

The risen Lord and Mary Magdalene

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[0 : 00] Let us turn now to the gospel according to John, chapter 20, reading at verse 11.

John's gospel, chapter 20, reading at verse 11. But Mary stood out at the sepulchre weeping, and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid them. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sad, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary, she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.

[1 : 23] But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

We are continuing our studies in the resurrection of our Lord, and particularly in reference to the appearances of our Lord.

Lord, we come to the appearance of our Lord to Mary Magdalene, who was, by the way, the first to see him after his resurrection, and the first to hear his voice after his resurrection from the dead. It seems as though the sequence of events runs something like this. After Mary Magdalene and the other women had come to the sepulcher that morning and discovered the empty tomb, Mary Magdalene seems to have run from the sepulcher immediately to tell Peter and John that the body of the Lord was missing from the sepulcher.

Peter and John, hearing that report, ran immediately to the sepulcher, and they saw the evidence of the empty tomb for themselves, and concluded that as there was nothing else for them to see, they might as well return home, which they did.

[3 : 10] And then the narrative, we take up the narrative from that point, with the beginning of this verse at verse 11, but Mary stood without, at the sepulcher, weeping.

And I want to look with you tonight at several things in connection with this wonderful incident. First of all, her distress. Secondly, the message of the angels, or rather the question of the angels. Thirdly, the Savior unrecognized by her. Fourthly, the Savior discovered by her. Fifthly, the Savior instructing her.

And finally, the Savior commissioning her. First of all, then, Mary, in her distress at the sepulcher. The word for weeping here means uncontrolled sobbing. Those of you who are familiar with the Gaelic language would probably best recognize this word as we use it when someone is weeping.

[4 : 24] Thet. Uncontrolled sobbing. And as she stood like that, outside the sepulcher, we have there an indication of the deep distress in which she found herself.

Now, as I said last week, there is no way in which one would try to condone her lack of faith, her lack of understanding of our Lord's teaching concerning his own resurrection.

She didn't understand it, and she didn't expect him to rise from the dead. We have to make that point. At the same time, we cannot but admire her love and her affection as she stood in a place where normally, naturally, she would not want to be.

It was her love that led her there, though her faith, we recognize, was at a low ebb. Again, we acknowledge that her love was misdirected.

But very often, that is the case with people who are seeking the Lord. And perhaps even with people who, in the experience of speaking just now, secondly to Christians, who may be missing the presence of the Lord in their affections.

[6 : 07] It is often the case that their love and their affection for her will bring them to places where normally they would not be.

And the seeking soul will be satisfied with nothing less than the Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, love, as you know, even natural love, where natural love is an exercise, it sets apart the two who are in love for one another.

No one matters in love but the people who are in love, the people who love one another. And though it may not be recognized at the spiritual level, by say, people who tonight may be seeking the Lord, they may not recognize this, but others may see it in them.

It is the love that the Lord has awakened in their heart for Himself, the love that He has kindred in their heart for Himself, that sets them apart from all others.

[7 : 30] It draws them away from the rest, draws them away from practices and pursuits that used to satisfy and that used to fill their mind so that now all that matters is to find the Lord.

And maybe there are people here tonight who can understand something of Mary's anxiety, Mary's sorrow, Mary's sadness, standing in that place of all places, looking for the one whom she wanted most of all.

Well, that was her distress. And perhaps you here tonight, some of you, may recognize something of that distress in your own heart.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could, if it were true of you tonight, what was true of Mary Magdalene, that she was there weeping, seeking her Lord.

Secondly, we have here the way in which the angels spoke to her and the way in which she reacted to herself. As she looked into the sepulcher, not for the first time, she saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

[9 : 06] And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

Now I'm sure that there are people who mistakenly think that if they saw an angel, it would help them to believe.

It wouldn't. Do you know why? Because the person who is genuinely wanting to trust, and who is genuinely seeking the Lord, and who is in love with the Lord, would not be satisfied with an angel. No matter how great and glorious a vision you would have, no matter how great and glorious the experience, neither the vision nor the experience, is the Lord himself.

Of course, there are some people who find that difficult to accept, but these are the facts. The great question for her was not, who were the angels, or what were they doing there?

[10 : 25] The great question for her was, where was her Lord? You see, there was room for nothing else, and there was room for no one else in her heart.

