

Communion Evening Service (Whole Service)

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Date: 11 December 2011

Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[0 : 00] Please pick one up at the door as you leave this evening that contains all the information of events that are taking place this week. We're going to sing together in Psalm number 100. That's the Scottish Psalter version of Psalm 100.

And we'll sing the whole of the psalm to the tune Old 100. It's on page 362 in the Sing Psalm books, Psalm number 100, and the whole will sing all of the psalm.

All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Him serve with mirth as praise, forth tell, come ye before him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed, without our aid he did us make. We are his flock, he doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take. Psalm 100, we'll sing the whole of the psalm, all people that on earth do dwell.

All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.

[1 : 15] Then serve with mirth as praise, forth tell, come ye before him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed, without our aid he did us make.

We are his flock, he doth us take. And for his sheep he doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise, and coach with joy his courts unto.

Praise God and bless his name always. Praise God and bless his name always. For his days he bid so true.

[2 : 46] For like the Lord our God is true. His mercy is forever true.

His truth have come and turn me soon. And shall promise to his endure.

Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. Father in heaven, we truly believe tonight that we are entering your gates with praise.

We truly believe that we are meeting with you personally. And that as we sing those magnificent words which shine light on the majesty and the glory of God.

And as we come before you asking that the day will come when all the world will sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. We believe in the power of the gospel.

[4 : 06] And we believe that one day the world will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Father in heaven, we come to you in faith, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Believing that he truly is the Son of God. The only begotten Son of God. And that he always was from all eternity to without beginning and without end.

When he came into the world, he didn't come into being. He simply took our nature to himself and was born into this world as one of us.

Father in heaven, we truly believe in his humanity as well as his divinity. We truly believe that as God and man, he lived amongst us.

And that he related to people, identifying with them and their cares and their sorrows and their disappointments, their heartaches.

[5 : 06] He came into this broken world to be one of us and to come alongside us. We give thanks, Lord, that he truly not only was concerned for the welfare of his fellow human beings, but he continues to be so much so that he gave his life to meet with us and to forgive our sin.

And tonight, we give thanks that the door is open. The door to your kingdom is open so that a man or a woman or a boy or a girl can come to faith in Jesus Christ.

And so that as they do so, that God will forgive all their sins and give them a new heart and a new beginning and a new life. Father in heaven, we pray for the world in which we live tonight.

And we pray that that work of spreading the message of Jesus Christ will be effective in this world. We pray as never before, because whatever advances our world has made, it is still as lost as it

ever was.

There is all the corruption and all the injustice and the cruelty and the inhumanity and the greed and the theft and the pride that there was always in this world.

[6 : 21] It is expressed in different ways. And yet the world is as it was, as much in need of being reconciled to you as ever. And so Lord, our prayer tonight is that you will continue to reconcile the world to you through the gospel.

We pray Lord for those we know who have gone out into the world and whose work it is to share the gospel with other people. But remind us afresh that as your people, our work is to share the gospel. And give us opportunity, we pray, and may we make use of every opportunity that is available to us to live for Jesus and to make his news known to others.

We give thanks that tonight the door is open to anyone here that has not yet taken that step of faith and commitment to Jesus. And once again, Lord, we will be thinking of what Jesus has done and how he has come into the world to change people's lives and to bring us to see what we were programmed to be.

And to discover afresh that true life is knowing and loving and serving God. Our Father, we pray that you will meet with us here this evening as individuals and as a congregation.

[7 : 41] We pray for every aspect of our congregation. And we pray that you will richly bless everything that we do in your name to share the gospel and to consolidate our already existing relationships.

And we pray that as we do so, that the unity, that the true unity, which is evident to all, may be evident to more and more people.

And that they may see the truth of what we believe in the way that we live. Bless our fellowship afterwards. Bless, Lord, the congregation as we come together afterwards and as we meet with one another, which is so important in the life of Christians.

