening. To a very important debate. And. I'm sure it wouldn't happen now. But. We. We were allowed to sit downstairs. Just behind the MPs.

Not in the public gallery. I don't know how it happened. But. We were just shown in. And. There was a seat. As it were. If you think of the. The speaker there.

And the benches at either side. Facing each other. And there's a. There was a bench. In that corner. I think it's. Where civil servants. Come in and out.

During. During. The debates. But. We sat there. At that bench. We were on the same level. We. You felt. You were almost part of it. I remember at one point. These were Thatcher days.

I remember at one point. The opposition. The whole. This whole. As I was looking at it. Well. I'm doing it this way. So. We're there. So. This whole side. Just.

[12 : 19] Got up. Like one man. Or one woman. And went. Like that. Over. Over to the. The Thatcher side. And then we came out. When the debate was over.

Into. We had to go out the same door. As MPs. And into the lobby. And I was surrounded by people. That. I almost felt I knew. Because I'd seen them so often.

And listen to them on television. And read about them in the newspaper. All these familiar. And important faces. I remember. Michael Hesseltine. Towering over me in the lobby.

And looking at me as if. Something had crawled out from under his shoe. But anyway. That. That was a look I got. I thought. I almost said hello.

As if I knew him. But I realized. As I looked around. All these people. While I knew a lot. About them. I didn't know.

[13:16] Any of them. Personally. I didn't know. Donald Stewart. Personally. And none of them. Knew my name. And none of these people. That I felt I knew.

Kared about me. It's a very important point. You can know. About Jesus. Without knowing him. Christianity.

Christianity. Christianity. Isn't being able to say. I know about Jesus. Or even. I know about Jesus. And I believe it's true.

It's being able to say. The Lord. Is. My. Shepherd. I know. Jesus. And he is.

My savior. My shepherd. My Lord. And my God. It's personal. And every one of us. Needs. To have a personal encounter.

[14:11] With the risen Jesus. And to put my own faith. In Jesus. For myself. The personal. Jesus. Jesus. But secondly.

He's. The powerful Jesus. The powerful Jesus. Jesus comes from the. Tomb. In. Power. We speak about his.

Humiliation. Leading. Towards. The tomb. But then. Humiliation. Becomes. Exaltation. As. You all know.

A new chapter. Begins. For him. And for us. And. The resurrection. Is the great. Sign. And display.

Of. The victory. Of. Jesus. He comes from that tomb. In. Power. And. In triumph. I want to think of that victory.

[15:10] In. In two. Two dimensions. Of it. It's a victory. Over sin. And it's a victory. Over death. First.

It's a victory. Over sin. On the cross. At Golgotha. Jesus. Had died. In the place. Of sinners. And now.

He is raised. From the dead. As. Has often. Been said. As the. Father's. Great. Yes. To the work.

Of the cross. The father. Accepted. The price. Paid. The sacrifice. Offered.

When. When Jesus. Gave his life. For us. And we read it. In John's. Gospel. He said. It. Is. Finished. Chapter 19.

[16:05] In verse 30. Meaning. It's done. It's. Paid. In. Full. And the resurrection. Is the father. Saying. Yes.

It has. Been. Finished. The perfect. Sacrifice. Has. Been. Offered. It has. Been. Paid. In. Full. I know.

It's. Impossible. But. If Jesus. Hadn't. Risen. From the dead. That would have been. The father. Saying. No. But of course. The father.

Had to say. Yes. Because. The perfect. Sacrifice. Had. Been. Offered. And Jesus. Deserved. To be. Raised. Having. Finished. The work. Given.

To him. To do. He's. Exalted. By. The father. So. Here. In the resurrection. The father. Is saying. Yes. It. Is.

