

**Bible Text:** John 20:19-28  
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... of the gospel according to John. John chapter 20 and begin reading at verse 19.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week [that would be Sunday, Sunday night], when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup>

Now a lot of folks want to debate and are troubled about the fact of the Lord's breathing on the disciples there and commanding them to receive the Holy Spirit. And it is in the imperative sense. And that was the time when the disciples received the Holy Spirit.

Of course, that presents some problems because they were called his believers some time before that. The Holy Spirit descended upon them at Pentecost here. He is symbolically breathing on them and commanding them to receive the Holy Spirit.

If this had been the bestowing of the Holy Spirit on his disciples, Thomas would have missed it, wouldn't he? Right. He wasn't there. I wasn't there either, was I? Nor you either. It is a command that is given to his disciples and all that he said here.

"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus..."<sup>2</sup>

Which simply means twin, for what purpose I don't know. Maybe it is here in the Scripture, suggesting that we might identify with him in this respect, if you are not too much different from him.

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<sup>1</sup> John 20:19-22.

<sup>2</sup> John 20:23-24.

“But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.”<sup>3</sup>

That tragedy. Here is the Lord visiting a church and somebody wasn't there. That is liable to happen any time, you know.

“The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord.”<sup>4</sup>

How does that affect you when somebody comes up and says, “Well, you ought to have been there”?

“We have seen the Lord.”<sup>5</sup>

[?] I wonder what went on. They got all caught up in emotion, got all excited about something. I am glad I wasn't there. No telling what would have happened.

Our folk just get green with jealousy and envy say, “Well, it is not... We have seen the Lord.”

You might say, “Well, praise the Lord. I am mighty glad some of you all have seen him. Been trying to tell you about him all that time. Glad you all finally got here. I have been praying for you. He finally answered my prayer.”

“We have seen the Lord.”<sup>6</sup>

Here is what he said.

“But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails...”<sup>7</sup>

“I have not only got to see it, I have got to feel it. I saw those Romans soldiers drive nails in his hands. Now I am going to have to see a man who has been crucified.”

And this is essentially what he said.

“Now you might have found somebody that looked like him, I saw him die. [?]. You might have raked up somebody, but the fellow I am talking about, Jesus, he is one who has been crucified. I have got to see one I know the crucified one. He has got the marks of crucifixion on him. And it cannot be an illusion. I want to feel it myself. I don't trust my eyes. I want to feel the print of those nails in his hands.”

“...and thrust my hand into his side.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> John 20:24.

<sup>4</sup> John 20:25.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

“I saw the Roman spear split his side open and blood and water flowed out. That man is dead. He had a hole in his side. I know what his body was like. I have got to see it. I have got to feel it.”

“I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within.”<sup>9</sup>

Of course, that would have been Monday night. I don't know what in the world they was meeting on Monday night for. Nobody meets for anything on Monday nights. The fact that it is... I could understand, you know, if it was in the middle of the week, Wednesday night at prayer meeting night. Some folks come to that, but Monday night? Who goes to church on Monday night? Maybe they were in a Bible conference some.

“And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them.”<sup>10</sup>

Uh, oh, he wasn't going to miss it this time.

“...then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.”<sup>11</sup>

The same thing he said before. He looked over there and there is Thomas.

“Hey, come here, Tom. Reach your finger. Here they are. You said you wanted to feel the nail prints. Here they are. Come on. Feel them. Here is my side. Put your hand in the side.”

“Be not faithfulness, but believing.”<sup>12</sup>

Isn't it amazing that God would accommodate us to some detail like that? You talk about God humbling himself to come and commune and fellowship with us. I don't think we can really appreciate how far God has got to come down to reveal himself to us.

“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”<sup>13</sup>

And he didn't feel nothing with his fingers. He thought he had to put his fingers in those nail prints. He thought he had to thrust his hands into that side, but when he saw him he didn't need to feel it anywhere.

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> John 20:25-26.

<sup>10</sup> John 20:26.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> John 20:27.

<sup>13</sup> John 20:28.

<sup>14</sup> John 20:29.

This man named Thomas has been much maligned. Generally the word “Thomas” is associated with a particular adjective. What? Doubting.

Any time anybody expresses any kind of skepticism or reservation or unbelief we will call on Thomas, don't they? You know, everybody else [?] Thomas always a scoundrel. He is really something. He doubted.