And we ask, Lord, that you will strengthen us and be with us and bless our witness as a community. We pray for this community. And Lord, in the last few days, our community has been rocked.

It has been shaken by the death of Liam Aitchison. Our Father in heaven, we, as a community, we are simply not accustomed to this kind of event taking place.

[8 : 51] And we confess, perhaps, that we've drifted into a proud assumption that this kind of thing just doesn't happen in a place like this.

And we've been reminded afresh that what happens in other parts of the world can happen and does happen and will happen here. Because we are part of this lost world.

So why should we be exempt from it, from other things, from the things that happen in other places? We ask, Lord, as we come to you, that we will come to you confessing our own failures as Christians to be the impact in this world that we perhaps ought to be.

And, Father, we confess, Lord, that all too easily we point the finger at other people. And we fail to see within ourselves our own sinfulness.

And we fail to see that if it wasn't for God's grace working within us, then this world for us would be a very, very different place. And so, Father, we pray for all those who are involved in the inquiry into this death.

[10 : 00] We ask, O Lord, whatever took place, and we must be careful not to listen to rumour and to come to our own conclusions without knowing the facts.

But we pray that the facts will become established. We pray for those who are investigating this crime. And we ask, O Lord, that you will give them to be able to come to the right conclusion.

And we pray, Lord, for the family. We ask that as they come to terms with this awful event that has taken place for them, and the loss and the darkness that that involves, we pray that you will strengthen them and meet with them where they are.

We pray that you will draw them to know yourself and to know the truth of the gospel, even in this dark hour. And give us, Lord, as a community to pray all the more for the world we live in, the world far away and the world in which we directly live.

For the people next door to us. For the people in the same street as us. For the people in the same town as us. And, Lord, we pray that you will give us a real concern, a real prayerful concern for this town.

[11 : 10] And we pray, Lord, that you will invade this town in all your glory and in your love and in your grace. And change people's lives. Because if ever there was evidence that we need the gospel

more than ever before, it is tonight.

And so, Father, we pray that you will visit us, that you will come and meet with us. And give us to ask ourselves what we can do to make Christ known. And we pray that your power and your strength will be made perfect in our weakness.

Lord, we pray that you will guide us now as we meet with you and as we come to you in this service. And we pray that you will bless each one of us and speak to us. For we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. I should perhaps have said at the very beginning, before announcing the psalm, that we have had three new members over the course of this weekend.

One by certificate. She is Ishbald McLeod from LOX. But the session was delighted to welcome two young people into our membership as we met with them last night.

[12:21] That was Laura Smith and Murdo McLeod. And we do welcome them as a congregation and as a session, as we always welcome our new members. And we rejoice to know that God is working within our congregation and blessing his word to people.

And we're always looking for more. We're looking for those who haven't yet sat at the Lord's table and who yet have been following the Lord and who love the Lord and who believe and trust in Jesus.

And we sincerely hope that it will not be long before those are sitting at the table with the rest of us. So we're going to sing again in Psalm 62.

Our singing is in Gaelic. Our singing is in Gaelic. And it's Psalm number 62.

And we're going to sing from verse 7 to verse 8. Two verses. Psalm 62. Psalm 62. Psalm 62.

Amazing.

[13:53] And the ring on the screen we'll sing these two verses, verse 7 and 8 of Psalm 62. SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS

SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS SONG PLAYS

We're going to read together in the Gospel of John, chapter 20. John, chapter 20, page 1092.

John, chapter 20. I'm reading from the beginning of the chapter. Now, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

[17:24] So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going towards the tomb. Both of them were running together. But the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in.

Then Simon Peter came following him and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.

Then the disciples went back to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept, she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

They said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him. After having said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing.

[18:32] But she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus said to her, Mary. She turned and said to him, Aramek, Rabboni, which means teacher.

Jesus said to her, Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascended to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that he had said these things to her. Amen. And we ask God's blessing on that reading of his own word.

We're now going to turn to page 40 and sing Psalm 34. Psalm number 34, and it's page 40. It's the new version of Psalm 34, the sing-salms version.