Perhaps, without knowing it, you too have come to that conclusion. If you are a seeker after the Lord, have you noticed what things interest you as you seek for it?

Let me mention some of the things, and this is true of every seeker. The Bible becomes an interesting book. The Bible becomes an indispensable book.

Prayer becomes an indispensable practice in your life. Meetings. Perhaps, for all I know, there are people who would love to have a meeting every night that they could go to.

There are some meetings, perhaps, that they can't bring themselves to go to, but there are some that they could, and they wouldn't mind having these things. Sermons begin to interest, and an interest is generated in the heart.

[11 : 34] And perhaps the gospel begins to meet their needs, and there is awakened in their mind an interest in the things of God, Now all these things are good and necessary, but have you noticed this?

No matter how much you want these things and how much you think of them, there is something more than that that you want. And your problem is, where can you find the Lord?

And that was Mary's answer to the angels. As they asked her, What's your problem? Why are you weeping? Why this? Why these tears? Why are you crying?

She answered, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they have led. And there's another interesting thing in this book, in this chapter, you know the Bible, what a wonderful

book the Bible is.

You look at verse 2. When Mary runs from the sepulchre to tell Peter and John that the grave was empty, she came to them and said to them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have led them.

[12:49] The Lord. But when she spoke to people whom she didn't know, to these two angels, her relationship with the Lord was far more personal.

They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they have led them. And you know, that's an interesting way in which the Bible puts this, because it is true, isn't it, that a seeker, or perhaps even a young Christian, in the presence of people whom they don't know, and especially people who may not be all that conversant with the things that interest them now.

And Mary wasn't bothered really about the angels. You know that in the presence of people like that, you tend to be far more bold, to express far more assurance, and to say to these people, This Lord who I'm seeking is my Lord.

Perhaps you wouldn't have the same assurance if you were to say that to Christians who were older than yourself. As Mary Magdalene said to Peter and John, They've taken away the Lord, and we don't know where they have led them.

But you see now, in the company, in the presence of these angels, salvation of Christ was far more precious to her. She wasn't ashamed to own him as her Lord.

[14:11] Although she was miserable and despairing. As someone put it, If I perish, I will do so acknowledging my debt to him and my need of him above all else.

Now you may be here tonight seeking the Lord, and your fear is that you may not have found it. I'm sure of this, that you can understand that quote I've made just now.

That if it were to be the case that you were to perish tonight, well, the one thing that you will do before you leave the world is you will acknowledge your debt to him who has awakened in your heart that desire after him.

And you'll acknowledge your need of him above all else. Otherwise, why do you seek him?

Because you desperately need him and there is no one else beside him.

And then, as that conversation ended, another person enters the scene. And now, the whole scene is transformed.

[15:30] When she had thus said to them that they had taken away the Lord and her Lord, she turned herself back. You know, you see, she was looking at the sepulcher. And the idea here, the way it's put is that she turned away from the sepulcher and turned around.

And there she saw Jesus she didn't recognize him. She thought that he was the gardener. You know, the tomb was in Joseph's garden.

And it was a practice for men like Joseph of Arimathea who had a garden like that to have a gardener. who looked after the garden for him. And she mistakenly identified the Lord with the gardener.

And she thought, well, if anybody's going to know what's happened in this vicinity, this man is going to know it. So she said to him immediately, sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you've laid him and I will take him away.

Now, the great question here is this. Why did Mary not recognize Jesus? Now, there are some people, maybe you've heard this, you know that she was crying uncontrollably.

[16:44] And when you're sobbing like that, the tears are flowing. And there are some people who say that she didn't recognize it because her eyes were filled with tears. And she couldn't see properly.

You can't, you know, when your eyes are full of tears. But surely that isn't the answer to the question, why did she not recognize him? She wasn't the only one who didn't recognize Jesus after his resurrection.

And this is just as a point of interest which I throw out for your consideration. You know that the body of Jesus after his resurrection was different to the body with which he went into the grave. There was something different about his body. He was the same person and it was the same body yet it had differences. For example, isn't it strange that so often after his resurrection the people who had spent so much time in his company failed to recognize him.

There was something about the body of our Lord that was different. We don't know what it is, what it was. We don't know. In the same way as the body that he has tonight and glory is different.