You ought to be ashamed of yourself. [?] You are like Thomas. You are not a bit better than Thomas was. Old doubting Thomas.

Well, we are quite apt to magnify the attributes that are not so pleasant, the weaknesses, the failings of others which we imagine ourselves that we do not have. But the truth of the matter is I don't think that we would be much different from Thomas. You must remember that not a single one of those other disciples believed until they saw him, not a one. No one really believed in Christ who really knew who he really was until after the resurrection.

Now, as I said, we have a number of people who are prominent around this event of the resurrection of our Lord who had various problems, various misconceptions, various defective views and concepts of the Lord. And these defective views and concepts are brought into focus by the Lord's resurrection.

There was Mary who loved him deeply and we have brought those facts to your attention that nobody loved a Mary or nobody was devoted to serving him and sticking with him any more than Mary was. Yet she had no idea whatsoever who he was. She... her conception of him was as a good teacher, as a man who had died and instead of [?] that she greatly loved and wanted to take care of him and she wanted to let... to look after his dead body. His dead body could do nothing for her anymore. I mean, there is not [?] going not help you, but unless you want to take care of it. And a lot of folks have that kind of concept of the body of Christ and of Christ himself.

The Lord is impotent. He is not active. He can't do anything for you. The Church can't do anything for us, but we love the Lord and we love the Church and we want to work us real hard to take care of the church and so it will look real nice. It is dead. It can't do anything. It is utterly impotent, but we want to dress it up and make it look nice.

And so her concept of the Lord had to be corrected with one who doesn't need to be taken care of or one who was intent of taking care of us.

And, of course, here was Peter who he thought that his concept of the Lord was a militant king. And he had his sword ready and he was ready to [?] and he had no concept of a spiritual warfare into which he hath brought us in which the sword of the flesh avails nothing. That is a stumbling block. But we are called on to deny ourselves and to suffer and follow him unto death. Peter finally got a hold of that.

And then there was John who had some concept of the Lord's deity, I think, all along. And he did not run and from him like everyone else did. But nevertheless he stayed right with him until he was enlightened on these matters.

But this fellow named Thomas, I think, we have a better description of him than doubting. Doubting, of course, is something that we all have in common. We are all full of unbelief and doubting skepticism. The only difference between Thomas and the rest of us is that Thomas was honest about it and the rest of us aren't. He was simply honest about his unbelief.

And one of the reasons that he was honest about it and is that he knew, he recognized his doubt and he recognized his unbelief.

Many of us have never stopped to think things through clearly enough to recognize our lack. And one reason we might say that he recognized it, he listened closely enough to what was being said to find out he did not understand.

I have a firm persuasion. It used to be kind of a sneaking suspicion. I didn't want to believe it. But I have a firm persuasion that about 90 to 95 percent of the people I preach to usually in conventional ordinary churches, I don't think the same thing is true about you. It is some of you, but in varying degrees, but I have the suspicion for a long time that about 95 percent of the people although they were not asleep and although they were looking at me and although occasionally they gave an intelligent nod and some of them grunted or said amen a time or two, that they had absolutely no concept of what I was talking about. Most of the time I am afraid that is so. That scares me to death. I am wasting my time. There is nothing more futile than preacher preaching and nobody understands what he said.

But Thomas was one of those fellows who listened close enough to find out whether he understood what he said or not. Look at John chapter 14, the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of John. Jesus is speaking to all of his disciples. They were all listening to him. Here is what he says.

John 14:1.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.<sup>15</sup>

If you had been one of the Lord's disciples at that time and did not know anything more about the Lord than they knew at that time, would you have understood what he said? Of course not. They didn't either. But they didn't say anything. At least it isn't recorded. It

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<sup>15</sup> John 14:1-4.

they said anything, they said, “Amen. Praise the Lord, brother. Come on back and get us. We are ready to go.”

And do you know what Thomas said? He said, “Lord, what are you talking about?”

“Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?”<sup>16</sup>

It is not difficult to have a question and answer session or a talk show and answer the questions of most people. You can usually give a political answer that the person doesn't understand and is designed to bewilder him and befuddle him to where he doesn't know what to ask next and so he just simply shuts up and everybody thinks he has answered the question.

That is generally true.

