

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 23rd April 2023 10 am

See 15_04_07.doc for earlier Bible study

Jesus appears alive - Mary said: "I have seen the Lord"

Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture and prayer psalm 30:4,5,11,12

Hymn MP 631 Tell out my Soul

Scripture Psalm 33 (page 560)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Children's talk Jonah and the message of Jonah

Chorus MP 49 Be bold be strong..

G. Verwer tribute

Chorus MP 170 Give thanks

Notices Housegroup at Ina's, 7th May, Peckwood, 9:45 prayer time

Prayer and share time

Reading 1 Cor 15:1-11 (Page 1155)

John 20:1-9, 10-18, 19,23, 24-29 (page 1089)

Hymn MP 402 Led like a lamb to the slaughter

Sermon "I have seen the Lord"

Hymn MP 759 When the roll is called up yonder

Closing Prayer



Prayer and Exordium

✦ Who or what makes you bold and confident?

■ I was reading about the British Army in Burma in 1943. Hard pressed against the Japanese, officer Anthony Brett James recalled: On 15th Dec our very important and stimulating visitor was Lord Louis Mountbatten, fresh to his appointment as Supreme Allied Commander of South East Asia. His visit was both memorable and invigorating. Supremo," a tall, powerful-shouldered leader, stirred every man along the Arakan front by the sincere friendliness of his approach, by his merry twinkling smile and infectious laughter, and by the informality that was new to us. Here was one who possessed qualities that could inspire an enthusiastic admiration and confidence. When he had shaken hands and talked, never perfunctorily, with the long row of officers and N.C.O.s, Mountbatten climbed nimbly upon the bonnet of a jeep, called upon the great British crowd to cluster round him, and spoke.

■ Having produced a profound effect within the hearts of the men Mountbatten, the striking commander, his distinctive head and long full jaw beneath the braided naval cap, strode rapidly away with General Christison the Corps Commander, on his way to inspect our Indian troops. An inspection so very slow because Mountbatten looked into the eyes of every man in each of the six ranks, this was characteristic of the great. The tonic nature of his coming heartened the Division and was not forgotten; nor did Mountbatten forget us in the future.

■ Many then went and fought bravely giving their all - even to death.

✦ Who or what makes you bold in your Christian life? Have you been invigorated by someone's presence?

■ Brother Andrew who passed away recently or for me and many thousands of others it was George Verwer (passed to Glory 14th April 2023)

✦ Is there someone who makes you bold in your faith?

Mary Magdalene ran wiping her tears away as she went to **the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!"** John 20:18

When Jesus's followers saw Him alive again the effect was dramatic it was the confirmation of all he had promised. Now the confounded were confident, and the cowardly became courageous. Yes all because they could say as **Mary Magdalene** had said - "I have seen the Lord!" x2

This morning we are going to look at the post resurrection appearance of our Lord

These appearances seal the arguments for his resurrection. So many precautions were taken with the trial, crucifixion, burial, entombment, sealing,

and guarding of Christ's tomb that it becomes very difficult for anyone to say that Christ did not rise from the dead. Today we look not at the grave clothes, the large stone moved, the soldiers going AWOL, but at his appearances.x2
([Resurrection arguments.doc](#))

Luke states in Acts 1 **“In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. In other words when Jesus was here it was only the start of his work on earth. It continued, - and continues now – through His people, in whom he now lives.**

Luke goes on to say: **After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive.** x2

Three days later the tomb was empty. After the cataclysmic events of that first Easter - Christ appeared alive x2 - Luke says: **He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.** Acts 1:1-4

So let us remind ourselves of what took place and then see what that means. So firstly let us go through those different appearances:

Jesus appears alive on that first Sunday

1. Jesus appears to Mary: **Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).** John 20:15-16

2. Then Jesus appears to the other women. Matthew recalls: **“Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."** Mat 28:9-11

3. Then Jesus appears to Cleopas and his companion on road to Emmaus that afternoon. Lk 24:13-22. It is likely that it is Cleopas's wife who was one of the women first at the tomb **“Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.”** John 19:25 Didn't Cleopas say to Jesus **some of our own women amazed us** Luke 24:22 **‘Clopas’** is considered a distortion of **‘Cleopas’** She, with the others, saw Jesus alive. Luke 24:13-32

4. Once Cleopas and his companion had seen Jesus we are told **They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."** Luke 24:33-34. Peter was singled out, Paul says in 1 Cor 15; **Christ died**

2a

for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter 1 Cor 15:3-5

5 That evening with the disciples behind locked doors Jesus meets with them **While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."... “When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.”** Luke 24:36,40-43
Jn 20:19-23

Jesus appears alive the following Sunday - and onwards

6. One week after His resurrection day Jesus appears to Thomas who is now with the other ten disciples; again behind locked doors Jn 20:26-31; 1 Cor 15:5b

7. He appears to his disciples in Galilee by the lake an unknown number of days later. The first BBQ, after which Jesus restores Peter. John 21:1-25

8. To 500 disciples at one time 1 Cor 15:6 - **After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, -** The large number of witnesses of Christ after that resurrection morning. **“most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep”.** Living witnesses - Paul reminded them that the majority of those people were still alive and could be questioned.