[17 : 55] The same body yet different because it is a glorified body. But she thought that it was the gardener. gardener. And she cared as little about the garden as she did about the angels.

Her sole concern was Jesus. If you have taken him tell me where you have laid him.

And you know she made no effort to explain to this man who she was looking for. No effort. She didn't refer to him as her Lord. She didn't say it was Jesus.

You see she assumed that the gardener would know what her problem was. What her burden was. What her sorrow was. She assumed that this man may be a man she had never seen in her life. Probably had never seen in her life. Thinking he was a gardener. She thought that he would know all that was going on in her heart.

[18 : 59] Now that's not so strange after all. Those of you who are here tonight as Christians will know that when you became Christians or maybe when you were seeking the Lord when this world had lost all its attraction to you and when nothing mattered but Jesus Christ as your Savior you too assumed that everybody else knew what your problem was.

And that everybody else would know the answer to your problem. And that they would know assuredly why Christ was so precious to you. Remember the church and the song of Solomon. The same situation exactly. She had lost the presence of him whom she loved. And she would have said to the first people she met the woman of Jerusalem have ye seen him whom my soul loveth? And back came the reply who is your beloved anyway? And then you have that wonderful chapter in which she begins to explain the qualities and the virtues of her beloved who was white and ruddy. You see when you're swallowed up with the wonder of this person nothing else matters. You're so willing to talk about him and you assume that everybody that you talk to knows as much about this person as you know yourself.

[20 : 32] And something else about this. She was quite convinced that if you would tell her where the body of the Lord was she would be able to carry it away herself. She was on her own and we know that a woman would never have carried away this corpse on her own.

But she was so taken up with it. She was convinced she could do it. And again that is very often the way that love works. Very often it is misdirected and misguided we acknowledge but nevertheless in its nature it looks on the object of its love in this way that whatever is demanded of that love love will perform it.

That's its nature. nothing seems to be too much for love. And now we come to probably some of the most wonderful words in the whole of the Bible.

When she said if thou art born in my way tell me and I will carry you. But do you notice what it was that drew that these words from Mary Jesus had asked and she didn't know it was him woman why weepest thou whom seekest thou that's what did it.

That's what drew this response from her heart. Why these tears? Why this sadness? And you know again if I may apply this in the passing before I come to these wonderful words in verse 16 in the passing just let me say this do you realize that in very many ways this is the nature of the gospel as well that Jesus speaks to people in and through his word and addresses the same question to them and draws a response from the heart.

[22 : 35] He's asking you tonight for example what are you weeping for? What are you looking for? What is your problem? perhaps you prepare to answer ah well I want spiritual comfort I want an answer to my prayer I want the assurance of forgiveness of sins in my heart I want to know the consolation of his presence in my life I want peace of heart I want rid of the sin that invades my peace I want rid of all that causes this sadness I want my life filled I feel that I'm so barren and so empty I've got nothing left in the world and I'm confused I have been robbed of the hopes that I had before

I fear the lostness of my state I want to find something that will give stability to my life I know that what I need is the Lord Jesus Christ well my friend the gospel is drawing out these responses from your heart let me tell you something else the one who is questioning you like that is never far away from you he's standing right beside you and maybe you don't recognize like Mary you don't realize that that is the Lord speaking to you that is the Lord who has come into your life it is the Lord who has transformed your whole life and altered your attitude and your outlook to life and the mistake that people make is the mistake that Mary made she mistook him for the gardener

I wish it wouldn't be wonderful if you tonight would realize as I said earlier that this is the one who is speaking to you in his word who because of the influence of his presence has made everything else

so vain and so empty for you and he's standing there and you do not recognize the nearness of the Lord to you but this is the wonder of his grace as we come to look at this fourth point that he discloses himself here now is a savior discovered in verse 16 Jesus said unto her Mary she turned herself and saith unto him Rabboni which is to say master you know that someone once said that the greatest moments that in the greatest moments in life words are few in the greatest moments in life words are few and there are moments in life when words are not necessary when words are superfluous our look is sufficient here we have one of these moments when one word transformed her whole life

Mary now we don't know what it was maybe it was something in the way that he said the name whole familiar tone maybe it was that that that the recognition of that voice that opened the door of remembrance in her heart Mary but we do know this that it was a word a name that was spoken by him in a manner that conveyed fullness of love and tenderness and affection and grace to her heart and even in human relationships oh how much can be stored up just in the utterance of a name Mary I wonder what that conveyed to

