

# The Lord is risen indeed

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Preacher: Rev Alex Murdo Macleod

[ 0 : 0 0 ] we shall now turn to words in the passage we read in Luke chapter 24 and we may again read at verse 32 Luke 24 verse 32 and they said one to another did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scriptures and they rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together and them that were with them saying the Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon now this is one of the most wonderful days that this world has seen since the beginning of time of which Luke tells us here the day of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead it can be said in truth that upon those who sat in the darkness and in the shadow of death great light has arisen gloriously brilliant light has arisen upon this world by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and we have an account here of the visit paid by the Lord Jesus on that first day to two of his disciples and we shall think as we are enabled on their condition of heart and mind when he came to them and the privileges that they came to possess as a result of his visiting them and the first thing

I should like to indicate in regard to their particular condition and experiences that they were both very sad men they were experiencing the sadness we might say of bereavement and most of us if not all of us know what the sadness of bereavement is as distinct from other kinds of sadness the job at one stage solemn stage in his own life's experience was visited in a most strange way in the providence of God with bereavement and loss and yet he was able to say naked came I up of the womb naked shall I return thither the Lord has given the Lord has taken away blessed be the name of the

Lord but for all the wonder of the words and sentiments expressed by Job on that occasion words and feelings that are well known and shall be kept in remembrance while the world remains that is not to say that Job did not experience the sorrow and sadness of bereavement we read before we read these words that are so much sort of memorial of Job before we come to these words we read that he arose and that he rent his mantle and shaved his head and fell down on the ground and worshipped cases of the sadness of bereavement are frequently found throughout the scriptures we find

David we happen to be reading these words very very recently at family worship last night in fact the words of David when he was informed of the death of his son Absalom oh my son Absalom my son my son Absalom would God that I have died for thee Absalom my son my son David could not contain his grief over the death of Absalom even when he was rebuked you remember by Job who accused David this day he said to him I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all we had died this day then it had pleased thee well but for all these rebukes

David could not contain and restrain his sorrow over Absalom the measure of his sorrow was his measure of his affection for his own son these men were experiencing the sorrow caused by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ they were sorrowing over the absence of their Lord you remember how in the book of Job himself we seem to discover what was a greater and more poignant cause of sorrow to his own soul than the loss of everything he had suffered at the beginning and it is in the 23rd chapter at the beginning that he says that even today is my complaint bitter my stroke is heavier than my groaning oh that I knew where

[ 7 : 0 5 ] I might find him that I might come even to receive oh that I knew where I might find the Lord my Lord and my God we find the same kind of feeling deeply in the soul of one of the psalmist who says you remember in psalm 77 he questions in his sorrow forever he asks will the Lord cast off and gracious be no more forever is his mercy gone fails his word evermore is it true that to be gracious the Lord forgotten hath and that his tender measures he hath shut up in his wrath the absence of the

Lord as Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me and my Lord hath forgotten me and he asks fortunately of Zion can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb and these disciples they were to discover in their own experience the push of that answer that the Lord gave to Zion of old in the days of Isaiah this absence of the Lord brings sorrow then into the lives of his people it is a sore experience for God's people and I wonder if you know it this painful inward grief that is caused by the absence of the Lord have you discovered it to be a distressing experience an experience that can bring a sea of troubles into your life along with it have you felt the absence of the Lord for whom your soul longs to be like a day of gloom and sadness and evil have you discovered it to be something you might call catastrophic in your experience that if it were to continue endlessly that no other loss could ever be compared with it the absence of the Lord is something that not only grieves but pains the souls of his people that makes them to feel faint makes them to feel themselves losing heart and to languish in weakness and spiritual infirmity and sometimes in mental and physical infirmity too and these disciples also they were sad because of a peculiar mental perplexity that they had and that perplexity is expressed surely by themselves when they tell him that they thought or trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel they were dull of understanding at the very best maybe it might be comforting to you to hear not for the first time that at the very best those who are blessed of God find that they are dull of understanding in regard to spiritual things spirits that there is a desire in their heart that continuously surpasses the measure of their light in their understanding because always it is partial they can compare it perhaps with spiritual vision that they have enjoyed in the past or compare it with what is promised to them in the future and they are here living as in a twilight world. And these disciples were in a twilight world spiritually in a very real sense because of their want of understanding of the necessity of the Lord's death, of the time of the Lord's death, and of the manner of the Lord's death.