Now you watch politicians get examined. You have seen them do that. But every once in a while you get an honest fellow who just hangs on tenacious like a bull dog and he says, “Yeah, but I don't understand that.” And he keeps dragging it out to this and dragging it out to that and dragging you back to that. Now when you get a hold of a fellow like that, you had better know your onions, because he is going to know what he wants to know before it is over and you are going to say, “I don't know what you are talking about.”

And this is what Thomas says. He [?] on what the Lord said.

Now we are puzzled about many things that the Lord has written in the Scriptures. Some of us are like those that Peter spoke about, unstable and unlearned and restless to our destruction, but we certainly ought to be like the Bereans who searched the Scripture to find out whether these things were so or not and listened carefully enough to find out if they were so or not.

He saw and admitted that he did not understand. He wanted to know what and when.

It wasn't, you know, some words, oh, I believe in those words.

We found ourselves yesterday seated on the front rows of the airplane from Dallas to Houston. And brother Randy had given me a little simple association calendar book and I was thumbing through that book and marking particular dates on it and a fellow sitting over to my right there said, “What do you do for a living?”

And of course I realized later why he asked me that question. He saw the box of [?] I had in my hand. And I told him. I said, “I am a preacher, travelling.”

He said, “Where?”

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<sup>16</sup> John 14:5.

I said, "I am a traveling preacher." I said, "I was in Arizona, live in Louisiana." I said, "What do you do?"

He says, "I teach systematic theology."

I said, "Where?"

He said, "Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary."

So he told me [?], "Oh, well, that is interesting. That is fine. Well we are fixing to have a good conversation here."

And so I said, "We are studying a little theology ourselves." I told him the textbook we was using. I said, "What textbook are you using?"

And he told me and I had never heard of it. And I said, "Well, what is this fellow's theological background?"

"Well," he says, "It is. .it is basically reformed theology with ... and along with some... some of the positions and teachings of the Anabaptists."

I said, "Hey, that sounds pretty good." I said, "Are you sympathetic with the views of the apple?"

"Well," he says, "You know, any teacher ducks it pretty well, played out and cut out what he wants to teach out of the book."

"Well," I said, "Are you ... do you subscribe to..."

He went ahead and said, "We find a certain amount of Calvinism [?] in a lot of Baptist life nowadays among Southern Baptists."

I said, "Well, do you subscribe to the soteriology, that is the doctrine of salvation of Calvin?"

"Well," he said, "to a great extent, basically so. I do not accept the scholastic and philosophical tenets that is set forth in the Synod of Dort."

Well, when he mention the Synod of Dort that gave me a take off point. I said, "You are not a five pointer, then."

He said, "No, I am not a five pointer."

I said, "Would you consider yourself a one pointer."

He said, "No, I am not even a... that got... I am not any points at all."

I said, "What do you teach, then?"

"Well," he said, "We just kind of center in Christology. After all, the Bible says that we are saved by faith in Christ." It doesn't say too much more than that.

And so I [?] a while and I said, "I am..."

We talked about some other things. He was trying to change the subject by that time. And a little later I said, "I am interested in this Christ's.... Christological centered theology that you have."

And he said, "I am not dogmatic."

Of course, the thing that he said was dogmatics. And I couldn't understand how you could be dogmatic about anything and not believe anything in particular.

I said, "How do you... how can you teach your... how do you approach salvation and you say it is by faith in Christ without teaching something in particular about Christ, who he is and what the atonement was, the [?] and what he got done and so forth and so on?"

"Well, yes," he said, "that [?] man of course and, of course, when you get into drawing some particular doctrines out of that, you get into this matter of hermeneutics, interpretation. That is, are you going to take what the Bible says? Are you going to go into it and read something into it?"

And I said, "Ok." I said, "Suppose we go about it right and the Bible has spoken in true exegesis. Hasn't the Bible spoken finally on that, what it says?"

"Oh, yes, yes," he says like that and he started rummaging for a book to read.

And so here was a fellow who was very careful that he took care not to ... to not understand anything in particular. You say evangelical words. You say nice sounding words. They are pleasant sounding things, but they mean nothing to you individually and particularly.

[?] like that. He [?] Lord, have mercy. Where are you going? Now if we are going to go and you are fixing us a place, I am going to come along. I want to know something about it. Tell us about that.

And so this man had an honest and an open and an inquiring mind and when we find him in the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of John he realizes he lacks faith and admitted it. He did not say, "You know, you fellows, you have finally seen what I have seen all along."