[17:00] Done. It's. All. Been. Done. By. Jesus. So. Important. To. Recognize. The. Completeness. Of. The. Finished.
Work. Of. The. Lord. Jesus. Christ. And. That's. What. The. resurrection. Is. Saying. And. You. Notice. When. Jesus. Comes. To. His. Disciples.
After. His. Resurrection. And. Speaks. Peace. To. Them. In. Chapter. 20. And. Verse. 20. He. Points. To. The. cross. And.
What. He. Has. Done. When. He. Had. Said. This. He. Showed. Them. His. Hands. And. His. Side. There's. The. cross. And. The. resurrection.
Together. Isn't. it? He. Speaks. Peace. To. Them. How. Can. They. Have. Peace. How. Can. Anyone. Have. Peace. Because. Jesus. Says. Look. At.

[17:53] My. Hands. And. My. Side. I. Died. For. You. And. Here. I. Am. Alive. For. You. The. Work. Has. Been. Accepted. The.
Insignia. Of. The. New. Covenant. Are. Cut. There. In. His. Flesh. And. They're. Still. There. In. His. Risen. Flesh. So.
The. Jesus. Who. Died. And. Who. Rose. Again. Can. Say. To. Us. Peace. Be. To. You. If. Our. Faith. Is. In. Him. Because. If.
Anyone. Trusts. In. The. Finished. Work. And. We. Add. Nothing. To. What. Jesus. Did. That's.
The. Great. Thing. About. The. Christian. Faith. Every. Other. Religion. Is. Saying. Do. This. And. Do. This. Prove. Yourself.

[18:45] In. This. Way. And. Prove. Yourself. In. That. Way. Achieve. Achieve. The. Christian. Faith. Says. It's. Been. Done. Jesus.
Has. Done. It. All. It's. Sufficient. Done. For. Us. Very. Simply. Put. By. Somebody. A. Little. While. Ago. Every.
Other. Faith. Says. Do. The. Christian. Faith. Says. Done. It's. As. Simple. As. That. Other. Faith. Say. Do. But. The. Bible. Says. Done. Done. By. Jesus. Who. Dies. And. Who. Rises.
Again. Demonstrating. That. It. Has. Been. Done. So. It's. A. Victory. Over. Sin. But. It's. Also. A. Victory. Over. Death. Obviously.

[19:39] He. Conquers. The. Grave. He. Died. Once. And. He. Rises. Never. To. Die. Again. But. To. Live. Forever. And. So. His.
Resurrection. Is. His. Victory. Over. Death. And. It's. Also. A. Promise. Of. Our. Victory. Over. Death. Of. Resurrection. Life. To. Come. For.
Us. He. The. Prototype. He. The. First. Fruits. For. All. Of. His. People. His. Resurrection. Body. Is. A. Real. Body. It.
Also. Seems. To. Be. Different. In. Some. Ways. Verse. 19. He. Just. Appears. In. This. Room. Verse. 26. He. Appears. In. Another. Locked. Room.
Maybe. Our. Bodies. But. Certainly. In. The. New. Heavens. And. The. New. Earth. We. Will. Have. New. Bodies.

[20:34] Resurrection. Bodies. Real. Bodies. Bodies. That. Will. Be. Raised. In. In. Glory. And. In. Power. Transformed. To. Be. Forever.
Bodies. And. How. Is. This. Possible. On. The. Basis. Of. The. Resurrection. Of. Jesus. As. The. First. Fruits. And.
Prototype. Of. What. We. Will. Have. In. The. Future. And. All. Because. Of. His. Power. End. Of. Philippians. Three. We're. Told. That. We. Await. A. Savior. From. Heaven.

Who. Will. Transform. Our. Lowly. Bodies. To. Be. Like. The. Body. Of. His. Glory. And. This. Is. Because. He. Has. The. Power. To. Subdue.

Anything. To. Himself. This. Powerful. Jesus. Who. Defeats. Death. And. Who. Can. Defeat. Death. For. Us. And.

[21 : 30] Give. Us. These. Bodies. In. The. Future. So. You. See. To. Commit. To. This. Powerful. Risen. Jesus. Is. To. Be. Confident. That. If.

