

Not Here - Risen!

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[0 : 0 0] I want to extend a very warm welcome to everybody this evening on behalf of Stornoway Free Church and we pray that God will indeed bless our word, his word to us all.

We're going to begin by singing from Psalm number 68 in the Scottish Psalter. We sing from verse 16 to the end of the double verse 18. Why do ye leap ye mountains high? This is the hill where God desires to dwell.

Ye God in it foray will make a boat. God's chariots twenty thousand are thousands of angels strong. Its holy place God is as in Mount Sinai them among.

Thou hast O Lord most glorious ascended up on high and in triumph victorious led captive captivity. Thou hast received gifts for men for such as did rebel.

Yea, even for them that God the Lord in midst of them might dwell. Verses 16 to 18 of Psalm 68.

[1 : 0 2] Why do ye leap ye mountains high? This is the hill where God needs time to dwell.

For ye leap ye mountains high? This is the hill where God needs to dwell. For ye leap ye mountains high? This is the hill where God needs to dwell.

B hearse deers, batten Persons of angels strong, His holy place God is out in Barn Sinai, Dehema, Barn Sinai, Dehema, Barn Sinai, Dehema, And holy place God is out in Barn Sinai, Dehema, Barn Sinai, Dehema, Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious Ascended upon high,

And holy place God is out in Barn Sinai, Dehema, And holy place God is out in Barn Sinai, Dehema, And holy place God is out in The King, Thou hast received the gifts For men, for such as did Rebell, yea, even for them That God the Lord in his In midst of them I dwell, In midst of them I dwell, In midst of them I dwell, Yea, ye Lord and God God the Lord

In midst of them I dwell. Let us bow our prayer. O Lord our gracious God, We bow before you this evening And again we give thanks for your Goodness and mercy towards us.

[3 : 5 9] We come every Lord's Day And we give thanks for the privilege And it is for many of us that Which we have grown up with And it has been such a source of Blessing to us over the years.

Lord we have to confess over years That we didn't appreciate what we had And maybe just went through the motions But we give thanks O Lord for every heart That you've opened And every heart that has been touched With your presence.

And we pray for any today Who might be watching And be involved in this service Who don't know you yet. That even through this service That they might meet with you.

It is the greatest meeting that any person Will ever have in this world. To meet with Jesus. And to discover anew And to discover for the first time The wonder of your grace.

The just the warmth of your love. The gentleness of your peace. And we pray that all of us this evening May discover and realise afresh These great blessings.

[5 : 08] We live in a very troubled world And it's a wonderful thing To be able to know the peace of God That passes knowledge. To be able to experience the love of God Shed abroad within our heart.

To be able to know the joy of the Lord Which is our strength. To be able to know that you are our God And that we belong to you.

And we pray then that we may have a sense Of your abiding presence. Not just a fleeting sense of your presence But an abiding sense. So that when we get up in the morning We might be conscious you're there.

And as we go along through the day We might be aware that you're with us. And when we go to bed at night That we might be conscious that you're there with us. And if we waken through the night Aware that you're there with us.

And so we pray that at all points Day or night That we might be aware that you're with us. We know that you are. Your word assures us of that. Your word tells us that you will never leave us Nor forsake us.

[6 : 13] And so we ask that you will indeed Enrich your lives in the knowledge of Christ. That you will fill us with With the knowledge of your will In all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

We pray Lord that we might grow with grace And in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that we may have our eyes fixed upon you. And as we run the race that is set before us.

That we may look unto Jesus Who is the author and finisher of our faith. We pray then that you will bless your word to us again As we come under it. And give thanks Lord for this Lord's Day.

And particularly this weekend. Which is a reminder to us. Of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks for that resurrection. Which is at the very heartbeat of the Christian faith.

Because today our Saviour is a risen Saviour. Exalted, triumphant. Who rules and overrules all things. We give thanks for the empty tomb.

[7 : 12] We give thanks to Lord that today That Jesus is the Lord Who rules triumphant over all. We give thanks for the triumph of You rising from the dead.

We give thanks for the triumph of Your victory over the grave. We give thanks Lord for your triumph. Where you have defeated the great enemy of death. We give thanks Lord for the triumph of Your entry into glory.