Mary Magdalene when I conveyed this to her ah here's one who knows me one who knew me of all one who knew the old Mary one who knew me sin ridden and sin dominated one who knew me as lost one who spoke to me and awakened within my heart the desire to seek himself one who knows my desolation and my sadness and my loneliness one who knows every moment of the history of my life and that's so true of the Lord with reference to ourselves tonight he knows our faith how much of heaven has someone said one word can convey the great

[28 : 20] Puritan Thomas Goodwin put it like this be not discouraged in your deepest decisions since one word from Jesus can revive you remember we sang that tonight one word from thy lips is better to me than thousands of words thousands of silver and gold one word from thy lips Jesus himself said in the during his ministry my sheep know my voice I call my own sheep by name and here is one who spoke to her in her name in a way that was unmistakable it produced the inevitable result in her life she responded immediately in love and adoration and devotion when he addressed this one word to her Mary I wonder if you can put your name there tonight in your own circumstance in this church in your own experiences with your own feelings can you harbor the hope that the Lord is speaking to you in his word remember the way the poet put it oh may we stand before the lamb when earth and seas are fled and hear the judge pronounce our name with blessings on our head has he spoken to you in our eyes that has brought blessing into your life has he set you apart from everybody else has he called you by your name has he reminded you of what you were as he brought you to a realization of what you are and as he communicated your need above all else of himself may and look at what happened she turned herself and said to him

Rabboni would you just say master now I think again the sequence of events was something like this she was looking into the tomb and the angel spoke to her she turned away from the tomb and she saw this man whom she thought was the gardener and she said to him look if you've taken him tell me and I will take him away and she seems to have turned away again from the gardener and then she heard the voice Mary and she turned round in immediate response Rabboni my master now let me say this this is what the voice of the Lord always does when it comes to you with conviction with power with blessing with meaning it turns you round it turns you round to face himself you're constrained to look into his face and you're constrained to acknowledge him how as my master or my teacher my leader my Lord this is what the word does when it comes with power the word that brings that comes to control your life the word that comes with light into your soul with conviction into your heart and the word that constrains you to look to him and to acknowledge him as your master your teacher your Lord and your redeemer there are lots of things summed up in this word which I haven't got time to look into but there is this inevitably there is this a soul that acknowledges the lordship of Jesus in the line that acknowledges the tenderness and the long suffering and the patience of Jesus in his life my teacher that's the meaning of it my teacher now any teacher worthy of the name is a teacher who exercises great patience and kindness towards those who are being instructed by him I know that the patience of every teacher is tried I'm sure by every duke but there is no Christian here tonight but one who would have to admit and acknowledge that if he has tried the patience and the long suffering of anybody it is the patience and the long suffering of his Lord and yet he abides his teacher still continues to instruct still continues to communicate his word what a blessing to you and to me tonight that he is still speaking to us in his word and what a blessing to you who are seeking the Lord in your ignorance with your

misguided seal the time that the Lord is addressing you tonight again by name constraining you to turn to himself and to acknowledge him in homage and in subjection to his will and in adoration of his dealings and of his passion my master then there is fifthly this the instructing saviour Mary Jesus saith unto her touch me not for I am not yet ascended to my father but go to my brethren now of course here is a verse that confuses and perplexes many people Mary was seized by an irresistible urge and desire to lay hold of the Lord the word he says to her Mary don't cling to me maybe she fell down in adoration at his feet like the woman fell when they met him on the way to Galilee maybe she wanted to hold on to his feet just to cling to him and he says to her don't do it this was the understandable expression of her affection and of her love her first impulse the one she had sought for weeping she has found him and you can well imagine that she wants to hold on to him as long as she can you know when someone is away from home perhaps a member of your family for a long time and they come home a mother knows this reaction and understands it full well the moment you walk in the door the mother's reaction is to hang on to the person who has come that's understandable it's the first impulse of love to hang on to what has come back to you and that is the way that we understand

Mary's response to her lord it was reverence adoration love homage desire so she never again wanted to lose the one who had revealed himself but she's forbidden Mary don't cling to me of course of course the thing about this is that it seems strange that our lord reacted like this towards one who was so loyal and so affectionate towards himself after all remember last week these these women other women were commanded by Jesus go and tell my disciples that I will meet them in Galilee and they went and as they went the angels rather told them and as they went Jesus met them and said all hail every blessing to you and they held them by the feet they were afraid after this he appeared to Thomas and he said to