And it's verse 5 down to verse 11. We're going to sing five stanzas. Page 40, Psalm 34, and singing from verse 5.

[19 : 40] And the tune is Jackson. They look to him and shine with joy. They are not put to shame. This suffering man cried to the Lord. From him deliverance came.

Psalm number 34, the sing-salms version. And it's page number 40, and it's verse 5 to the end of the psalm. And we're going to stand to sing. Amen. They look to him and shine with joy.

They are not put to shame. This suffering man cried to the Lord.

How will he deliverance come? The angel of the Lord's silence And tracks continually He sets his people free Come, taste and see The Lord is good Who trusts in him is blessed O hear the Lord You saints with me You will not be oppressed

Young lions may grow weak and faint And hunger for their food But those who wait upon the Lord Will not lack any good Come here, my children Gather round And listen to my word And I will help you And I will help you On her son How you may fear the Lord Turn with me to the chapter that we read

[22 : 36] John chapter 20 Verse 6 Verse 6 Page 1093 John 20 verse 6 Then Simon Peter came Then Simon Peter came following him And went into the tomb He saw the linen cloths lying there And the face cloth which had been on Jesus' head Not lying with the linen cloths But folded up in a place by itself Then the other disciples Then the other disciples who had reached the tomb first And he saw and believed And he saw and believed For as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead Then the disciples went back to their homes To their homes Particularly verse 8 The verse that tells us about that other disciple who is unidentified as far as John is concerned But who we believe is none other than John himself

This morning we remembered the death of Jesus in communion And that is a very important event Every time we meet on a Sunday and a weekday It's an important event Every time we worship God We are hearing God's word And we are meeting with him But we have been commanded as a church To remember the death of the Lord in communion And Jesus says For as often as you do this You remember you show the death My death until I come And it follows therefore this evening It's logical that we should think together this evening Having thought about the death of Jesus That we should think about the other half of the story Because one half is incomplete without the other The death of Jesus is incomplete without the resurrection And the resurrection is meaningless without the death You have to have both You have to keep returning to both

We must never lose sight of the death of Jesus at Calvary As the very centre of our being That's what makes us Christians It's what has saved us from our sins That has brought us into God's kingdom It's his death that has been the sacrifice of our sins And we are commanded to remember and remember And to go back to that place time and again To remember his death But we must also remember that three days after he died He rose from the dead That's not an optional extra That too is the centre of what we are and what we believe You cannot ignore it and we must not neglect it We come back to it time and again You've heard me speaking about it before Good! We have to come back time and again to the resurrection Because without the resurrection The death of Jesus is meaningless In fact, the whole of the Bible is meaningless without the resurrection It's the kingpin of the gospel It's the centre of what we are It lies at the centre of the Christian faith When the first disciples went out in the Acts of the Apostles And stood in Jerusalem And they preached Jesus They preached Jesus having died and risen again And rose again from the dead on the third day And it was that resurrection Jesus That was the power of God to salvation Because he was alive He had not died again He hadn't risen again to die again He rose again to live forever And that means that we can have a living, loving, continuous, eternal relationship with the living Jesus That's why we come tonight to give praise and thanks Not to the Jesus Not to the memory of Jesus But to the Jesus who we believe is here tonight And whose table we sat at this morning He rose again from the dead In order to meet with us And to change our lives The gospel is of no meaning whatsoever I've said this so many times And I want to say it again and again If I ever discovered That the resurrection was not true If I ever discovered That it did not actually happen That if it did not take place That Jesus rose Came to life Physically Historically Actually On the third day If that body of Jesus That the disciples placed in the tomb If I ever discovered That that body did not come to life again Then I would cease to be a Christian I would

resign on the spot I would throw away my Bible And my library And I would abandon Everything I have believed in In the Bible Now

[27 : 24] That's another way of saying What the Apostle Paul said He says If the resurrection is not true Then let us eat and drink And be merry Because for tomorrow we die Our preaching is in vain You are still in your sins We are of all men most miserable That's another way of saying Just what I've said just now The resurrection is the heart of the gospel Without it The death of Jesus is meaningless Everything that Jesus said is meaningless It's just They've just become the words Of another wise So called wise man in history I remember saying that Many years ago In a sermon Somewhere else And somebody came to me shortly afterwards And said that cannot possibly mean How can you say that?