[ 12 : 06 ] And then they were full of sadness because surely as they understood it, there had occurred what was nothing less than the shattering of the most promising career in this world known to them.

The Lord Jesus had been in the prime of his life, as they said, in him they trusted that Israel would be redeemed. And there was no one else to whom they could look to bring about that redemption, which they understood to be deliverance largely. They saw it as deliverance from the power of Rome and from the oppression they had to sever as a people. But now, as a result of his death by crucifixion, they were filled with sadness. Their hopes were destroyed insofar as the redemption of their people was concerned. But still, these people not only are saddened people because of events around about them and their effects upon their own hearts and upon their own understanding. [ 13 : 32 ] But they are two men who each of them is in good company. They are traveling on the road to a mare in companionship, one with another.

And we find them also describing others as women of their own company. They are placing emphasis upon the fact that whoever sorrowful they are, they are not alone in their sorrow. They are individuals who belong to a very special company of people. And we know that the company they are so attached to was the best company to be found in this world. The company of the saints of God that they were therefore like David when he says, I am companion to all those who worship thee in fear. Like the psalmist, when he thought of the blessedness of the fellowship of God's children, even here in this present life. Behold, he says, how good a thing it is and how becoming well together such as brethren are in unity to dwell.

[ 14 : 55 ] And in the prophet Malachi, in a day of spiritual declension and gloom, we find the Lord's people, those described as them that feared the Lord, that they speak often one to another.

And the Lord harkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that fought upon the Lord's name. And you remember how the same kind of powerful attraction is expressed in the book of Ruth when she was journeying from the land of Moab with her mother-in-law Naomi. Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to turn from following after thee. This closeness of kinship and its consequent desire for fellowship and oneness with the people of God in the world, eventually surely it shows, forth, makes, open and manifest in the world what we have been thinking of here for the

past two or three Sabbath mornings.

Their secret, what you might call the secret togetherness of the children of God in the hidden eternal purpose of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit before the world was when the Father chose those people, gave them to his Son in order that he should be their Savior.

[ 16 : 45 ] and it is surely a manifestation of the oneness that came to light in the mystery of godliness in and through the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ in whom the divine and the human are united together in the one passion.

And in the union they all had with him in his obedience unto death and also in his resurrection which at the point of which Luke tells us here was a very recent event that very morning that all the people of God throughout the whole of time in a real sense were one with Christ in his death and in his resurrection and the power of that oneness manifests itself in the hearts of all who are blessed in Christ not only in the change of attitude and in their new affection for Christ himself personally but in the powerful attraction that there is in their heart toward one another toward the people who are Christ's two followers now we find that in the experience of these two disciples whom we hear read journeying on the road from Jerusalem to a mayor despite their sadness and in a way because of their sadness because

God's children have in every generation discovered that one another's fellowship here in the world has a healing effect upon their soul even in times of sorrow thirdly the two disciples on the way to a mayor had a very special topic of conversation as they communed together and reasoned that is another effect of Christ's absence in so far as their consciousness and feelings were concerned conversation about him was almost a kind of substitute for himself for his own desired presence and God's people have and still continue to discover that talk of him inevitably it leads to contemplation of him of himself when a patient's mind may have become distracted with multitudes of thoughts of vain thoughts because our minds are so prone to wandering and are so disinclined from the things of the spirit and from

Christ himself personally that is the effect inevitably of power of spiritual death carnality of mind and worldliness earthliness of mind and heart so that our thoughts are disinclined from Christ from things spiritual and heavenly but toward the things of earth the things that are material and pertain to this present world talk about Christ amongst his people conducive to contemplation about things spiritual and eternal it enlivens in other words their minds and it elevates their thinking and no doubt brings their desire to follow their thinking and their conversation so that their whole soul becomes elevated above the things that are temporal and they find and often have found that their conversation insofar as it centers upon the