He. Has. Won. The. Victory. Over. Sin. Sin. Will. Not. Have. The. Last. Not. Have. The. Last. Word. In.

My. Life. Jesus. Has. Won. For. Us. And. Jesus. Will. Win. At. The. End. Illustrated.

In. This. Way. As. I. Think. About. Victory. Over. Sin. And. Death. Again. I. Don't. Know. Why. I. Go. Way. Back. In. My.

Memory. And. I. Think. Of. Films. I've. Seen. A. Long. Time. Ago. And. Books. I. Read. I. Suppose. Nearly. Half. A. Century. Ago. And. My.

[22 : 22] Memory. Is. Not. All. It. Was. So. I. Think. It. Was. Nearly. Half. A. Century. Ago. Reading. A. Book. Called. Lorna. Dune. That. I. Saw. A. Scene. Like. This. But. Even. If.

It. Isn't. It. It's. In. Many. Many. Movies. That. You've. All. Seen. Where. Two. People. Are. Fighting. Two.

Men. Are. Fighting. And. They're. There. They. Tumble. Into. Into. The. Water. And. There. They. Are. Fighting. In. The. Middle. Of. The. Water. And. Then. They. Go.

Down. Under. The. Water. And. Suddenly. The. Surface. Of. Water. For. A. Little. While. Seems. Come. And.

You're. Asking. What's. Happened. Under. There. What's. Happening. Under. There. Has. Somebody. Won. Or. Have. They. Both. Disappeared. Forever. And.

[23 : 16] Then. Suddenly. At. Last. One. Of. Them. Breaks. The. Surface. The. Emerge. Triumphant. The. Other. One. Doesn't. Appear. Again. But. One. Appears.

Up. Through. The. Water. As. The. Victor. And. I. Think. Of. The. Lord. Jesus. In. Terms. Of. That. Illustration. Jesus.

There. With. The. Burden. Of. Sin. On. His. Back. And. Jesus. Fighting. Death. And.

They. Disappear. As. It. Were. Under. The. Water. And. You. Don't. Know. For. More. Than. A. Few. Minutes. You.

Actually. Don't. Know. For. A. Day. Or. Two. As. You. Watch. What. Has. Happened. Who. Has. Won. Jesus. Remember. With. The. Burden.

[24 : 09] Of. Our. Guilt. On. His. Back. Fighting. Death. Under. The. Water. Then. Everything. Goes. Quiet. Who. Has. Won. And.

Then. On. Resurrection. Day. Jesus. Rises. From. The. Dead. Jesus. Emerges. Out. Of. The. Water. Again. He.

Re. Emerges. Because. He. Has. Won. And. He. Emerges. Without. The. Burden. On. His. Back. Because.

Our. Sins. Are. At. The. Depths. Of. The. Sea. He. Emerges. Free. Of. That. Burden. And. Emerges. Having. Defeated. Death.

Never. To. Die. Again. That's. The. Kind. Of. Powerful. Savior. That. We. Need. Someone. Who. Can. Take. On. Sin. And. Take. On. Death.

[25 : 02] For. Us. And. Who. Can. Bury. Sin. And. Emerge. Triumphant. From. Death. As. Our. Savior. Our. Powerful. Risen.

Savior. Who. Defeats. Our. Enemies. For. Us. The. Powerful. Jesus. But. Thirdly. Pastoral. Jesus.

In. These. Stories. He. Is. The. Pastoral. Jesus. I. Think. This. Is. Very. Important. To. Notice. As. We. Think. About. The. Kind. Of. Risen.

Savior. That. We. Have. When. Jesus. Comes. Back. From. The. Dead. Have. You. Ever. Thought. That. He. Engages. In. Pastoral.

Work. That's. What. He. Does. That's. Where. His. Heart. Is. To. Be. The. Shepherd. The. Pastor. Of. His. People. So.

[25 : 55] You. Notice. In. The. Stories. Of. Each. Of. These. Three. Individuals. Mary. Thomas. And. Peter. Jesus. Comes. To. Someone. In. Need. And.