And the great fact that You are the personal guarantee Of what you have achieved in that. Will be the lot of all your people. Everyone throughout every generation.

And so Lord we pray that We might be able to rejoice in you. And to give thanks for all your goodness to us. And that we may be blessed by you. Pray to bless those who are struggling in life.

Those who are going through difficult times. And we know that there are so many different areas. It can be problems within the mind. Or problems within the body. Problems at home.

[8 : 14] It can be in family life. It could be because of work. Or lack of work. It could be financial constraints. It could be so many different areas.

It could be a combination of all. And so we pray that in the midst of all the difficulties. That you will indeed straighten the path. That you will lighten the burden.

And that you will grant peace. In whatever situation people are in. Pray Lord for those who are battling really difficult health issues. We pray Lord that you will grant healing and recovery.

We pray Lord for those who are going through addictions in life. And they find that they just cannot get themselves released from that which is a power and a hold over them.

No matter how hard they try. Even though there are many times that they completely give in. And sometimes don't even want to be released. But there is often a cry deep down.

[9 : 13] And longing to be released. And we pray that you will grant that deliverance. We give thanks for all the different agencies that work with those with addictions. And we ask that you will bless them and help them.

Pray Lord for those who are approaching death. That great enemy. We ask Lord that your peace will be in their soul. That even if there are any who have not yet to come to know Jesus.

That they might close in with Christ even at the eleventh hour. We pray Lord for their families. As they go through that with them. And all the sorrows that are attached to that.

Pray for those who mourn and have lost loved ones. For us. And we ask that the comfort and the joy of the Lord might be their portion. Even in the midst of the distress and the pain and the anguish that death and separation bring.

We ask Lord to be with us nationally and internationally. Be with our leaders. Those in authority over us. And as we approach election time. Make us aware of our responsibilities in these things.

[10 : 15] Lord we pray that oh that you would bless our leaders. So often we see that. It doesn't seem to be the wisdom from above. But the wisdom that is from this world.

That is so often guiding them. And we pray Lord that they may look up. That they may look to you. That they may realize that you are the source of ultimate wisdom. And that you alone are able to guide and direct in the right way.

And you do that through your word. The worst thing that can happen is that the word of God will be closed in a nation. And that our leaders will never consult what your word says. Oh Lord we pray that they might begin to consult your word.

And that they might hear what you have to say. Oh Lord deliver us from all those who are seeking to remove your influence from society. Lord we pray that that will never happen.

And we ask oh Lord that even despite how often they may attempt to do so. That all the more your word will flourish and grow. We pray then that you will prosper your word.

[11 : 18] As it has been preached throughout this day. And ask Lord that many souls will be built up and strengthened in the faith. And that people will have come to faith even before this day is out.

We pray to bless the word throughout the nations of this world. Remember Muriel in Cambodia we commit her to your care and keeping. And we give thanks for how she is able to link up with us here.

We give thanks for the wonder of technology that is able to link people up from all over the world. These are great opportunities that are given to us in the day that we live in.

We give thanks for these things Lord. We pray that you will be with us and that you will guide us in our worship and guide us in all that we are about. And ask that you will forgive us our every sin.

We again ask your blessing upon us in face of the pandemic. And we give thanks for every encouragement that we are receiving. Lord, we pray for all who mourn because of what has happened.

[12 : 25] And the death that has been so rampaging over this last year that has caused so much pain and distress. We pray Lord for those who have not been able to get to funerals.

Those Lord who have not been able to be with loved ones as they have died. That's a heartbreak.

We commit them to your care. Watch over us and we pray. Grant us your grace in all things. And do us good and to give away our sin in Jesus name we ask it. Amen. Now just a wee word to any of the young folk who might be listening in.

Do you know what a witness is? Well I'm sure you do. Because a witness is really somebody who has seen something very clearly.

They have been present and they have been able to see it exactly happen. Right there in front of their eyes. And I'm sure as you think back over your life there are lots of things that you have seen.