Lord Jesus Christ leads to joy in the Holy Ghost as well as to the peace of heart and mind that only Christ can impart to us in this world and the measure of joy and peace of course in conversation about Christ depends upon the preciousness of Christ to us now you know how there are people in every generation and they consider that talking about Christ and perhaps that is true as far as their understanding goes that it's talk about religion talk about church talk about events within the church or outside the church talk about the experiences of men or women in regard to church and in regard to religion but that is not the kind of conversation that I am talking about at all perhaps the one [ 22 : 35 ] I am talking about is one that is foreign to your own life and to your own thinking even you have never known it for yourself and I have never appreciated but I can assure you that the conversation spiritual that is so uplifting to the children of God is something far more elevated than talk which can be gossip talk about the things that concern church and churches and even individuals in the church because it is conversation whose essence the center and circumference are Christ and not church or churchy things or people can indeed involve the church and involve individuals in the church but not as its center and essence Christ must be God in Christ must be the essence of conversation that is spiritual in verse 18 we discover that that so important was this topic to these two men that the one who had joined them in the way according to their view of things must be a stranger and he said unto them what manner of communications are these that he have one to another as he walk and are sad and one of them whose name was Cleopas answering said unto him art thou only a stranger in

Jerusalem and has not known the things which have come to pass there in these days anyone who has been in Jerusalem for any length of time ought to know what we are talking about as well as we know it ourselves there is nothing else as it were worth knowing or talking about in comparison strength and comfort and when our heart is fixed upon any one thing that assumes far greater

importance maybe than any other one thing and maybe sometimes than all other things combined and we suddenly discover that our hope is not going to be fulfilled it can be a terrible trial another painful setback to us in life hope deferred even let alone dashed makes the heart sick these two men were

Christians and you might very well ask if their hope was in any way centered upon Christ how could it have been dashed for them well we have to remember that obviously they had very defective views of redemption and of redemption of Israel for which Christ had come and clearly they had very defective views of the way the method and means by which the redemption of God's people was to be accomplished and that is why for these are reasons why their hopes were dashed their most deeply entertained hope the hope of salvation of what is truly salvation was not dashed as they are soon to discover the dashing of their hope was in the measure in which their hope was up also and in the measure in which their understanding of redemption was false the manner of redemption which if it necessitated anything at all it necessitated the death of Christ which he had died recently on the cross and which was the cause of all of their despondency so they needed correction they needed light there were people still in a measure of darkness and in a large measure of darkness and perhaps there is someone here tonight who entertains a hope that they find that there is a conflict in their mind in so far as attaining any confidence of their own salvation is concerned in that they find their understanding so lacking they read so much and they hear so much and instead of dispelling darkness it seems to add to the darkness of their understanding now I think I already said that often Christian people can go through phases of experience in terms of life in terms of spiritual vision in their understanding and heart and filling their soul that it seems to them to be like a twilight in comparison with a stage that they have already gone through when to them the glory of

Christ's countenance and God's countenance in Christ shone upon their soul and they basked in the beams of that glorious sun so that they thought that their portion spiritually was more like heaven than like earth and in comparison with such an experience that present one is like a twilight where darkness seems to be as strong as the light has been in the past and then there is the glory that they hope to have in the future the light that they know of which they are perfectly assured God's people will have the enjoyment throughout the ages of eternity and in comparison with that life they find themselves almost as if they were walking through a thick hall of darkness as if their lives were night time rather than day their eyes were holding worried that they could not know him they would discover they received of the empty grave had astonished them and it seems that that confusion was only added to further by the report of a vision of angels who had said that he was alive and in verse 24 we read uncertain of them which were with us again our own brethren members of our own company lovers of him and his followers just like yourselves the certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher and found it even so as the women had said and then there is added to confusion or cause of confusion but him they saw not so we have the report of an empty grave of tomb but no report of where he is he is as lost to us as ever he was empty though the tomb is reported to be they were rebuked by the