He is taking the position of a person who does not believe, who knows he is far, far substandard as far as the Lord [?] and his concept of him is [?] and he [?].

Troublesome to me to find a person who does not ... who is not conscious of his lack of apprehension of the law.

I told brother [?] last week when he said, "I am crying. I am crying out to God to give me a servant's heart."

I said, "When a man cries out to God to have a servant's heart, he has already got one."

And it is true in a concept when we are crying out to know the Lord, it is true. We have already begun to know him in some sense of the Word. At least we have begun to fear him and to reverence him and we have got it started in the right direction.

So recognize that he lacks real faith. He cried out about it and he knew its crucial importance. He knew his own wicked heart of unbelief. He said, "I know how hard I am to persuade. I know how skeptical I am. I am going to have to see him. I am going to have to see. I am filled with doubt."

Well, Thomas was willing. He was not only honest, he recognized his faith, his faithlessness, his unbelief, but he was willing to follow the Lord as he saw him, even as defective as his faith was.

Flip with me to John chapter 11, the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of John. Jesus has now received the report of the sickness of Lazarus, waiting until he heard that Lazarus was dead and then he tells the rest of the disciples that we are going to go.

Verse 14.

"Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead."<sup>17</sup>

Well, in verse 11 it said this.

"These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep."<sup>18</sup>

Verse seven, we are going backwards:

"Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again."<sup>19</sup>

Here is what the disciples said, the 11.

"His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?"<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> John 11:14.

<sup>18</sup> John 11:11.

<sup>19</sup> John 11:7.

Last time [?] we might near got killed and you are going to back over there? They will kill you if you go back over there.

Now that was in their mind.

He said, “Let’s go back over to Judea,” and they barely got out of there before.

And you are going to go back over there to Judea. And notice what Thomas says in verse 16.

“Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.”<sup>21</sup>

Here is a man who was ready to follow the Lord to the rock pile. Are you going to say he is an unbeliever? Isn’t that amazing? He [?] of death and because he knows and understands, he said, “The Lord is going over there. I am, too.”

Why did he say that? I will tell you why he said that. Thomas was a man just like you and I of like passions. He liked to see the sun rise. He liked to hear the birds sing. He loved the taste of good food in his mouth, the comforts of warm clothing, the sound and laughter of children, the smile of the woman he loves. He loved life no less than you and I or anyone else. Anyone could love life. Why would such a man say, “I am ready to die”?

Thomas in his inquiring mind and his keen intelligence had enough sense to look around [?] and found [?] outside of this man Jesus Christ.

Do you know why kids, young people, this generation are filled with such despair and hopelessness and utter contempt for society and everything that means anything, for the system that goes on in this world nowadays? We have robbed them of a concept, of a living God who is. We have taken away any solid reference point of absolute truth and reality.

Therefore none of us has no meaning, life has no meaning. Suppose I have good food, what am I going to do, fill my stomach? I will have to do it again in four hours and again next day. And how many tons of food I eat before that will go to the dung hill and I go to the grave? What does it mean? It means nothing. This man Jesus Christ had given him some meaning to life itself and this fellow was about to die and [?] any longer. Now he had a defective concept of Christ. He didn’t know him as he really was, but he knew enough about him to know that life has no meaning without Jesus Christ.

Now, dear friend, people who are in darkness don’t believe like that. It is only people who have been enlightened and they can see the real world as it is, who can see the real

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<sup>20</sup> John 11:8.

<sup>21</sup> John 11:16.

life and real death and the real issues. But a person whose mind and intelligence and heart has been enlightened knows that the universe and life has no meaning outside of Jesus Christ.

He continued assembling the disciples, even more so. I know some folks who when given a report of a visitation of the Lord, some supernatural manifestation... if someone gives a testimony of something that they themselves have not experienced, they want to get huffy and go off and join another church.

You say, "Well, I am not staying with this bunch no more. They are seeing ghosts, talking about spirits rising from the dead, stuff like that. I haven't experienced anything like that. That doesn't fit in with my experience. I am going to go off and join some other bunch."

Well, he didn't do that. He didn't figure the standard was too high. He said, "There is something, if the Lord is alive. I want to find it out."

Hungry hearts. He continued assembling with the disciples. He didn't back off and run off somewhere else. He determined that if I do see him, I believe.