[13 : 41] Maybe you have come home and told your mum or your dad or something. You should have seen what I saw today. And they will say, did you? And you say yes. Because you were there.

You actually saw it. Often a person is called to court. To be a witness when something has happened.

Where they were present and they saw it. And when they come to court they have to promise that they will tell only the truth. They have to make that promise that they won't tell any lie but tell the absolute truth.

Supposing for instance you happened to be just standing at the side of the road. And you saw a car and it indicated just beside you and it slowed right down and indicated it was going to stop.

And then all of a sudden this car came right in BAM into the back of it. And you go there we go. Whoa! And both drivers got out. And both drivers said, that's your fault.

[14 : 46] Because the driver who ran in said, you just stopped all of a sudden. You didn't indicate anything and I just drove into you. But you just stopped without any warning.

And the man at the front. And the man at the front. Whose car had been run into said, no. I stopped slowly and I indicated. And they were arguing back and forth.

And the man who had indicated. And the man who had indicated. Although the other man said he hadn't indicated. Might have come over to you and said, did you see what happened?

And you would say, well yes. I actually saw it. What happened? Did I indicate? And you would say, well yes. I saw you indicated. And you see, you were a witness to what actually happened.

And then the police might come. And they'll take a statement from you and say, well. You tell us exactly what you saw. So you were able to be witness to exactly what happened.

[15 : 46] So that's a witness. So we're witness to loads and loads and loads of things. Sometimes just now where the sheep are out there and they're lambing. And one day you look out and say, I actually saw a lamb being born.

I was a witness to a lamb being born. So that's something that you witness. That you actually see. Jesus, when he rose from the dead, he said to his disciples, you are my witnesses.

What did he mean by that? Well, after Jesus had been put on the cross and had died for our sins and he was put into the grave. And a big stone was rolled over the grave.

We know what happened. He rose from the dead. And he appeared and came and he appeared to his disciples. And they, first of all, they got a fearful shock.

There was one time he just came into the room where they were. They were all sitting there. They were all scared because of what had happened to Jesus. And he appeared in the room.

[16 : 52] And they were just filled with joy. And he said to them, you are my witnesses. In other words, you have seen me. You have seen me alive again.

I have beaten death. I have risen from death. And you are witnesses. And I want you to be a witness in all the world. I want you to go and tell everybody what you have seen and what you have heard from me.

But Jesus also wants us to be witnesses for it. And if Jesus has touched your heart, if Jesus has come into your life, he wants you to go and to tell other people what he has done for you.

That he has come to save your sins. And that he has come to fill your heart with his love and with his peace. He doesn't want you to keep that to yourself.

He wants you to tell other people. And whenever you do that, whenever you tell anybody about Jesus, you are a witness for Jesus.

[18 : 02] Ask the Lord today, tonight, that you will be a witness for him every day in life. Let's say the Lord's Prayer. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. Now let us read God's word and we are going to read from Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew chapter 28. Matthew chapter 28. Now, after the Sabbath, towards the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

And behold, there was a great earthquake. And behold, there was a great earthquake. But an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow.

[19 : 13] And for fear of him, the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, do not be afraid.

For I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. For he has risen. As he said, come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead.

And behold, he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him. See, I have told you. So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and run to tell his disciples.

And behold, Jesus met them and said greetings. And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, do not be afraid.

Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. And there they will see me. While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city.

[20 : 17] And told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, tell people.

His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.

So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day. Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

And when they saw him, they worshipped him. But some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

[21 : 21] Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. Behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. Amen. And may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word.

I want us this evening to consider this first section. Really verses 1 to 10. We have here of the resurrection. We have the accounts and the various gospels of this.

But it tells us, I'm not going to read it again. Now after the first, after the Sabbath towards the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb.

And behold, there was a great earthquake for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. And so on. The Christian gospel is really the most enriching positive message that this world could ever hear or ever know of.

And it's strange how people think of Christianity as being that which is negative and doer. And which is that which removes all kind of joy or positivity out of life.

[22 : 41] Well, people think that. Well, people think the Christian faith is all about negatives and all about what you can't do. And about being heavy and ponderous and gloomy.

