

He is risen

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 January 2000

Preacher: Mr Ken Macleod

[0 : 0 0] we'll turn again to the chapter that we read together Matthew's Gospel in chapter 28 and to the words we find in verse 6 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 these are astonishing words amongst the most amazing words we find in the whole of the Bible but before we turn to them let me introduce you to Chandr Pal Singh Chandr Pal is a 26 year old Hindu born in a Hindu family living in the middle province in India where along with his wife they eke out an existence grim a grim existence listen to what he says

I was searching for the true God everywhere but I could not find peace on the living God I became very upset because I thought there was no God at all and the things on this earth were just running automatically I wonder can you identify with Chandr Pal Singh he was a man and deep down in his heart there was a cry for meaning and for relevance and for help and he was really reiterating what a great saint said so long ago our hearts are restless said Augustine until they find their rest in you and that's not surprising because we have been created in the image of God and he made us for himself and set up a correspondence between heaven and earth so that our first parents in paradise knew the bliss and the perfection of his fellowship not a cloud crossed their sky their horizons were blue and everything so to speak in the garden was rosy

Chandr Pal Singh centuries later many centuries later knew that there was something missing in his life and so one day he was out in the fields and he was tuning his shortwave radio for some entertainment and then across the airwaves came the message of the gospel to him the first time he had ever heard the words Jesus Christus or Jesus Christ and this set Chandr Pal on a course of searching and one day he found an answer to his question and that's the greatest question that anyone can ask how can I be right with God how can I find peace with God it's a question that Delcho asked

I stayed with Delcho just two weeks ago today in the southern part of Bulgaria Delcho was raised in a communist home rose to prominence in the military had all that he wanted fast car an attractive wife good prospects but there was an emptiness in Delcho's heart one night he had a dream and he dreamt that he was going to a lost eternity that he was going to hell and Delcho woke in a sweat and Nina noticed Nina his wife a lovely lady noticed that he was in anguish and this went on for weeks and then she said to him Delcho my granny has a bible and in desperation

Delcho made his way to Nina's granny's home and he began avidly reading the bible and on new year's morning 1990 he found peace with God and from that moment his life was spent in witness come she said the woman of Samaria come come see a man who told me all that ever I did is not this the Christ and that's the way it is or ought to be with everyone who has come to faith in Christ we heard this morning about the man Christ Jesus there is no one like him absolutely unique so tonight we're asking the question how can we find peace with God a great question but many answers are returned to that question some say do your best as long as you're sincere that's all that matters now the word sincerity is a very interesting word and it's a word that was used long ago in the

[6 : 2 3] Greek speaking world and if you were to go along to a sculpture's yard in Greece and you were to purchase an item there made of marble you would ask the sculptor is it is it without wax and by that he would understand full well what you meant because if he had in the making of the article if his chisel had slipped and there was a blemish the article was marred he would take some wax and punch paste over the crack and it would be invisible is it without wax is it sincere and not until the heat of next summer when the wax would melt would you then realize that you have been sold a defective article it's possible to be sincere in our faith but to be sincerely wrong and today in the west in our own land we live in a multicultural multifaceted society and they say to us all rivers lead

to the sea and all faiths lead to

God so it really doesn't matter they're all on a par but that's not what we find in the scriptures we find that Jesus Christ makes this great claim no man he says comes to the father but by me he claims an exclusive way to the father no one knows the father except the son he said so do we have anything in common with the other great world faiths and how is Christianity unique in what way is it unique well we share certain values with these other faiths whether it be Islam or Judaism the religions of the book each one has a respect for life for the sanctity of life at both ends of the spectrum each one respects and honors parents and promotes honesty and so on these are values that are shared in common but what makes

Christianity unique is its facts 9-11 is a fact so is 7-7 the exodus from Egypt is a historical fact sin is a fact and the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a fact and we read of that fact just a few moments ago come said the angel to the women come see the place where the Lord lay now these are astonishing words as I said they could have said come see the place where you are Lord lay but the word in the original I'm told is come and see the place where the Lord lay Lord of what or Lord of whom