Do you know what Jesus did? Amazing. He comes and he brings faith. Where does he come? He comes where the believing disciples assembled. Are you listening? In the Church there are always... there is always a group of people, a mixed multitude who have varying degrees of conception of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some see him clearer. Some see it dim. Some see it lightly. Some do not see him at all. Some see him gloriously. There are varying degrees in this fellowship right here of people's comprehension of the Lord.

Now if you are not content with the way in which you know the Lord, if you would like to know him in a way in which you do not now know him, if I were you, I would get pretty close to folks who know him better than you know him.

He continued meeting with the disciples. That is where the Lord comes. He comes upon his own. The song that we sang a little while ago concerning the church. God has eternally prepared it for a habitation for himself. That is, it is a habitation of God. You are not to see God. You have most likely encountered him among the multitudes of those who believe him and have seen him.

Where does he come? He doesn't send out an announcement schedule. He has no itinerary that he has published.

Brother R J Koops, who at Bible conference this week preached a few times, gets all bent out of shape when various people only want to come when certain preachers are going to preach. Well, if he doesn't want to do that, he ought not to publish a schedule of who is going to preach when. He says the [?] and the [?] and the [?] and the [?] they only come to hear their preachers and they won't come any other time.

Well, the Lord doesn't give any itinerary or schedule of activities. He comes when he pleases. He appears according to his good purpose in his time. That is the reason that we need to be [?].

What does Luke tell us about this in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, that is, Luke recording the words of our Lord? The fourth chapter of Luke and verse 35. This is their attitude.

“Let your loins be girded about.”<sup>22</sup>

Now this is not talking about the Lord's Second Coming to redeem the Church. I will demonstrate to you why it isn't.

Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.<sup>23</sup>

You see, when the Lord comes to take a church home, he needs no knock on no doors, is he?

He is already talking about Christians that were believers. You are waiting for your Lord. [?]

“Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching.”<sup>24</sup>

What is going to happen? He is going to say:

“I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.”<sup>25</sup>

Yes. He is talking about those sweet times of blessed communion when he comes and reveals himself unto us. He comes in spite of opposition. [?] unfavorable atmospheres.

That is one of those things that brother Hughes asked the professor yesterday. What kind of atmosphere, spiritual atmosphere is there [?]? Well, he thought it was wonderful. [?] he said, “Must have improved them.”

“Oh,” he said, “There is nothing ever been wrong with it.”

Well [?] atmosphere, but I am in an unfavorable atmosphere does not stop a visitation from the Lord. Times are unfavorable right now, but that is that.

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<sup>22</sup> Luke 12:35.

<sup>23</sup> Luke 12:35-36.

<sup>24</sup> Luke 12:37.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

Hypocrites in the way. If hypocrites, stumbling blocks could stop the Lord from [?] revealing himself to his beloved, he never [?] to any of them, would he? Too many hypocrites around. Hypocrites can't stop him. False prophets, liars and deceivers, more of them now ever have been before. The Bible tells us they are blind leaders of the blind. Everybody who is blind is going [?]. The Lord's sheep aren't going to [?]. They are not going to stop. They are not going to hinder. Devils and demons cannot hinder him. There are principalities and powers that he has put under his feet. Ignorance and [?] cannot stop him because [?] and he is alive and [?].

Sure. We have no light outside of him. We have no life outside of him and we have no truth outside of him, but he has got it all. He comes in response to an honest seeker.

Well, who is honest about his seeking? Some of you remember I preached this message a number of times before in some of your presence, I know, and I related a story about a young man that I met one time during the course of visitation. He was a visitor in the house to which I had come. I felt strongly impressed of the Lord to visit that home and when I got there the home was ... they were having supper and had a guest there and that is... [?] a bad time to try to visit somebody. I came in the back door. Most homes you go in the back door nowadays. That is where the kitchen was right there and they were all eating there.

So I just sat down and waited until they got through eating. A young man was visiting there from a neighbor. He got up and started to leave. And I was in the way and I had to get up and I shook his hand and told him I was glad to have met him and he shook my hand and about that time it seemed like the Holy Spirit just gripped my heart and said, "Hey, that is him right there."

Everybody else has arrived. Now that is no time to embarrass the fellow to witness to him. And I just asked him, "Are you a Christian?"

[?]

I kept looking at him, held on. Well, are you really a Christian? And the smile went off his face and he sobered up and looked at me.