But you know, nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, we do. We are heavy because of sin. But what we have a, there is a joy within the Christian heart that cannot be found in the world.

Christian joy cannot be taken away because Christian joy is in Christ. And when Christ is within our heart, then through the spirit, then that joy ultimately cannot be taken away.

You know, there's no other creed or system or faith that has such an inspiring message as the Christian faith. And so, yes, there is death. Yes, there is death.

Yes, there is death. But out of that death, there comes life and hope and meaning and purpose and a future. It is the most wonderful death bringing forth new life.

[23 : 50] And so the Christian message focuses upon Christ who is ahead. And we know that Christ is the one who defeats death. He takes death on. He takes the grave on.

And he defeats death and he defeats the grave. And, you know, this is a wonderful thing. If you and I are united to Jesus Christ, then he is a personal guarantee of what he achieved, he has achieved for us as well.

In other words, that means that death does not have an ultimate claim and hold over us. Yes, we will die. But there will come a time when the grave will have to release our body.

And our body will be reunited with the soul that has gone to be with the Lord. It means that death, as we say, and the grave do not have the ultimate victory, even although it appears so.

You know, it's one of the horrible things about death and horrible things about a funeral and horrible things about the grave. It all seems so final, it's not.

[24 : 58] It seems so final when Jesus was put into the grave. It certainly wasn't. And it won't be for you and for me for trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. And so the resurrection, which the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ hate, and that is why so much energy has been put in trying to undermine and trying to destroy the reality of the resurrection.

Because the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ gives an impetus to the Christian faith like nothing else. The empty tomb is that which troubles the enemies of Christ like nothing else.

Now, as you know, Jesus was put into the grave. And there was a great big stone put against the tomb. And there was a guard of soldiers set to guard the grave.

And they were put there for one reason and one reason only. This guard was put there in case the disciples of Jesus came and tried to steal the body of Jesus.

Because the religious leaders remembered that Jesus had said that he would rise again from the dead. And so they were taking no chances. Because they were saying, it would be a nightmare if the disciples come and steal the body away.

[26 : 18] And then people say, oh, he has risen. And so they were going to make absolutely doubly sure, trebly sure, that there wouldn't be any stealing of his body away.

Now, of course, when Jesus was buried, the women were those who were so devoted to him, were watching what was happening. And whenever the Sabbath was passed, the old Jewish Sabbath was passed, very early in the morning on the first day of the week, the women, we have Mary Magdalene and the other Mary and the other women, went with prepared spices to the grave to anoint the body of Jesus.

And I love the faith and the courage of these women. And they had seen where the Lord was laid. It tells us in Luke chapter 23, verse 55, the women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid.

And Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were burying the body of Jesus. These women were watching from a distance. And they had their full intention whenever the Sabbath was passed of coming to anoint the body of Jesus.

Now, of course, they had seen this huge stone roll against the tomb. And they had seen the soldiers to get the position as guard. And here they come.

[27 : 49] Here are these ladies. And it's often been highlighted just the faith and the devotion and the love of these women. Because these women are coming to anoint the body of Jesus. And they know that there's a guard of soldiers around the grave.

They know there's a massive stone rolled against the entrance to the tomb. And yet, on they go. What drives them on?

Faith, love, devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. And although they're questioning because in Mark, in the Gospel we read, they're asking, Who will roll away the stone for us?

Who's going to take the stone away? Well, it certainly wouldn't be the guards. So they're going to have to confront the guards on that stone. And human logic would say, Hey, you're wasting your time.

There's absolutely no point in you. What are you going there for? What are you going to anoint, try and anoint the body of Jesus? It's impossible. But love and faith and devotion to Christ doesn't think like that.

[28 : 55] That faith rooted in Christ, that love that is full of zeal and fervour to Christ, doesn't hear the logic of the world.

Doesn't listen to the reason of human reason. Faith is focused on Christ and will move forward whatever. And that's a beautiful picture that we have.

And these women are an inspiration to us. Their courage and devotion and commitment. Because you see, it was a dangerous thing to be identified with Jesus Christ at this moment.

Because Jesus having been put to death, we find that this was a dangerous time to be identified with Jesus. In fact, his immediate followers, the disciples, they are huddled together in a room, in an upper room.