How can you say that If the resurrection was not true That all of the rest of the Bible is rubbish How can you say that? I said Well these are not my words They're the words of the Apostle Paul The resurrection is absolutely key To what we are and what we believe And to the gospel itself It's like a string of pearls For the young people tonight It's like a string of pearls I remember once finding When I was a wee boy I remember finding A string of pearls That belonged to my mum And I started playing with them And the string broke And all the pearls They went everywhere They scattered all over the room I won't tell you what she said And I won't tell you the trouble I got into That's the kind of things that children do Isn't it? But the gospel The resurrection is like that string That holds the pearls together And if the string gets broken The pearls go everywhere And everything is lost And ruined And destroyed That is what the resurrection is all about So when I ask myself As I often do Why am I a Christian?

I hope you ask yourself that question as well If you're following Jesus Why are you a Christian? You can answer that in so many different ways People choose to answer that all too often The wrong way By going back to their own conversion If I ask you that question tonight You might say Well, because I remember Three years ago Being at a meeting And being struck by something that was said Or ten years ago I remember No, that's not the answer to the question That's how you became a Christian I'm asking Why are you a Christian?

When I ask myself that question It is always The answer is right here Right here Because Jesus rose from the dead And if anyone was to ask me To explain to them The Christian life The Christian faith From the very beginning This is where I would start Because this is the most momentous Earth-shattering news That anyone could possibly Come into contact with And it's because And I speak to most of us This evening Who have grown up with it It's because we've become So familiar with this story That the impact of it Has become lost The sheer power And uniqueness Of this story This fact Has become lost We're all used to hearing about this Aren't we?

[31 : 07] You're probably saying to yourself tonight Oh, don't tell me He's going to talk about the resurrection again What is it about the resurrection? The resurrection is everything And if you're not a Christian This is where you start Because you first of all Want to ask How true is Jesus?

How unique is Jesus? Why should I believe Jesus? After all, we live in a world Where there are so many different voices And so many different religions And they all seem to be so sincere And proper And they're all doing so much good in the world Why should I listen to Jesus?

The answer is here In the resurrection It is only because He rose from the dead That I believe in Jesus You take away from that And he becomes Like everyone else He just becomes someone Who spoke some So-called wise words But in actual fact They're not wise at all Because if Jesus didn't rise from the dead Then he's not God And if he's not God Then his words have no more authority Than anyone else in the world So, his so-called wise words Are just the same as anyone else's His opinion is just the same as anyone else's And it's just thrown into the melting pot Of human philosophy But if Jesus actually rose from the dead Then that makes the world of difference Because it means that he is entirely unique Amongst every other religious leader And he, let me just go Let me just say four things Let me just say four things About why the resurrection Is so important It's important first of all

Because it is living proof That it is possible for a human being To come back to life Here is a man in history A real breathing, living human being Who walked and talked amongst people He was 33 years old When he was put to death on a Roman cross And here that very same human being He does not continue in the grave His disciples, his friends Took his body down off the cross They wrapped it in linen That's what we read in the chapter previous They wrapped it in linen Along with all the spices That normally was put together In the burial process And they placed his body into the

tomb They rolled a stone over the mouth of the tomb

When his friends, those same friends Who had buried his body They went on the third day The first day of the week To anoint the body as it was customary to do Out of respect They found that the grave was empty The tomb was empty The tomb was empty They could not find the body of Jesus On the third day Moreover, they met with the living, breathing, standing, talking, teaching Jesus Christ Unmistakable He was alive He had been dead He was now alive Which means, let me put it in this way once again That a man in human history Who has died Has now come back to life again Do you know what this means?