■ Dr. Edwin M. Yamauchi, associate professor of history at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, emphasizes: "What gives a special authority to the list (of witnesses) as historical evidence is the reference to most of the five hundred brethren being still alive. St. Paul says in effect, 'If you do not believe me, you can ask them.' Such a statement in an admittedly genuine letter written within thirty years of the event is almost as strong evidence as one could hope to get for something that happened nearly two thousand years ago."

9. **Then he appeared to James,** Jesus' brother who becomes a believer 1 Cor 15:7

10. **then to all the apostles** 1 Cor 15:7 - Various other meetings with the Eleven during the 40 day period after the Resurrection **he showed himself to these men... He appeared to them over a period of forty days...** Acts 1:1-4

11. Jesus meets with the Eleven at the mountain in Galilee (Great Commission) Mt 28:16-20.

2b

12. Finally the apostles gathered at Bethany stand and stare as he is taken up to heaven before their eyes. Luke 24:50-52

✚ Yes those who saw Jesus certainly knew that He was alive.

And then there is 'Sunday'! - Another very strong evidence is that the early Christians, many either Jews or Synagogue attenders steeped in the Sabbath, now worshipped not on Saturday but on Sunday, - the Resurrection Day.

- **The resurrection is a fact of history** - Professor Thomas Arnold, for 14 years a headmaster of Rugby, author of the famous 'History of Rome', and appointed to the chair of modern history at Oxford, well knew the value of evidence in determining historical facts. This great scholar said: "I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence,.... than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead."
- The scholar Brooke Foss Westcott said: "taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no historic incident better or more variously supported than the resurrection of Christ."

Yes they were sure then...

They knew for sure that Jesus was bodily resurrected in time and space by the supernatural power of God.

But what about now? If Jesus has ascended to heaven wouldn't that mean the last of his physical appearances. So what about today?

What about you and I now? Not just that Christ rose - but can I too with Mary say: "**I have seen the Lord**" Can I too meet the risen Lord? The answer is YES.

✚ The changeover point is Paul. x2

Paul says in 1 Cor 15 (after Jesus had ascended) that He **appeared to Him also**. So you might say if he did that to Paul maybe he is still appearing to people?

- I have heard some people say, and quite ungodly people say "I have seen Jesus"

What do we make of it? I say no. and why? Because Paul said he appeared to him '**last of all**' x2,

Did then Jesus appear to him on the Damascus Road in the same way that he had before when he stood among His disciples?

After all that was the mark of an Apostle that they were **witnesses of his resurrection** Acts 1:22

Paul is an Apostle **as to one abnormally born** i.e., out of time with the others.

✚ The Apostles were not Jehovah's witnesses - but Jesus' witnesses!

In Acts 26 when Paul is giving an account before Festus he describes as having fallen to the ground and heard the voice of Jesus, Jesus who said "**I have appeared to you**" Ac 26:16

When Paul came to Jerusalem Barnabus smooths the way saying **Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him**, Acts 9:27

This fits in with what Paul said when testifying before the violent crowds in Acts 22. Recalling the words of Ananias he said: '**The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.**' Acts 22:14-15

In fact Paul sees him twice – Once on the road to Damascus – and then later at the temple, "**When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance and saw the Lord speaking.**" Ac 22:17

He describes it as a trance, dreams are when you are asleep, a trance or vision is when you are awake. I used to be an expert and daydreamed through most of my school years, especially during the exams

But hang on, when Paul saw the Lord on the Damascus Road it too we are told was a **vision from heaven** Acts 26:19

✚ But a vision of the Lord Jesus is not the prescribed way any more than we see him appear physically as the Apostles did.

So how do we 'see' him now?

✚ As I said the changeover point is the place of the Apostle, those with a unique role of bringing the living word to us through the written word.

It is here we see him. Yes really. How do you meet with him today? You meet him in his word, these are living words hold up the Bible. As Paul said to the Christians in Galatia "**Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the Law or because you believed what you heard** Gal 3: 5 The Spirit and belief come together. The context is Abraham who believed and lived this out in action. This belief comes from hearing. **Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.**" Rom 10:17

Jesus said: "**whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.**" John 5:24

Remember what Jesus said to Thomas: "**blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**" John 20:29

✚ You can see who has the Spirit by 'belief' - belief shown in action.

It is this belief, or faith that confirms the reality of the victorious risen Jesus. Jesus now lives in his people. That is why there is a sudden new confidence.

✚ Now the confounded are confident, and the cowardly courageous. x2

We do not see apparitions, I do not hear voices in my heard, I see him *by faith*.

Moses: **By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.** Hebrews 11:27 ... others from Heb 11

This we might say are the eyes of faith, x2 that is what faith is: "**being certain of what we do not see.**" Heb 11:1 This what all the men and women of God were commended for.