They're not out. They're not like the women. They're not making their way to the grave. They're meeting in secret behind closed locked doors. They're scared. Peter, remember the courageous Peter, he had lost his nerve and he ended up denying Jesus.

[30 : 08] These women are what an inspiration to us. They're not hiding away. They've nailed their colours to the mass, irrespective of the cost.

And that's a question that I have to ask myself and you have to ask yourself. Are you hiding the work that Jesus has done in your soul? Are you hiding that work from others?

Are you nailing your colours to the mass? Do people know that you're a Christian? Do people know that you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ? Or are you one of these secret disciples?

Are you hiding the peace, the joy, the fellowship of the Lord? Do people know that you're hiding in your soul? Do people know that you're hiding in your soul? Do you know, you don't enjoy, you will not enjoy the peace, the joy, the fellowship of the Lord, if you're trying to conceal what Jesus Christ has done for you?

It doesn't work that way. It doesn't work that way. It's vital. And see what happened at the very moment when Jesus was revealing himself to the women.

[31 : 21] The disciples were shaking with fear in a room up. Why? Because they were concealing, they were hiding, they were hidden. See, it makes all the world a difference when you go forward in faith.

Now it doesn't tell us that the women were praying, but there's no doubt that they were as to what was going to happen. And when they came to the grave and they were coming to anoint the body of Jesus, we find that they came there, you know, with a heart of love.

We said that already. And a heart of love always seeks Jesus out. And that's what love does. Love wants to be with the object of love.

So that's what love is. When you love somebody, you want to be with that person. That's what love does. Love wants a togetherness. And that love wants to be with the Lord Jesus.

That's why we meet together the way we do. Because Jesus has said that we're two or three gathered together in his name. He's here in the midst. He's there. He's here to bless.

[32 : 31] And that's why we love coming to God's house. That's why we love his word. That's why we pray. Because we will go wherever he is. That's why we love the Lord's table. Because wherever he is, we want to be.

And Jesus has said that. Remember what he said in John's Gospel. John chapter 12, verse 26. If any man serve me, let him follow me. And where I am, there shall also my servant be.

And if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. You see, there is blessing in following Christ. There is blessing in serving Christ.

And so, it's this heart of love, this heart of service that we find amongst these women as they make their way to the grave. And so they have this, they're still moving on.

They're still wondering, how are we going to, how on earth are we going to get over the problems that faces? But it didn't stop them moving forward. And you know, when we go forward in faith, do you know what happens?

[33 : 37] God goes ahead of us. What blessing these women would have missed out on if they had said, there's actually no point in doing this. But faith took them on.

And faith was hugely rewarded that morning. That was a morning that they would never, ever, ever forget for the rest of their lives. Because disciples didn't enjoy what these women enjoyed.

Yes, they had the moment later on. But they missed the first of it. Jesus so often says, oh you of little faith. Well, these women went forward.

Two-fold problem. The guards and the stone. But you know, because faith pushed them on. God took care of these two problems. Two problems were dealt with by the time they got there.

That was the beauty of it. And you know, it might be so for you today. There might be things in your life. And you're so discouraged. And you're so full of fear. And you're so afraid.

[34 : 39] And sometimes your devil is tempting you. And your own heart is tempting you to give up. Keep going. Keep your eyes fixed upon Jesus. You know, the more you see of Jesus, the less your problem is.

The less you see of Jesus, the bigger your problem is. Keep going. Fix your eyes upon Jesus. And go forward. Move forward in faith. And so we find that an earthquake, that's what it tells us.

And behold, there was a great earthquake. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven. You know, often when God is revealing himself into this world, it is accompanied by an earthquake.

You find that in the wilderness journey there was the earthquake. When God at Sinai, giving the Ten Commandments, there was the earthquake with the presence of God.

We find that at the crucifixion, there was an earthquake. And here at the resurrection, there is an earthquake. When Jesus returns again, there will be an earthquake.

[35 : 43] It's going to happen at all these times. And so we read. Now, interestingly, we read in Luke's Gospel that there were two angels.