[34 : 38] Do you get it? Let me put it this way If I wasn't a Christian tonight I reckon I would be asking myself this question I would be, I hope I wouldn't just be living for my own pleasure Maybe I would, maybe I'd be like so many other people in the world Who cares about God Who cares about why we're here We don't need to know all that We just make of life what we can We only live once Let's eat and drink and be merry Because tomorrow we're going to die Maybe I would be living like that Maybe I'd be a complete fool But I hope that if I had a break And if I was a thinking person I'd be asking far deeper questions than that Like, what is the world all about?

Why do I, why am I wondering I'd be watching Frozen Planet And I'd be saying to myself Why is this world such a wonderful, fantastic, majestic, glorious place?

I'd be trying to see beyond my next meal or my next pleasure I'd be asking, I hope I'd be asking myself What is this world all about?

Who am I? Why am I thinking this way? Why am I asking all these questions? Is there a God? If there isn't a God If there isn't a God then why am I asking all these questions?

And why can I not be content with nothingness? No answers But I'd also be asking this fundamental question Why am I going to die?

[36 : 22] Why is it that everything that makes life so rich and wonderful And every enjoyment of life And I mean the good enjoyments of life And life was always made to be enjoyed If the world had carried on the way that God had made it There'd be nothing but pleasure in this world Not selfish pleasure But pleasure oriented in God And now I die I'm going to die And there's nothing I can do to stop it I've watched it happening in other people People who I know and who I've loved And because of sickness or accident Or whatever Those people their lives have come to an end Normally in old age like 80 or whatever But sometimes in younger age Because of an accident or because of illness Or something has happened to them Their lives come to an end And that strikes me with horror Because I ask myself

Why is it that all the richness of life Ends in nothing at the end of it? What does all that mean? Why is it that life has to come to an end? And why is it that on the one hand That on the one hand There is such greatness in life And then on the other hand There is such horror in life When somebody does die Because the great separation of death Means that that family will never see their loved one again So there's something fantastic about this world And yet there is something horrific about this world And I'd be asking this question Is it possible?

Is it at all possible? Is it at all possible to reverse the death process? Where can I find the answer to that?

And I look back in history And the only time There is just this one person Out of all the millions of people That ever have lived in this world There is one person Who came back to life And it was Jesus of Nazareth Now that's why I want to investigate this person More than anyone else Because to me The person who has the key to life and death Is the person I'm going to listen to Because he can answer every other question Or the kind of questions that I want to ask Because he's been there And he's come back to life again And that's why tonight And that's why tonight I truly I'm confidently I'm telling you Please tonight Seek Jesus Not because of the culture that we live in Not because we've grown up to believe the Bible Something to do with that Is because Jesus stands unique In all of the earth's beliefs and systems

And opinions and philosophies and religions Jesus is alone He's not better He is not the best man that ever lived He is the only good man that ever lived And he's the only man who ever came back from the dead You see It's like this tonight I've said this before But sometimes you have to say things over and over and over again And perhaps years later Someone will think Yeah This is true Let me put it in the way In the way that C.S. Lewis puts it You remember C.S.

[39 : 56] The writer and broadcaster C.S. Lewis One of the most influential Christian thinkers Of the last century There was a time when he not only was an atheist But he was totally opposed to

the gospel He hated the gospel Until he came to see this Jesus for himself Until he came to see that The resurrection of Jesus provided the answer to the question that he was looking for For so many years in his life And this is what he said He said he came to this conclusion Christianity if false Is of no importance That's just what I said If it's not true It's of no importance whatsoever It's a pile of nonsense Then he went on to say If it's true It is of infinite importance Then he said this The only thing it cannot be

Is moderately important And I suspect And I suspect That tonight For many people here The gospel for you Is moderately important That doesn't make any sense at all You can't say tonight It's good for some people It's good for some people But not me If Jesus rose from the dead That means he has a claim On your life That means that he is Who he said he was And you can't say Nothing to do with me It has to do with you And that's why I would appeal to you Once again tonight To open your Bible