[37 : 04] Thomas in his doubting Thomas it is me stretch forth thy hand and thrust it into my side and on another occasion he said to the disciples when he came into the room and they were again afraid and they thought it was a spirit and he said handle me and see for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have and this is the question why should he allow these people to touch him and yet he wouldn't allow Mary Magdalene to hold on to why because Mary's circumstances were different the women who held her by the feet were afraid and he allowed them that touch to meet the fear Thomas was full of doubt and he commanded him to touch him to give him assurance of faith the disciples when he went into the room they again were full of fear and they thought it was a spirit so he commanded them or rather invited them to touch him to remove their fear but you see

Mary wasn't afraid nor did she have any doubt at all there was no unbelief or disbelief in her experience why then did he not allow it surely for this reason because he was teaching Mary Magdalene that the relationship between them from now on was to be of a spiritual nature as was to be his relationship with all his people it was to be spiritual not physical he wasn't going to abide with her woman remember he said the same thing to his mother on the cross woman behold thy son that is not the case Mary was a sinner saved by grace by the power of his grace and here he is saying to her that from now on she must depend not upon his physical presence not upon his physical nearness but upon his presence through the spirit and by the spirit

I am not yet ascended to my father and to you to my father and the purpose of the ascension was this that he would send the spirit into the world so that the contact between a sinner and the savior is by faith in the spirit now I know there are some of you perhaps for whom this may be rather confusing here tonight but it has to be said because it is part of the teaching of the word of God you know that he says the same to you and to me tonight some people say if I saw the Lord I would believe if he stood beside me I would become a believer tonight if I could touch him I would believe I think I'll tell you this incident I don't like bringing incidents from my own life into preaching the gospel I would rather project the savior than myself I hope at least I would but you know that there are you know when we tend to speak about how could I put it have you ever heard it put like this has the word of God ever spoken to you now what people understand by that very generally is that the word of God a version of the bible comes with suddenness and comes with directness from heaven to their heart and the word of God speaks to you in that way but really what we mean by the word of God speaking to us is the bible the spirit of God blessing the word of God to your heart so that the gospel becomes meaningful to you see everyone here tonight who has been blessed saved by the power of his grace the word of God has spoken to them but there are times I have no doubt when people get a particular blessing maybe through a word being spoken in a particular way to their

hearts and you know for you people who may be tempted tonight to think that if only Jesus would speak to you you would believe you know that there are many people I'm sure who feel like that I remember a time this is what I was going to tell you I remember a time when I was a student and I was home on holiday in Glasgow and I was reading a book which I turn to frequently because of the blessing I got out of it and I would commend it to anybody Hugh Martin on the shadow of Calvary and I was so filled with a sense of the wonder and the glory of the Lord through reading that book one day and I never forget this I laid the book down in the chair where I was sitting and I walked across the kitchen towards a sink in the home that we had in Glasgow and I longed to see Jesus just so I would have given anything just to see him and that word flashed like lightning across my mind blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed and you know this is what Jesus is saying to you tonight and this is what he was saying to Mary Magdalene your relationship to me is going to depend not upon my physical nearness to you but upon my presence with you through the spirit whom I will send when I ascend to my father

[43 : 20] Mary live by faith in the spirit don't touch me but touch me by faith and he says the same to you and to me tonight this is the only way of salvation it is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ you have the word and you have the spirit believe in me it was a stern warning which was necessary to Mary a warning to guard her against a mistaken hope that she would stay with her physically forever and was also this surely it was this a promise of a more abiding presence in this world it was wonderful to be with Jesus while he was in the earth it is more wonderful to have his presence by the spirit far more wonderful far more abiding because he was with them left them physically went back to heaven but he is with his people always in and by the spirit one of the Puritans goes so far as to read into it this that he is also saying to her

I have not yet ascended to my father that he was going to heaven and as he was saying to her there will be ample opportunity in heaven for closeness for nearness but again it will be after a heavenly pardon there was the assurance to her of an eternity of close contact and this is what he said he does not deny the touch he only delays it and he transfers it from earth to heaven that it may be the touch of Jesus risen by Mary risen we don't know very much about heaven but we do know this that when those who love the Lord go there they will see him as he is what the nearness to him with a resurrection body will be we leave that to one side our responsibility and privilege tonight is to touch him by faith and to say to him as she said