[ 30 : 47 ] Lord himself then he said unto them oh who can slow apart to believe all that the prophets have spoken now I would say that one of the reasons why the absence of the Lord from these men was so hard on their hearts was that he was not given to using hard or harsh language with them at all they were missing him were they not because he was so different from so many was he not different from everyone else in his love to those who did not deserve to be loved in his humanity in his kindness in his warmth and big heartedness in his humility his compassion and beneficence generally his whole spiritual attitude toward them and his influence in these ways upon them were they not often a sort of comfort and solace to weary souls in a weary and wearying world it was like balm to their heart but even though he never withheld truth from them and when they needed rebuking or admonishing they faithfully received that admonition or rebuke hereafter he has risen from the dead and joins those two and wrote to a man he says to them

O foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory they were foolish in their thinking they were hard of heart and you might say those two men were not hard hearted they were very tender heart they were very broken hearted they were full of sorrow but he is referring to a hardness of heart that is reflected in their unbelief of the words of prophecy unbelief in regard to the word of the Lord himself there is a tenderness of heart that is manifest only where there is a humble and ready reception of

the word of

God with trust and with confidence in a childlike spirit that does not argue or dispute let alone resist whatever the Lord is pleased to speak to us all all whose and law of heart to believe no we find that these two were put in possession of privileges they were put into possession of three privileges of wondrous miraculous privileges privileges beyond measure in value privileges so great do you not agree that if you were to be asked of all who inhabited the world on that

Lord's day who were the most privileges at this hour who of all men were the most privileged well surely you would be prepared to accept that it is at least doubted if there was one soul one other soul in all the earth more privileged than those journey from Jerusalem to a male so what made their condition such a uniquely privileged one well surely the the first thing that comes to mind is that he the one who departed from them had caused such sorrow in the rocks that he had come back to them he is actually with them on the road he is a fellow traveler with them no doubt they would have felt it a wonderful privilege to have had someone like

Peter to join them or any man or woman who would be able to speak words of comfort to their sad hearts that it was himself the Lord himself who had joined them and that privilege is to be assessed first of all in the light of the glory of the passion secondly in the light of the wondrous experiences that he had had that he had had when well that he had had during all the days of his humiliation from his infancy until the hour of his death on a cruel cross the wondrous experiences he had had during his life as a result of his own speaking as a result of the effects of his preaching on some and as a result of the wondrous miracles that he had performed and their effects upon the people who witnessed them then was it not wonderful in the light of the fact of death and then of his burial that as recently as that morning he had lain in a tomb under the power of death but now he is walking with them on the road to emir was it not wonderful in the light of his future glory that soon he was to ascend up into heaven to the right hand of

[ 38 : 57 ] God where he was to remain until the consummation of all things and was it not wondrous in the light of the glory that shall be revealed at the last day when he shall come in the glory of the Father with the heavenly angels in order to judge angels and men and finally and forever seal their eternal destiny here he is the saviour and the judge joining those two disciples in the midst of their gloom on the road to emir are they not privileged with his continued presence although to them he was a stranger and you would consider it a cool reception to receive from anyone in whose company you had been you might say just hours before and to discover that they did not even recognise you after a few hours but he continued with them their estrangement of heart did not drive him away to his people the

Lord says I will never leave thee nor forsake thee my presence he said to Moses on behalf of the people of God my presence shall go with thee and I will give rest and you remember in the third chapter you should read the third chapter you who seek the Lord in spirit and truth read tonight the third chapter in the song of Solomon the third chapter of beginning when the church had felt that the Lord had removed his presence from and he arose to seek him it was but a little that I passed from them but I found him whom my soul loveth I held him she says and would not let him go until I had brought him into my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me they enjoyed his fountain presence and thirdly they were privileged surely with the instruction that they received first of all the question out of what book were they instructed and surely it is of interest to us that they were instructed out of a book that we have in our own profession that