To start reading the Bible And to discover this Jesus For yourself So that as you discover him That you can meet with him And as you meet with him You can experience the change And the forgiveness That he can bring into your life And the new direction Into which he can place your life From a direction which is Heading for God's just punishment Because that's what the Bible tells us That every one of us deserves Only God's just punishment Because we have ignored him Because we have lived without him And so the first thing That the resurrection teaches me Is that it's possible for A human being to come back to life But it's also proof as I've just said That Jesus is authentic What do I mean by that?

Well why? How does this prove that Jesus was authentic? Well simply this It is impossible for a person To come back to life again It is a physical, medical, physiological Impossibility Unless God Gives that person Their life back to him Our lives are in the hands of God God's in control Over life and death It was God who gave life to us In the first place God who made us What we are And who we are God who placed us in this world And it's by God's providence We believe that we are We are brought to the day of our death And so everything takes place Under God's control Under God's sovereign command He has the power alone To give life back If he so chooses And in this one case The only explanation as to how Jesus came back to life

On the third day Is that God sovereignly intervened In the grave Invaded the grave Invaded the tomb And by his unique power Brought Jesus to life again And the question then becomes Well if that is the case Why did he do that?

[44 : 22] There is only one answer By so doing He is stamping his own approval On everything that Jesus was And everything that Jesus did From the day of his conception All the way through his life To the day of his death God was pleased with him Why? Because he was the son of God He said so himself Everything that Jesus did His miracles, his teaching His interaction with people They all said one thing That Jesus was the son of God He came into the world from heaven To show the world To show all those who would listen to him That he was from God People knew that They saw that there was something extraordinary about him Now either he was telling the truth About himself Or else he wasn't If he wasn't And if The Romans Crucified him And if they buried him In a tomb And all the time he was a liar

Why should God raise him from the dead again? Why should God choose this man Over and above anyone else in the world Every other liar and deceiver in the world Why should God choose this man And raise him from the dead?

It doesn't make sense But if Jesus told the truth about himself And if everything we read about Jesus was true Then it makes sense For God to raise his own son After he had died the death that was planned for him to die As the punishment for our sins And so what that means is that Jesus is authentic He's the real thing That's the reason I'm a Christian tonight It's not because I live in Lewis It's not because I was brought up in the free church It's not because I happen to be culturally Christian I've asked myself plenty times I've gone through time and time again Why are you a Christian?

And I come back to this It's nothing to do with culture I think if I was going to live according to my culture I would be as indifferent as millions of other people are tonight I would be chasing and pursuing everything else That the world chases and pursues It's not to do with culture It's to do with God having revealed himself to us In the person of Jesus Christ Jesus is authentic And I'm putting this to you as a challenge Because I still believe we are living I know that most of us have heard all this before But we believe in a world tonight that has not heard this And hasn't been faced with

these stark realities And I also believe tonight That there may be some Who are waiting for some extra experience And you're saying to yourself I'm not a Christian because What I expect to happen to me Has not happened to me And I'm going to wait until that moment of Special, internal, subjective feeling In order for me to come to Christ Well I don't know what you're waiting for I really don't know Because everything that you need to know About the Gospel is right here in this chapter And I would like to suggest to you tonight That you need to come to Christ Not in order to get some kind of feeling But because he is God Is that not enough?

[48 : 01] It's enough for me To know that I follow and believe In the Jesus who is In every respect God And who is the real thing Who came into the world for me And gave himself for me And opened the door of his kingdom for me And has taken away all my sin And my filthiness and my shame And has given me a new life That will last forever In which I know That I will go forever To be with the Lord When I die Is that not enough?

Why do you wait for something else? That's not going to happen When God touches a person's heart It is his word It is the pages of the Bible that touches It's the truth of his death And his resurrection You see You realise This is the truth Then come to him That's the next step Don't wait for something That is not going to happen Because if it doesn't happen Then you are in big trouble Why should it happen?