He. Deals. Personally. And. Pastorally. With. Each. Of. Them. As. Their. Shepherd. Each. Of. Them. Is. In. Emotional. And. Spiritual. Need. And. Confusion.

And. He. Deals. With. Each. One. Of. Them. As. An. Individual. Speaking. Into. Their. Own. Need. Let's. Look. At. Each. Of. Them. Just.

Very. Quickly. Don't. Have. Time. To. Go. Into. The. Depths. Of. Each. Of. These. Stories. But. In. Each. Case. Making. The. Point. That. The. Risen. Jesus. Deals. Pastorally.

With. Each. Of. These. People. In. A. Very. Personal. Way. And. The. Three. Of. Them. Can. Be. Summed. Up. Like. This. One. Who. Weeps. Mary. One.

[26 : 49] Who. Doubts. Thomas. One. Who. Fails. Peter. So. To. One. Who. Weeps. Mary. Just. Glance. At. The. Story. In. Chapter. 20. From.

Verse. 11. There's. Face. As. She. Stands. Outside. The. Tomb. And.

Then. As. She. Looks. In. Verse. 12. She. Looks. In. And. She. Sees. Two. Angels. Where. The. Body. Of. Jesus. Had. Laid. One. At. The. Head.

And. The. Other. At. The. Feet. It's. Hard. Not. To. Have. The. Picture. Of. The. Cherubim. In. Mind. There. But. I. Leave. That. Speculation. To. You. To. Think.

About. So. The. Angels. Ask. About. Her. Tears. In. Verse. Thirteen. And. She. Replies. To. Them. Then. In. Verse. Fourteen. She. Turns.

[27 : 42] Round. And. See. Someone. Of. Course. It's. Jesus. We. Don't. Know. Maybe. She. She. She. Heard. A. Sound. Behind. Her. And. Turn. Or. Maybe.

She. Saw. The. Angels. Look. Over. Her. Shoulder. Because. They've. Seen. Jesus. Anyway. She. Turns. Round. And. She. Sees. Jesus. But. She. Doesn't. Recognize.

That. It. Is. Jesus. Maybe. Her. Vision. Is. Obscured. By. Her. Tears. And. Now. This. Stranger. Who. We. Know. As. Jesus. In. Verse. Fif. Fif. Asks.

Are. About. These. Tears. And. She. Responds. To. Someone. That. She. Thinks. Is. The. Gardener. Again. I. Think. There's. Something. Going. On. Here. That. Takes. Us. All. The. Way. Back. To. The. Beginning. Of.

The. The. Gardener. But. That's. Another. Discussion. For. You. To. Have. Another. Time. So. Then. Jesus. Says. Her. Name. In. Verse. Sixteen.

[28 : 35] And. As. Soon. As. He. Says. Her. Name. She. Realizes. Who. This. Is. He. Just. Speaks. Her. Name. Maybe.

In. The. Way. That. He. Always. Used. To. Speak. Her. Name. And. She. Knows. It's. Jesus. Speaking. To. Her. I'm. Saying. This. Is. The. Pastoral. Jesus.

Remember. Pastoral. Means. Shepherd. And. What. Did. Jesus. Himself. Say. In. John. 10. And. Verse. 3. He.

Calls. His. Own. Sheep. By. Name. Here's. The. Shepherd. Here's. The. Pastor. Calling. Mary. By. Name. And. Mary.

Realizes. Who. It. Is. And. She. Says. Rabboni. Teacher. And. She. Hugs. Him. And. Jesus. Says. To. Her. In. The. Translation. Here. Do.

[29 : 29] Not. Cling. To. Me. He's. Maybe. Saying. To. Her. Don't. Hang. On. To. Me. As. If. I'm. Back. Here. Permanently.

In. The. Old. Way. Things. Have. Changed. Or. Maybe. He's. Saying. To. Her. Don't. Cling. To. Me. Because. I've. Got. Something. For. You. To. Do. I. Want. You. To. Go. And. Tell. My.