And that corresponds really with what we find in Matthew and Mark. Because in Matthew we have the account of an angel outside the tomb. And in Mark's Gospel, an angel inside the tomb.

And critics straight away jump and say, look at the inconsistency. One is an angel outside. Another is an angel inside. But Luke puts it all together and says there were two angels.

And so there's one outside and one inside. So it all comes together. That's the beauty. That's why it's important to follow the account by the different witnesses of the Gospels.

So Matthew and Mark, we find that the angels are pointing to the women. And they're saying, look, see the place where the Lord lay. He's not here. He's risen.

[36 : 45] Isn't that wonderful? He's not here. He's risen. That, I believe, is one of the great moments. See the place where the Lord lay.

He's not there anymore. Where is he? He is risen. He is risen. He was risen. He is risen. Amen. He is risen.

Thanks. You are here. He is risen. He is risen. And we know, the Lord, the Lord doesn't have to. In me, that's what you've seen. That will be, that's what you've seen. You've travelled. That's what's given you the heart beating. In your faith today. We don't follow a Saviour who is dead, who is lying in a tomb somewhere.

We're following a Saviour who is risen, who is triumphant, who is the right hand of God, who is the head of the church, who is the head of your life, who is within you, through the the Holy Spirit. It's amazing. It is the most wonderful news that any person could ever hear.

And it's very interesting the different response that we find with regard to the visitation of these angels. Because the soldiers, we're told, trembled with fear. They became virtually paralyzed. They became like dead men. It's like they went into some kind of faint. They were trembling with fear. Now, why, there was a fear in the heart of the woman as well.

[38 : 09] It wasn't that kind of fear. It wasn't a paralyzing type of fear. It was a fear of joy, of reverence, and awe, but also of joy, and just a sense of wonder. And you know that when the Lord Jesus Christ returns, the response is going to be very similar to what it was confronting these angels.

Here are these tough soldiers, hard men, and they're absolutely paralyzed with fear in the presence of ministering spirits from God. The women are not paralyzed with fear. There is a sense of reverence, a sense of joy within their heart, a sense of awe and wonder. And you know, at an even greater level, it's going to be like that when Jesus Christ returns. Because the enemies of Christ, and all those who have mocked him and laughed at him and refused to believe who he is and his very existence, they will begin to shake and tremble and they'll be paralyzed with fear. And they'll be in such agony and fear that they will call on the mountains and the rocks and the hills to fall on them and to conceal them and to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb.

That is an awesome thought. That's what the Word of God tells us it's going to be like when Jesus returns. There won't be one atheist or one agnostic or one mugger on that day. Every eye will see him.

And those who have pushed him, that is all who have rejected him, they will weigh it or told us in Scripture. But what's the response of his people? Even so, come Lord Jesus.

There is going to be delight and joy in the heart of a watching, believing world when they're alive at the return of Jesus Christ.

[40 : 08] What a moment that's going to be. Can I ask you, what would it be for you if Jesus was to return tonight?

If Jesus was to come just now? What would be your response? Which category would you find yourself in? Which camp would you be in? Would you be crippled by fear?

Calling for the rocks and the hills and everything, anything to cover you and conceal you from Christ? Or would you be saying, oh Lord, this is who I've been with. I've been waiting for you.

Which category do you find yourself in? Now, while the stone was rolled away, the angel didn't come to roll away the stone in order to let Jesus out.

Jesus was already out. The stone was taken away in order for people to see. Because, you know, the grave clothes were lying just there. Just as they were when they were on him.

[41 : 08] What had happened? Jesus rose through the grave clothes. And you know the great difference between Jesus rising from the dead and Lazarus who was raised from the dead.

Do you remember Lazarus when Jesus commanded him to come out of the grave? It tells us that he came out of the grave in his grave clothes.

You see, Lazarus wasn't finished with death. He died. But he was going to have to die again. These grave clothes were a reminder to him that it's not over for you, Lazarus.

You'll be in these grave clothes once again. Because death will take you again. But Jesus left the grave clothes behind. He had no need for them ever again. Ever again.