Lord of all and Lord is a title of divine significance Caesar claimed that title to himself wrongly of course come see the place where the Lord lay from all eternity he had lain in the bosom of his father God the father God the son and God the holy spirit the three in one the three in one invulnerable and yet what we read is astonishing he came to this world as the servant of the father and for nine months he lay not in the bosom of his father but in the womb of his mother father and he was born as we know to these humble Palestinian parents brought up in the ways in the obscurity of Nazareth became a refugee in Egypt he knows what it is to be a refugee and just two weeks ago I was in the company of many hundreds of refugees who had to leave everything behind when they fled Bosnia and later Kosovo and now live just in one room almost in squalor he knows what it is to be a refugee and he also knows what it is to be homeless and there are many and we needn't go past our own borders there are many in our own land he knows what it is to be homeless come see the place where the Lord lay lay lay in the bosom of his father lay in the womb of his mother but here he is lying in the lowest place of all in the grave now we are all fast hastening to the grave every day takes us that much closer and in the grave all distinctions are obliterated high and low rich and poor rich and poor those who make the headlines and those who live in obscurity we are all heading towards the grave and in the grave all ambition comes to an end that's what he lay that's where he lay and then we know that before he was laid in the tomb he was on the cross and his disciples had forsaken him but the women stood around and they observed and they observed where his body was taken lovingly wrapped in linen and laid in the tomb and the great stone laid against the door of the tomb and early on that first day of the week

Mary Magdalene and the other women make their way to the tomb and John's account is a very full account and he focuses on Mary more than the other women Who was she?

[14 : 05] Mary grew up on the western shores of Lake Galilee in a little town called Magdala and it would seem that Mary's home was secure and stable and a loving home and then one day something happened and Mary's mind became deranged and that lovely home, that peaceful home was turned upside down and nothing could be done to console Mary nothing that her parents or her neighbours could do was of any avail trouble came to that home and no home is immune to trouble no home is exempt no Christian is exempt from any of the sorrows of this life but then one day a stranger passed by and Jesus cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene

Mary's mind was restored no wonder she followed him as did the other band of women she owed him everything some time ago I met Olga Olga and Olga and Olga is married Olga would be the equivalent of the matron of Bethesda in Slovakia a home for elderly people and Olga and her husband look after these people we asked the Christian family and she gave us her testimony and Olga too had also like Delcho had been raised in a communist home father was in the military but the uncle, the father's brother was a believer and he taught Olga the basics of Christianity until the day that her father discovered and then uncle was no longer permitted to the home Olga left home went to university tragically went down the wrong road and found herself quickly under the power of an evil influence and her roommates discovered to the horror that she had power over them and she was expelled and the next step would have been the last for her apparently and then she remembered she remembered her uncle and what she had been taught and through a phone call a meeting was arranged and she would meet with the pastor in her uncle's

church but if she were here she would tell you how difficult how impossible it was for her to take the next step inside the church she was possessed by an evil power but she was taken into the church and she was delivered

Mary Magdalene was delivered from the power of evil no wonder she followed the Lord so here she is at the tomb early on that first Lord's Day morning stone is rolled away the body is not there she returns to Jerusalem we know the story and then the disciples see for themselves he is not there they go back home but Mary returns to the tomb and she is there weeping tears we shed our tears tears of sorrow when we bury our beloved dead we shed our tears and that is but natural what goes what precedes tears what goes what precedes tears or what precedes sorrow all was this love precedes sorrow and it is those who love the most who sorrow the most and the same is true in the spiritual life we sorrow for we ought to mourn over our sin and when the Lord begins to work in our lives he creates within us a love for himself so here is Mary Magdalene outside the empty tomb weeping love is there first at the tomb and then she hears a voice behind her and she says John supposing he was the gardener and suddenly was the gardener said to him

Sarah if you have taken away my Lord tell me where you have laid him and then she hears the one word and that is enough Mary Mary and she responds Rabboni Master and that is all that it takes one word and if the Lord were to bless to you dear unconverted friend if we were to bless to you just one word tonight your life would be transformed forever in the best possible way he said to her woman now isn't that significant the first word that passes over the lips of the risen Lord the world is woman woman victims of war of treachery of abuse mother daughter sisters sweethearts woman woman why are you weeping in his day they were despised and in many parts of the world they are still despised but not by Jesus woman why are you weeping and when

[21 : 02] Mary recognizes who it is her response is so natural she goes to clasp him never to let him go but he says to her do not touch me do not touch me Mary how are we to analyze his response there is nothing better or more wonderful in this world than Christian fellowship and wherever you go and you meet with the Lord's people and Jesus himself is the topic of conversation and comes among the group that is the highest point in this world wasn't that the case when he took Peter and James and John up the Mount of Transfiguration and the heavenly visitors came down and they were speaking about his exodus the exodus that he was to accomplish at Jerusalem in a short while and then Peter said to him