"No. No, I am not a Christian. Sure I am a member of a church. I joined a church years ago. I don't know what it is to be a Christian. I never have been a Christian. What is it to be a Christian? What do you mean to be a Christian?"

I said, "Would you like to talk about it?"

He says, "Yeah, I sure would."

And the whole family got up and left the room and we sat down at the table and I opened the Bible and went over some things about what it was to be a Christian, to be born again, to be a new creature in Christ, to put away sin, to die to the past life, to being anew just

like a little baby all over again, a life of faith, of real union with the living God, personal communion with God himself.

Would you like to be a Christian?

Yeah, I sure would.

Would you go down on your knees and pray with me and ask the Lord to save you?

[?] do that. You can't.

No, sir. [?]

Why, you want to be a Christian don't you?

He said, "Yes, sir. I sure do, but I don't want to give up my sin. I want to be a Christian, but I don't want to give up my sin."

I said, "What is so good about your sin?"

Well, it is this old life I know. I like to get my paycheck. I like to go down to the drive in and drink beer and have a good time with the boys and girls. I don't want to give that up. I enjoy it.

I said, "Well, [?] honesty." I said, "Would you pray with me and ask the Lord to make you willing to give up your sin, willing to ask God to make you a Christian, willing to ask God to make you willing, to be willing?"

He thought a moment and he said, "No. I don't think I could honestly ask that. I don't want to be willing to be willing."

I have never heard anybody said that, but he knows how. He could not say, "Lord, I want to give up my sin." He did not.

"I love my sin," he said. That is the only thing that he could honest...

And I said, "I don't know how to tell you to pray, but apparently you need to pray. I am going to pray. You pray any way you can."

And so I prayed and he prayed something like this.

He said, "Lord, you know, I like my sin. I know that I am a sinner and I know that I deserve to go to hell and you know I don't even want to give it up, don't even want to be willing to give it up, but if there is anything you can do for a fellow like me, I sure do wish you would."

That is all he prayed.

Oh, my, could God hear a prayer like that? [?] the kind he can hear. Why don't you quit lying to God about your prayers and about yourself or lying to yourself and a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. I mean, if you just opened your heart and mind to yourself, to where you can be honest with God about your doubts and fears and skepticism and everything else. [?] they are his.

Two or three weeks later I heard from him. God heard his prayer. He made him willing. Jesus comes bringing peace, gladness.

Thomas saw the Lord. Let me tell you what he saw. He had already seen several things and he already knew this that any man with a logical clear mind [?] could see what Thomas had already seen. He saw that Jesus was a good teacher and what he taught was reasonable and right. Anybody could. Anybody knows that. He is already a good teacher. He told the truth. It wasn't a lie. He wasn't a deceiver. He thought he was a healer. He could make sick folk well, make blind men see, make lame people walk. He saw that. He could even make a dead man live. He had ... was an eye witness of Lazarus' resurrection. He saw that he was a good provider. Nobody left his presence hungry. He provided the food for the multitudes. He had seen all of this. Oh, yes, he knew the goodness of God. He knew he was a sinless man.

All of this the human... the natural man can know that. he had no sin. He saw that he was a prophet, that he had God's power and spirit upon him, could not deny. He knew that he was an innocent sufferer and although he had been crucified, mutilated, that he was innocent in that suffering. He saw a crucified Savior.

This healer, this deliverer, this man who was a teacher, this man who was sinless he knew had been crucified and he had suffered for somebody's sin and it wasn't his. It wasn't his own sins. He suffered for somebody's sins. He saw all of that. He knew the Lord as healer, knew him as provider, knew him as teacher, knew him as prophet, knew him as a sinless sufferer. He knew him as crucified, but he didn't know him in his resurrected power.

Do you know what he has found out? That he did not need to feel. He saw his God.

“My Lord and my God.”<sup>26</sup>

He didn't say simply, “Almighty God, you are God. You are the almighty God.” He says, “You are my Lord. Yes, you are my God. You are my king.”

He saw.

Now you don't have to put your fingers in his nail prints. He didn't have to. You don't have to thrust your hand in his side. All you need to do is get honest about [?] he comes.

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<sup>26</sup> John 20:28.

“Be not faithless, but believing.”<sup>27</sup>

Let’s stand.

Will you take...

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<sup>27</sup> John 20:27.