Finished with death. He came for the simple purpose of dying. For our sins. And rising for our sins. And so he's leaving the grave clothes.

[42 : 09] He's leaving everything that's connected to death and the grave behind him. As he ascends up into glory. What a wonderful thing for us.

And so we find that this is just this wonderful man. So the angel is sitting there as well on stone. And you know there's a tremendous picture of triumph there.

The angel sitting on the stone. And more or less the angel is saying to anybody. I dare you come and put this stone back at the entrance to the tomb. Nobody would. Soldiers have legged it.

They say whatever. I've fought many a fight in my life. This is one fight I'm out of. I am not fighting here. They knew they hadn't a chance. They were gone. They were terrified.

And then we see the angels give the women a message. And the message was that they were to go to the disciples. And tell the disciples that Jesus was going before them to Galilee.

[43 : 13] And again we see the women away. They went as fast as they could. With a great joy to tell the message that Jesus was alive.

And I say go on their way. Jesus needs them. And he speaks to them very simply and he says greetings. And the word that Jesus used there was a very ordinary word.

It was like hello or good morning. And he puts them completely at ease. And I can't even begin to imagine what that moment must have been like for these women.

It was just one of absolute. Well it tells us their response when they see him. And behold Jesus met them and said greetings. And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him.

The joy. The adoration. The reverence. The thrill. You can't put it into words. That moment that they realised.

[44 : 17] Our saviour shall live. And he's here. And you know it's wonderful that he met these women first. And I believe. People say why did Jesus show himself to the women before he showed to anybody else.

I believe very simply because of their love and their devotion. Their love and devotion went way beyond Peter, James, John. Beyond any other. And I believe that Jesus was acknowledging that.

In the same way that people say why did Jesus in his final ascension make his way out. But from like towards Bethany. And many people believe that it was again to mark the devotion of Mary of Bethany.

These women. They're there as a shining example to us. In scripture. Of love and devotion to Jesus. But do you know where I live the message?

Jesus said go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. My brothers. Yes and I.

[45 : 24] I love that. Why? My brothers. You think of what the disciples had done to Jesus. They all forsook him and fled. Peter who was the leader in fact had denied him.

I don't know anything about the man. He means nothing to me. And Jesus says. They're my brothers. Jesus doesn't even mention what they had done.

Go and tell them. My brothers. I belong to them. He's not ashamed. We're told. To call us brethren.

Isn't that great? Not ashamed to call us brothers. It's extraordinary. You know we may turn our back upon Jesus. And sadly there are times we do. Jesus will never ever turn us back on us.

Isn't that wonderful? What a thing to hold on to. What a truth to lay hold upon. Lord. That Jesus will never ever ever. turns back on anyone of his sheep.

[46 : 28] Of his lambs. Of those who live. Let's pray. Lord of God we pray that this evening every single one of us might bow before you. And acknowledge you as Lord.

We pray that you will bless us. Cleanse us from all our sin. We pray in Jesus name. Amen. We're going to conclude our service singing from Psalm number 16. Psalm number 16 and sing Psalms.

And we're going to sing from verses 8 to the end. Psalm 16. From verse 8. Before me constantly I set the Lord alone.

Because he is at my right hand I will not be overthrown. Therefore my heart is glad. My tongue with joy will sing. My body too will rest secure in hope and wavering.

For you will not allow my soul and death to stay. Nor will you leave your holy one to see the tombs decay. You have made known to me the path of life divine.

[47 : 29] Bliss shall I know at your right hand. Joy from your face will shine. Psalm 16 from verse 8 to the end. Before me constantly I set the Lord alone.

Before me constantly I set the Lord alone.

Because he is at my right hand. I'll not be overthrown.

Therefore my heart is glad. My tongue with joy will sing.

My body too will rest secure in hope and wavering.

[48 : 46] For you will not allow my soul and death to stay.

Nor will you leave your holy one to see the tombs decay.

You have made known to me the path of life divine.

Blessed shall I know at your right hand. Joy from your face will shine.

Now may the grace, mercy and peace of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen. Thank you very much for watching in this evening.

[50 : 07] And pray that the Lord will bless all of you throughout this coming week. God bless.