I have in front of me here at this moment that you have in your hands in your pew verses 22 and 25 or 25 and 27 I should say then he said unto them four fools and slow apart to believe all of the prophets and beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself Moses the prophets the books of the old testament the very book that we have here ourselves and what was the lesson that they had what was the matter of the instruction imparted out of that book to those two disciples that day the things we are told concerning himself concerning himself and every lover of

Christ and of the instruction that Christ imparts will say Amen to this that there was no need for no room for any other kind of instruction in philosophy perhaps or in science or in mathematics or in languages or in history or in law or in medicine or anything else upon which so many minds and hearts in this world in every generation are so engaged he expounded out of the scriptures the things concerning himself that should have wealth in your heart a feeling of affection to the Lord Jesus Christ that he is concerning himself and he was at his feet for what hustled learning from his

own very living things concerning himself and the salvation with which he had come to his people they were privileged with the teacher himself as one who knew the scripture it's a really wonderful thing to think of

Christ as a teacher in regard to the scriptures the scriptures are his own very words when we talk about the inspiration of scripture we are thinking about scripture as writing inspired by Christ as one who is God and as one who is appointed by the Trinity in his office of mediator not only as priest and king of his church but as the prophet the teacher of his church he knows the scriptures they are his own he knew and he knows the father whose glory is revealed in the scriptures he knows the holy spirit also no man knoweth the father but the son and the son knows the holy spirit the third person of the trinity who himself searches all things even the deep things of

[ 46 : 43 ] God and does so in a sense in subservience to Christ as the great teacher of the church in order to impart to sinners by the word the knowledge that Christ is engaged in imparting to his people in order to make them wise and to salvation was that not then a privilege for men to have in the one who ultimately is the only teacher who can make anything wise unto salvation they were privileged we discover here with a quickened heart they said that their heart did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us this repulsion our heart quickened from its dullness its heaviness from the effects of their natural unbelief and hardness of heart in a word from the power of spiritual death they have been uplifted by him out of the doleful condition that depressed they dejected their dejected despondent condition that had made them so dispirited that their whole walk was to be spent in sadness of heart were it not for the fact that someone had come who by his presence and instruction enlivened their heart uplifted their heart and replaced their sadness with joy in the holy soul so that they had become now lively in heart vigorous in heart animated in their feelings and in their thinking and buoyant in their spirits so that they could say like the psalmist of old that their mourning had been turned into joy and they constrained him under the influence of that quickening of heart and affection they constrained him but to abide with them because as they said it was now evening and the day was far spent and they were again privileged with his fellowship at home at their destination and at their meal he was invited to join them but after he went in he became their host he became their host and surely they had an experience of joy that the disciples had not had at the last supper the last

Passover at which the Lord Jesus had introduced the Lord supper as the sacrament in the New Testament church with which he replaced the Passover in the Old we read that he had that meet with them he took bread and blessed it and gave to them and they then were privileged with a new vision of their Lord the scales fell off from their eyes the immediate effect of that was that they were able to discern the passion in their company and to know him as the Lord how we do not know what because of the way in which he broke the bread or the way in which he blessed the bread was it through something peculiar in his voice that distinguished him from everyone else or did they see the nail prints in his very hands as he broke the bread and gave it to them we do not know but we know this but their eyes were opened and they knew them and then they were privileged with a new kind of spiritual experience probably that they had not had before he suddenly vanished from their sight and they were privileged with the recollection of their experience on the way when he opened them to them the scripture and their hearts they remembered had burned within them and they were also privileged with the grace and the strength to make a new return journey to Jerusalem of a kind that they had never made before in that same hour they went back to Jerusalem they were back to their own company with the glad timing of their experience on the road to Emmaus and I wonder if there is any here tonight who shall have a taste of that kind of experience before this night is out an experience that shall be proof to you personally that the Lord has risen in David and that he aligned in the power of an endless life and that he knows you and knows you in the path deeper and the deepest desire he knows that only he comes through him and can fill for you perfectly and eternal may he bless these thoughts to us