Brothers. That. I. Have. Risen. From. The. Dead. So. He. Tells. Her. To. Go. And. She. Notices. The. First. Person. A. Woman.

A. Woman. Is. The. First. Person. Commissioned. By. The. Risen. Jesus. To. Announce. The. Resurrection. She's. The. First. Herald. Of.

The. Message. Of. The. Resurrection. And. She. Goes. On. To. She. Has. Seen. And. Heard. In fact.

[30 : 24] The. Word. That's. Used. In. Verse. 18. When. She. Announced. To. The. Disciples. Is. The. Verb. Where. The. Noun. Would. Have. Been.

The. Word. For. Angels. In. Chapter. 12. Angels. You. See. Our. Messengers. Announcers. And. These. Angels. Speak. To.

Her. Then. Jesus. Says. In. Effect. To. Her. Go. And. Be. An. Angel. Go. And. Be. A. Messenger. Go. A. Messenger. To. My.

Disciples. And. Announce. To. Them. Angel. To. Them. That. I. Have. Risen. From. The. Dead. One. Of. The. Most. Poignant.

Things. About. This. Dealing. Of. Jesus. With. This. Woman. Who. Weeps. Is. Of. Course. That. This. Is. The. Gospel. That. Has. Told. Us. In. Chapter. 11. And. Verse. 35.

[31 : 16] That. Jesus. Wept. Jesus. Wept. In. His. Humiliation. And. He. Understands. What. It's. Like. To. Weep. And.

Here. He. Is. After. His. Resurrection. Concerned. For. This. Woman. Who. Weeps. The. Jesus. Who. Knows. What. It's. Like. To. Feel.

These. Things. From. The. Inside. And. To. Show. Them. As. Tears. Pour. Down. His. Face. It's. Still. The. Same. Jesus. In. The. Resurrection.

Who. Wants. To. Minister. Comfort. To. A. Woman. Who. Weeps. Jesus. Understands. The. Pastor. Has. Been. Here. And. He. Understands. What. It's.

Like. And. Then. To. One. Who. Doubt. Very. Quickly. First. Day.

[32 : 09] Of. The. Week. When. Jesus. Appeared. To. Them. And. Proved. He. Was. Alive. And. Thomas. As. You. know. Refuses. To. Believe. Their. Story. And. And. Speaks. Almost. In. a. In. a.

Grotesque. Way. Says. Unless. I. See. Him. And. Unless. I. Place. My. Hand. In. The. Side. I. Will. Not. Believe. Verse. Twenty. Twenty. We'll.

Say. We'll. Start. Monday. Tuesday. Wednesday. But. They. Would. Include. Sunday. Is. The. First. Day. And. Then. Monday. Is. The. Next. Day. So. Eight. Days. Later. We. Take. You. To. Another. Sunday. And.

Just. This. Rhythm. Is. Very. Important. It's. Being. Established. The. Very. Beginning. That. Jesus. Comes. To. His. People. In. A. Every. Sunday. But. Here. Another. In. The. Next. First. Day. Of. The. Week.

The. Disciples. Are. Together. Thomas. Is. With. Them. Jesus. Comes. And. Invites. Thomas. To. Do. What. He. Had. Said. What. Would. Been. So. Amazing. To. Thomas. Of. Course. Is. That. He.

[33 : 12] Said. This. I. Need. To. Touch. And. Put. My. Finger. And. Put. My. Hand. In. He. Had. Said. This. When. Jesus. Wasn't. In. The. Room. Jesus. Wasn't. There. And. Now. A. Week. Later. He. Had. Been. Saying. It. To. The. Disciples. Sorry. In. Intervening. Days. When. They. Told. Him. That. The. Previous. Sunday. Jesus. Had. Appeared. And. He. Saying. I. Won't. Believe. It. I. Won't. Believe. It. He. Said. It. Privately. To. Them. Jesus. Wasn't. Part. Of. These. Conversations. Then. Jesus. Appears. And. He. Knows. What. Thomas. Has. Been. Saying. And. Thomas. Realizes. How. Wrong. He. Has. Been. And. He. Stops. Doubting. He. Sees. The. Evidence. In. Front. Of. Him. And. He. Confesses. My. Lord. And. My. God. And. Again. Notice. How. Personal. It. Is. My. Lord.