Why is the gospel not enough for you? I don't know The very truth of the gospel Ought tonight to compel Every single one of us Because here is the key To who we are To why we are here To why this world exists And it's the key to knowing God Surely that is the greatest priority That any one of us has tonight To know God We've all got our priority lists We've all got our to-do lists We've all got the things That we absolutely have to do And the things that we are not They don't matter so much But tonight Where does God fit into that?

Where does knowing God Seeking God Believing in God Trusting in Jesus Christ Where does that fit into your priorities Your ambitions, your dreams, your intentions Surely as a human As a thinking human being tonight At the very least you want to say Well, I've never heard this before I'm going to have to really give this some thought So be it Make sure That you stay on track And don't get distracted Every one of us is different Some people Some people They believe right away As soon as they hear the gospel They just believe it It could be you tonight It could be somebody here tonight And you know that God is speaking to you In this very truth And this is enough for you To be compelled And to be persuaded To come to faith in Jesus Christ

You're like John You read together We read together of how John came into the tomb Peter stayed outside the door It was John who came in It was, he saw the linen cloth lying there I'm going to read it again Both of them were running together The other disciple outran Peter And reached the tomb first And stooping to look in He saw the linen cloth lying there But he did not go in And Peter came following him And went into the tomb He saw the linen cloth lying there The face cloth which had been on Jesus' head Not lying with the linen cloth but folded up Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first Also went in and he saw and believed You see the other disciple Was more cautious Than Peter Peter was impulsive But even John's caution did not prevent him From finally believing

[51 : 57] When he saw the evidence for himself The evidence was compelling Can you imagine these two men They go to the tomb They expect to find Jesus' body there And they instead They find the wrappings The wrappings The linen cloth Which had been wrapped Tightly round Jesus' body With all the spices That they used in those days To preserve a body First of all It was utterly impossible For anyone to survive Even if Jesus had been alive When they took him off the cross Which he wasn't It would have been utterly impossible For him not to have suffocated With all of the wrappings That were placed around him And it would have been utterly impossible For him to have struggled in some way Out of the linen cloth That is an impossibility But the way in which the linen cloths

Were lying They were lying in one piece If someone had come into the tomb And tried to steal the body of Jesus Then they would have taken the whole thing Linen cloth and all And they would have shifted it To some other place In other words If somebody had stolen the body The linen cloth would not have been there Nothing would have been there It would have been empty But the linen cloth was there The strips of linen They were there And they were lying in one piece Now that could either mean That as Jesus had Fazed out of the linen cloth Of the linen cloth That the linen cloth would have just crumpled to the floor But there is another possibility And that is that the cloths that

were wrapped around the body Actually, because they were mixed with the spices They actually had hardened And so it was like a cocoon In the shape of Jesus Could have been And the napkin that had been around his head Was placed in another location Folded up by itself Every indication All the evidence For the disciples Pointed To the miraculous Intervention of God In giving life to Jesus Once again And Jesus having Miraculously passed through The cloths And he also, by the way Passed through the stone The stone wasn't removed In order to allow Jesus Out of the tomb The stone was removed In order to let the disciples Into the tomb To see what they had to see And when John went in He saw and believed And there may be some here tonight And it's all you need to know Is to hear this story And to hear the truth of the resurrection And that's enough for you And some others might be a little bit more cautious You might want to just Think and ask and pray And ask that the Lord will

Because both disciples They came to an understanding eventually Not only of the reality of this resurrection But also of what they had made But it also was proof That Jesus won the power and the victory Over death It was proof that his death on the cross Was for a purpose And that every moment of his arrest and his trial Every moment of the agony of the cross Was God accepting his death as the punishment for our sins And God actively punishing his own son For our guilt and our sin His death was a sacrifice We saw this this morning And the resurrection is the proof That that sacrifice was effective God accepted it Jesus said it is finished And for as far as God was concerned