Lord it is good for us to be here let us make three tents one for you one for Moses one for Elijah who wouldn't want to stay on the mountain but what was Jesus' response there is a valley down there and in that valley there was a demon possessed boy it is wonderful to have a mountain top experience and to be present in the company of the Lord and of his people but there is a demon possessed world out there looking for help and cry and that is the mission of the church saved to serve Mary do not touch me go and tell my brethren that I ask the disciples of all the nations teaching them and so on and so on and lo I am with you always even to the end of the age come come said the angel to the women come see the place where the Lord lay he is not here for he has risen as he said somewhere in this world you will find the bones of Mohammed and of Buddha and of every other so called so called faith leader but you will not find the bones of the Lord Jesus Christ his tomb is empty come see the place where the Lord lay he is not here for he has risen as he said what did he say?

well he said this just as Jonah was three days and three nights three nights in the belly of the fish so the son of man will be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth and he also said didn't he not destroy this temple referring to his body destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again it's not everyone whom you can trust trust but here is one who is absolutely trustworthy everything he has said all his words of promise are words of truth he keeps his promise he said he would rise and he did let me close by telling you a true story of what happened in Armenia northern Turkey just a few years ago

I think it was 1999 there was a horrendous earthquake in one of the Armenian towns and in four minutes the city was flattened and thousands were swept into eternity and the father whose little son along with other pupils were in a primary school the father jumped into his car sped off in the direction of the school only to find that it was a mass of rubble and other parents were standing there weeping broken hearted and Amram's father went and with his bare hands began to remove the rubble hour after hour and they said to him the others said to him it's too late they've gone but he kept on and on and on twelve hours passed twenty-four hours passed thirty-six hours passed

and he didn't give up and every so often he would listen and he would call and then he thought he thought he heard a voice and he shouted down

Amram and back came the word yes dad it's me I'm well dad and so are my friends my friends and I said to them that if you were alive that you would come for me because you said to me that whenever I needed you you would be there for me you would be there for me and so Amram was rescued under his little palace and Jesus Christ has risen the Arimathean's tomb held him for three days the stone was rolled away and tonight Jesus Christ is at the right hand of the majesty above just as he promised that he would rise so too he has promised that he will return and there is a day yet ahead we know not how long but he will return and he will return to this world and his voice will be heard

[28 : 04] I didn't mean to say this but it just crossed my mind just two weeks ago we were in Macedonia and we were visiting Professor Ivan Grosdano who was here the wake of the hurricane and he actually preached from this pulpit and we went to visit him and he said to us before we went to bed in his home that night he said don't be alarmed if you are waking down to your sleep at five in the morning it will be the Muslim call to prayer and sure enough we were sound asleep and at five o'clock in the morning this shriek this wail came across the loudspeaker rapidly Macedonia is becoming Islamized and the Muslim religion is on the mark and this sound was terrifying and it penetrated the darkness and it woke you out of your sleep at five in the morning sunrise at Mecca and I couldn't help but think of the words of Jesus in John 5, 28 the time is coming he said when those that are in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of Man and will rise and the voice of Jesus will penetrate penetrate to the grave and among us is it not proverbial to say as silent as the grave and when he returns the dead in Christ will rise first and those who are left and remain will be caught up transformed, translated together to be with the Lord forever what a glorious prospect and hope there is for those who believe in Jesus

Chander Palsing searching for God pounding Delcho the communist army officer wakened out of his sleep with the fear of going to a lost eternity founder Delcho is now a preacher so too is Chander Pals they both have a mission what about you?

have you heard his voice? have you heard his voice? well if I'm not mistaken his voice is heard in his word as it is proclaimed in your hearing tonight may you respond by his grace positively let us pray Lord enable us to believe we are pure and needy and needy and without you we can do nothing and we remember your own words when you are on the earth and man can receive nothing unless it be given him from above and we pray for that gift of faith that enables us to believe and to be fully assured that what you have said you will perform you have promised it come you say come to me you are weary and burdened and I will give you rest

Lord bless to us your own word watch over us take care of us go with us for what remains of this evening and then all our days for Jesus sake Amen now there's a special request for the last psalm and the request is that it be sung in Gaelic for the benefit of our Romanian friends and so we'll sing from psalm 72 and the last three verses psalm 72 verse 17 v sis us look at the door

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[33 : 42] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[37 : 26] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. What a day that will be.

When the whole earth. Will be full of the glory of the Lord. It is certain. It is assured. And one day. His glory will be visible.

And seen. And felt. May we all. Be participants. In that glory. What may he bless us. And follow with his blessing. And take us home safely.

Shall not wait longer. Shall we. Shall we. do.

Do. Do. Do. Do. Do. Do. Do. Do. Do.

[38 : 35] Do.