[34 : 05] And. My. God. And. Then. To. One. Who. Fails. The. Story. Of. Peter. In. Chapter. Twenty. One. Verses. Fifteen. To. Nineteen. Peter. Has. Denied. Jesus. You. Know. That. Story. Very. Well. It's. Back. In. Chapter. Eighteen. He's. Denied. Jesus. Three. One. Link. Here. In. Chapter. Eighteen. And. Verse. Eighteen. Peter. Denies. The. Lord. At. A. Charcoal. Fire. Standing. And. Warming. Himself. And. Then. In. Chapter. Twenty. One. And. Verse. Nine. When. They. Meet. Jesus. On. The. Shore. There's. A. Charcoal. Fire. In. Place. Is. It. Not. True.

[35 : 01] That. The. Very. Scent. Of. The. Fire. These. Charcoal. Fires. Had. A. Very. Particular. Smell. Aroma. The. Scent. Of. The. Fire. Would. Have. Brought. It. All. Flooding. Back. G. Peter. Had. Denied. Jesus. At. A. Charcoal. Fire. With. That. Smoke. In. His. Nostrils. And. Now. Here. He. Is. At. Another. Charcoal. Fire. Remembering. The. Previous. One. And. Jesus. Shows. His. Grace. To. Peter. By. Recommissioning. Him. With. A. Threefold. Commission. Peter. Had. Denied. His. Lord. Three. Times. At. A. Charcoal. Fire. And. Now. Jesus. Recommissions. Peter. Three. Times. At. Another. Charcoal. Fire. In. Other. Words. He's. Saying. To. Peter. I am.

[35 : 54] Reversing. Your. Failure. I. Want. To. Use. You. Because. I know. You. Love. Me. And. He. Lifts. The. Penitent. And. Restores. Him. To. Usefulness. And. We. Still. Weep. And. We. Still. Doubt. And. We. Still. Fail. And. Jesus. Is. Still. The. Same. Compassionate. Wism. Savior. You. Can. Come. To. Jesus. With. Your. Tears. And. What. A. Variety. Of. Reasons. There. Are. To. Weep. And. You. Can. Come. To. Jesus. With. Your. Doubts. There. All. Kinds. Of. Doubts. And. You. Can. Come. To. Jesus. With. Your. Failures. And. We. Fail. Him. In. All. Kinds. Of. Ways. All. The. Time. And. He's. The. Same. Compassionate. Risen. Savior. That's a tremendous challenge also I think to myself and yourselves and to any church.

[36 : 53] Not just to a leadership but also to a membership and to the whole culture of a church. Are we the kind of place.

I'm not talking about you but in back or wherever. Are we the kind of church. That would really offer help. To somebody who weeps or somebody who doubts or somebody who fails.

I give myself that challenge as I give it to all of us. You know if there's somebody out there. Weeping their heart out. Is this where they would want to come.

If there's somebody out there full of questions and doubts. Is this the place where they would come to have them answered. There's somebody out there who feels they've blown it. Would they feel that they could come here to me.

To you. And find the compassion of the Savior meeting them. I think it's a very very challenging question for every one of us.

[37 : 56] Are we like Jesus. Happy to minister to those who weep. And who doubt and to fail. In the way that he was willing to do.

With his love and compassion. And fourthly just in a word. The perpetual Jesus. So we've seen the personal Jesus. The powerful Jesus.

The pastoral Jesus. The perpetual Jesus. I just want to say that. He's all of the above. All that we've been thinking about. He's all of these things.