Jesus is alive today. Have you entrusted your life to Him? If not will you entrust your life to him? He has spoken of sin, He has suffered greatly on the **cross** to remove the guilt of it – and now the risen Jesus calls you to turn from self and sin and towards Him. The suffering Servant is now the King of Glory – turn to him now to be your Lord and Saviour.. not your Judge!

Do not - do nothing. x2

When we were speaking to people at Easter at Cotteridge I would say "do you know what happened at Easter?", a number would reply "Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the dead". They would say this in the most expressionless way. No understanding, no emotion. I would follow up with: "Does it mean anything to you? "Not really" or "No". How sad.

✚ The greatest event in history is met with - complete indifference.

Can you hear the voice of Jesus: "**Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look around and see. Is any suffering like my suffering that was inflicted on me, that the LORD brought on me in the day of his fierce anger?**" Lamentations 1:12

Are you like that? You know what the Lord has done, you have heard it, you have read it, you have sung it, - Have you responded to it? or is there.. nothing.

Jesus says some people are so unresponsive it is impossible to move them. '**We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.**'" Matt 11:16-17

Bible - Here is the word of God - Jesus says here is the door to everlasting life for if you look here you find Me. This is your test – will your heart respond here? '**If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, - that is the word of God - says Jesus they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.**' Lk 16:31

Will you look here – and find Jesus? many have and can now say with Mary: "**I have seen the Lord**"? Her tears of doubt, fear and emptiness had gone. "**I have seen the Lord**" That was her experience, that was her testimony.

✚ Meeting the risen Lord changed everything, it did too for the others who saw him. They were sure then – You and I can be sure today

The result is a changed life

The empowerment of the dejected and despondent Apostles can only be explained by the fact that they were convinced Jesus was alive.

They went out boldly to tell others of the fact. As a reward for their efforts those early Christians were beaten, stoned to death, torn apart by lions, tortured and crucified. Every conceivable method was used to stop them from speaking. That is how sure they were. It was solely their experience of meeting Jesus that explained their whole-hearted and total allegiance to this "risen Christ."

They went out and boldly proclaimed the truth of Christ and his resurrection.

Saul having seen the Lord now preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus." Acts 9:27

Many laid down their lives as the ultimate proof of their complete confidence in the truth of their message.

✚ Yet we can be no less sure that Jesus is alive as they were.

Jesus's power is there to see you through every problem you are facing today, yes everything. The power that **raised Jesus from the grave** Eph.1 means he is able to take care of your daily needs, your problems, your impossible situations, to heal those hurts and lift you from your sorrows, - so you can be free to get on and serve him.

■ Like an army Batman taking care of everything so the soldier is ready to fight – Now you can focus on the greater tasks to which you are called.

The message you bring has power because like Jonah it is the message of Christ back from the grave – There's the power, there's the life saving message to the lost

■ We are those paramedics, we are the ones carrying the defibrillator to revive the dying. This is our high calling,

Let Jesus take care of your needs, do not worry about food or clothing, and he will give you the energy and strength for the task he has called you to. Then the depression will go, the upsets will seem minimal, those big problems will assume their rightful place.

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. 1 Cor 4:20

Every true Christian should be able to speak with certainty, hope and a changed character. Behind me is the baptistry, last Sunday evening public testimony was given of a changed life, Jesus has done it. A Christian should be confident. We are told to be – and we can be.

So we say now “Yes Mary I too **have met the Lord**” and I too know I will be with the Lord on the Day He comes.

Read verses from MP 759 v2,3 - let us sing it with a new confidence

END

A tribute to the founder of OM

Dear Mr Williamson,

On 14th April, our dear friend and brother in Christ, George Verwer, was promoted to glory. George, the founder of Operation Mobilisation (OM), leaves a profound legacy.

George was God's servant. A man of prayer, with an extraordinary passion, vision and commitment for reaching the world with the good news of Jesus. George was incredibly big hearted and generous; he leaves behind a lasting legacy within OM, and also in the hundreds of organisations that have been formed or are led by those who served with OM.

He was a leader who pioneered and formed a large, influential mission organisation, yet his heart was always beating for God's Mission, God's Kingdom.

However, it is not just George the global mission pioneer that we will miss.

Personally, I'll miss his short, to-the-point, encouraging emails. I'll miss the packages sent through the post, full of articles or books he felt I should read. I'll miss the walks, listening to him speak and then suddenly he is weeping and praying for someone or a global situation on his heart. I'll miss the book reviews and book tables, the high-octane prayer meetings where he would grab an inflatable globe and lead us all on a global prayer journey. I'll miss George's global passion and dedication to the cause of world evangelisation.

George leaves behind a legacy challenging us all, as followers of Jesus, to step out of our comfort zones and move in a radical revolution of love, whilst embracing the 'messiology of life' and the beautiful, wonderful call of God to make Jesus known to all people.

The post resurrection appearances of Jesus

Jesus appears alive on that first Sunday

1. Jesus appears to Mary: **Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).** John 20:15-16

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