His wrath was now appeased His justice was satisfied And all that needed to be done For our salvation Was done It was finished There was only one final event to take place And that was For Jesus to come to life again And rise victorious Over death And the grave And that has two things to say to us tonight That first of all tells us Because Jesus has risen He has paid the price for our sin And that as we come to him in faith this evening The person who comes to him asking for his forgiveness Turning to him in trust and in faith Can be absolutely sure That your prayer is heard And you can be absolutely sure That as you turn to Jesus

[57 : 10] He will hear you And he will change your life The second and last thing that the resurrection of Jesus tells me Is that I one day Will rise from the dead The Bible tells us that a day will come when Jesus Will come back to the earth And on that day the graves will open And the dead in Christ Shall walk before And then it tells us We shall go forever To be with the Lord And that same passage in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 You can go home and read it tonight It tells us that we know This to be true We can look forward in faith to that day Whenever it comes Because it has already happened in Jesus' resurrection

We can know that it will happen again Because Jesus has proved it in himself I know that I will rise from the dead one day Because I go back to this chapter That tells me of a historical fact The real Jesus The real Son of God The real Son of God Who became a man for me And who died for my sin And who was placed in the grave And rose again Triumphant over the grave As the proof That I will rise also Because I am united to Him in faith He said I am the resurrection and the life He who believes in me Though he were dead Yet shall he live And he who lives and believes in me Shall never die

He said this word to Martha And then he said this to her Do you believe this? Let's pray Father in heaven we pray that you will smite us with your truth We pray Lord that you will meet with us No matter how uncomfortable it is for us To grasp and to accept and to drink in the truth of Jesus' resurrection Because it has all kinds of implications for us It forces us to question the direction of our own lives It forces us to question what our real priorities are And where does God appear in our lives And we pray that we will face all these questions Because of this one simple fact That Jesus is alive Father in heaven bless your word to us This evening then

And forgive all our sin in Jesus name Amen We are going to sing together from Psalm number 16 And that is in the Scottish Psalter version And that is on page 216 We are going to sing the last four verses Psalm 16 verse 8 To the end of the psalm Before me still the Lord I set Sith it is so that he doth ever stand at my right hand I shall not move at thee Because of this my heart is glad And joy shall be expressed even by my glory And my flesh and confidence shall rest Then we sing these words Because my soul in grave to dwell Shall not be left by thee Nor wilt thou give thine holy one corruption to see These words spoke prophetically The psalmist saw somehow What would happen to Jesus Christ As his body was laid in the grave But his body would not see corruption

But he would come to life once again And because of that The psalmist is able to say Thou wilt show me the path of life Of joys that is full stored Before thy face at thy right hand Are pleasures evermore So the theme of this psalm is Eternal joy On the basis of Jesus' resurrection Verse 8 to verse 11 Before me still the Lord I set We're going to stand to sing Before me still the Lord I set Before me still the Lord I set Say lift his soul on thee God there I stand And by thy right hand I shall not do it be Because of this my heart is bad

[62 : 30] And joy shall be expressed In thy light glory And my flesh In confidence shall rest Because of this my soul In faith to breath Shall not be led by thee Nor will thou give Thy holy blood Thou wilt be shown

Thou wilt be shown Thou proud of life Of joy is there is So soar Before thy face At thy right hand Our pleasures evermore Our Father we pray For your blessing to be upon us now As a people and as individuals You know our hearts And you are able to open our hearts And you are able to speak Powerfully to each one of us And to convince and to persuade us Of the truth of Jesus Christ And how we may come to know him As our Saviour and Lord And show us oh Lord That there is nothing so crucial In all the world As where we stand with God

We give thanks Lord for our time together And we pray for our fellowship together Later on We give thanks for the food That we will have And we pray that in everything that we do That we may glorify God In our thoughts and our words and actions And we pray that your grace and your mercy and peace Will be ours in Christ Amen Thank you