Rabboni and to hear him now saying tonight this finally and just now word in conclusion bear with me he commissions her don't touch me but go to my brethren say unto them I ascend to my father and your father to my God and your God and she came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and that he had spoken these things unto her here she was now the first person to see him after a resurrection the first person to hear him after a resurrection and the first person to carry the message of the resurrection and the ascension to his disciples go and tell them that I have risen and that I am ascending to my father and to your father to my God and to your God and I just want to say this because I know that there are some people no doubt who will notice the distinction that he draws here in verse 17 what is the difference of Jesus saying

I am going to my father and saying I am going to your father why did he not say I am going to our father and I am going to our God well I tell you because there was a difference and a distinction of relationships he was his God by nature he is ours by grace he was his father by nature he is ours by adoption that's the difference that's the difference and something else unless this confuses you but I'd say it anyway do you know the way they are well you know it's amazing the way some of these old divines used to put a thing here's something that you could take with you and perhaps put in your pocket and take out and chew on it afterwards this is what some one of them said as the son of God a God he hath not a father he hath you see as the son of God he spoke to his God as father spoke to God as father as the son of God a God he hath not a father he hath as the son of man a father he hath not a God he hath now isn't that wonderful what am I to put it like that in his human nature he had no father but in that nature he had a God my God my God why hast thou forsaken me anyway he gives her a message go and tell them that I am a sinner and Mary went and the reading of verse 18 is this as Mary went everyone she met she told them that the Lord that she had seen the Lord and that he had spoken these things unto and we're right here tonight

Mark and Luke and with this I close Mark and Luke tell us this Mary Magdalene came to the disciples and she found them full of despair and she told them her message I've seen him and he has spoken to me and he's going to ascend to the Father I'm not going to deal with the problem that

that race is concerning the connection between the resurrection and the ascension here tonight just to say this and this may encourage some of you here tonight do you know that her words had no effect upon the apostles the other gospel writers tell us they did not believe her as a matter of fact her words and the words of the woman were like idle tales to the disciples and what I want to say to you in closing is this that when she went she found these men with her hopes dead but they weren't reawakened by her message as someone has put it to them they were just the ravings of a half frantic woman you see she couldn't create belief in the resurrection in the heart of the disciples but nevertheless she had a message to convey and she conveyed it and that's the encouragement for you and for me tonight for me as a minister yes for you as a seeker after the Lord yes and for you as a disciple and as a Christian maybe long standing the same message the Lord commissions you to tell what you have found you must carry the words to others you must go from him to other people but you remember this it is self denial maybe to go to go from him it is obedience at the same time to go you've got to tear yourself away maybe it's good at times sitting in a church it's good at times listening to a sermon or being in fellowship but you've got a message to convey when you go with it you'll find this people don't believe you people will give no heed to what you say perhaps the response that you meet with will be one of indifference a cold and an unbelieving and for all I know a hostile reception well I don't know what kind of home faces you tonight [52 : 25] I don't know what kind of environment you're going to I don't know whose company you hope to keep tonight but I want to ask you one question as you leave this church has the Lord Jesus given you a message for those with whom you come in contact can you go to them tonight and say oh well I know that the Lord has risen the Lord has spoken to me and the Lord has changed my life and the Lord has told me to tell you what he has done for me can you do that as you leave the church perhaps I could take it a stage further would you like to do it and I would be surprised if there are people here tonight who respond to that question the secrecy of their heart by saying oh I would love to do it

I wish I had the courage to do it oh my friend you're a messenger from the Lord tonight a missionary in your own rights and perhaps the people you're going to perhaps the only lips that ever hear that message from are you what a tragedy if you wouldn't if you don't tell them and even if you are put off by the fear of the reception that you get though the disciples didn't believe Mary Magdalene that day you remember this God in his mercy and his grace can bless your testimony to those with whom you come and contact you could never go with a greater message on this side of eternity let us pray oh to thou bless our hearts to thou have mercy upon us and visit us with thy salvation make thyself precious in our experience and to thou glorify thy blessed and thy holy name and forgive our sins for Jesus sake amen