Now. And always. Perpetually. Eternally. What he was yesterday. In the gospel of John. He is today. And will be forever.

So. Today. He's the same Jesus. We have a high priest. Who. Cannot but be touched. With the feeling of our infirmities. In terms of these stories.

[38 : 52] Jesus still dries tears. And he still dispels doubt. And he still. Forgives failures. And restores them to dignity.

And responsibility. And he does it personally. And he does it powerfully. The risen Christ. Is the answer. To our emotional. And intellectual.

And spiritual needs. As he was then. So he is now. But he will be that forever. He will always be the pastoral Jesus.

In the world to come. The shepherd. The same Peter. That we've just been thinking about. Tells us in his first letter. Not only that Jesus. Is the shepherd of our souls.

The same Jesus. As he was. But that one day. The chief shepherd will appear. And his return. We know will usher in a world.

[39 : 47] Of personal shepherding. And John tells us. Not just here. But he tells us. In the book of Revelation. That Jesus will always be.

Our shepherd. Revelation 7. 17. For the lamb in the midst of the throne. Will be their shepherd. And he will guide them. To springs of living water. And God will wipe away.

Every tear. From their eyes. But John who wrote the gospel. Gives us that picture. And revelation. And as he shows us. This pastoral Jesus. Here.

He's saying. He will always be the pastoral Jesus. The lamb who died on the cross. Is now the shepherd. In heaven. And he will lead his people. Forever.

Forever. And he will wipe away. Every tear. From their eyes. So in terms of the people. We've been thinking about. Jesus at last. Will take all of his people. To a world. Without tears.

[40 : 44] Amazing thing. And without doubt. An amazing thing. And without failure. An amazing thing. You trust in Jesus.

He promises that one day. He will take you to a world. Where you'll never weep again. And you'll never doubt again. And you'll never fail again.

He guarantees it. So let me finish. I've been stressing all the way through. How important it is. To have a. A personal connection.

With. Jesus. Let me illustrate that. As I finish. Again. All my memories. Go way back. When I finished at the Free Church College.

I went to the States. For a year to study. In Philadelphia. And. One day. Friends there. Took us to visit. Amish country.

[41:44] In Lancaster County. Pennsylvania. You might have. Heard of the Amish. Or seen them. They came from Europe. A long time ago. And they still insist on living.

And dressing. The way that their. Forebears did. When they left Europe. They wear the same kind of clothes. Use the same kind of. Agricultural equipment.

And so on. They don't want to move. With the times. The Amish stay. As they have. Always. Been. Now many of their houses. Don't have electricity.

Because the strict. Amish. Won't let their homes. Get. Connected. That's the word. They won't get. Connected. Electricity.

Is carried overhead. In that part of the world. So. As you could. As you travel along the roads. You can see. Electricity lines. Going past. Houses.

[42:39] Which are not linked. To the supply. You know. It's obvious. Which houses are linked. But then you go through. Amish country. And it's obvious. That most of the houses. Aren't linked.

To the supply. And it's also amazing. How close they are. You know. The supply is there. The house is here. There's only. Two or three meters.

But. The power is there. It's available. It's so very. Very close. But they refuse. To get linked up. They refuse. To get connected. And so they don't benefit.

From all they could. Benefit from. With a live. Connection. Isn't it sad. To see the same thing. Spiritually.

To see how close. The gospel comes. To some homes. To see how close. The gospel comes. To some people. But they just. Don't want.

[43:35] To get connected. And receive. This grace. And love. And power. Into their hearts. And my appeal. At the end. Tonight. Is that we all.

Connect. Personally. With Jesus. In faith. Because Jesus. Offers. Himself. To us.

He offers. Himself. To every one of you. He offers. Himself. Today. You can have. A living. Personal. Relationship.

A real. Live. Connection. With the living. Personal. Jesus. As your. Savior. And your. Lord. And your. Shepherd. And your.

Pastor. And you can have that. Forever. Amen. Let's pray.