

(John) 22 - Triumph of Divine Love

by Alan Redpath

The sermon explores the triumph of divine love through the resurrection of Jesus, highlighting the significance of Mary Magdalene's early morning visit to the tomb and Jesus' appearances to his disciples, which bring peace, joy, and authority to declare forgiveness of sins.

Duration: 43:50

Scripture: John 20:1

Topics: "John"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the authority given by Jesus to his disciples to publicly declare forgiveness of sins in his name. This authority is seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit and a power of the new life in Christ. The speaker emphasizes the importance of repentance for believers and the condemnation for unbelievers. The sermon also references Chapter Nine of the Bible, highlighting the sacrifice of Jesus to put away sin and his appearance for the salvation of many.

Transcript

Twenty, just two more hours on John to endure for you, for you to endure, as you say. John, Chapter 20. And if you've got your notes and in your outline, we've had to miss, I'm afraid, John 14, 15 and 16, but if you've got your outline, we're at the last part now, and Chapter 20 is underheading the triumph of divine love.

And then there's the epilogue, Chapter 21. So tonight, hopefully, we'll get through John Chapter 20, and on Wednesday at this time of hour, John Chapter 21. I think the best thing this evening is to go through this chapter in the sections into which I've divided it in your outline.

Have you got that with you? The great discovery, verses 1 through 10. Love rewarded, verses 11 through 18. Peace for fear, verses 19 through 23.

Certainty for doubt, verses 24 to 29. And the purpose of the record, verses 30 and 31. So we'll just take it through under those headings, if we may, and we'll read those verses as we come to each different heading.

So we'll start in Chapter 20 now, and I'll read verses 1 through 10. John Chapter 20, reading in the RSV. Now, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw

that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have led him. Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter, and reached the tomb first.

And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloth lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloth lying, and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloth, but rolled up in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes.

This is the word of the Lord. A wonderful chapter. The first ten verses are called The Great Discovery.

The people who were really ready for the resurrection of Jesus, were Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. These three, really prepared. And the signs which prepared them here, are the open sepulchre, and the grave throats.

Mary sees the first of these, the open sepulchre. And then, see the others. Look at what Mary saw.

What wonderful verses, the first two verses of this are. How spontaneous, how passionate. Let me read them again.

Just to check, what she saw. Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran, and went to Simon, Peter, and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.

In those few words, how much is said, do you notice, about the time, early in the morning, before dawn, while it was still dark. Incidentally, could I say that early morning appointments with Jesus, hold secrets, for those who are there with him. Early morning appointments with Jesus, hold secrets, for those who are there with him.

She was there, before the dawn. The time, and the place, and the fact of an empty tomb, and the effect, and her testimony. See all those things, in the first two verses.

Time, place, fact, effect, testimony. See if you can trace them. The first evidence, of the resurrection, was given, to the one who loved Jesus so much.

In fact, well enough to be at the tomb, before sunrise. I'll come back to that in a moment. Notice what Peter and John saw.

Verses three through ten. When they ran and reported to them, They ran towards the sepulchre, that Easter morning. Love, in the person of John, went faster than enthusiasm.

Peter, had to run him, beat him to it. I can imagine those two fellas, covering the ground, can't you? That Sabbath morning, a nip in the air. I'm sure there was a light in their eye, and wonder in their heart.

Amazing. I said that love, beat enthusiasm. But, it was enthusiasm, that went right into the tomb, to look.

Verses six and eight. However, the race went on, and love continued. And you notice, love was the first to believe.

Verse eight. They saw the linen cloth lying, and the napkin, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloth, but rolled up in a place by itself. Lying, that is still in their original fold.

Lying, still in their original fold. Untouched by human hands. But no longer containing the body.

Lying, repeat that. Still in their original fold. Untouched by human hand.

But no longer containing the crucified body of Jesus. They saw that. And John saw it, and believed.

Verse eight. The great discovery. Now second here, love rewarded.

Mary stood, verse eleven, weeping outside the tomb. And as she wept, she stood to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain.

One at the head, and one at the feet. They said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him. Saying this, she turned round, and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek? Supposing him to be the gardener. She said to him, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus said to her, Mary.

She turned and said to him in Hebrew, which means teacher. Jesus said to her, Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, I have seen the Lord.

And she told them that he had said these things to her. Some of the details in those verses are only recorded in John's Gospel. Some things are taught here.

Verses 11-15, look at her love and her sorrow. Verses 11-14, she stood weeping at the tomb. Look at her sorrow.

And then in verse 16, look at Jesus' revelation of herself, of himself. Mary's sorrow and her love. And then Jesus reveals himself and said to her, Mary.

And she turned and said to him, in Hebrew, which means teacher or master. And you notice the two-fold command. Verses 17 and 18.

Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Do not hold me. Why? Don't touch me.

It's a very strong word. Wrote out in translation which says, stop touching me. The reason the Lord gives is that he has not yet ascended to his Father.

And for that event, the ascension of Jesus, she must begin to prepare. By ceasing to cling too closely to the physical form of her master. Notice that.

Could I just repeat that to you? Because it's important, just by the way, to get that down. Why did Jesus say, don't touch me? She was learning. Had to learn something.

He hadn't ascended to his Father. She must begin to prepare for that. When he would leave her, physically.

Therefore, she mustn't cling too closely to the physical. Begin to trust the spiritual. And he then commissions her to declare to his disciples his ascension.

You notice in verse 27, just glance ahead of that, will you? Verse 27. He said to Thomas, put your finger here, see my hands. Put out your hand and place it in my side.

Don't be faithless, but believing. That was the only evening of the same day. Jesus hadn't descended into heaven.

Why did he say to one, don't touch me. The other, stretch out your hand. Well, it's a different word.

One, to me, he used to say, stop clinging to me. The other, a word that simply means a touch. A touch.

Quite different. An invitation to touch him. You want evidence, touch me.

Look at my hand, it's in my side. Put your hand into it and see. A suggestion, if you want evidence, just touch, to be sure.

But to Mary, a danger that she clung to the Lord Jesus. Hadn't learned to trust the spiritual Christ. But there's something else about his appearance to Mary that we must look at.

Which I think is very wonderful. And you don't get it in John. Mark's gospel account is Mark 16 and verse 9. Mark 16 verse 9 says.

When he arose early on the first day of the week. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Now just hold it a minute.

What an opportunity. To stand before Pontius Pilate as the risen Lord. What an opportunity to go to the Roman political authority.

And stand before them. But he didn't. He didn't.

He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. And Mark goes on to remind us. Out of whom he had cast seven demons.

A resurrection priority. Jesus showed himself first to Mary. Out of whom he had cast seven demons.

Because. Go slow. Write this down.

Ready. Go. The first significant.

Long word. S.I.G.N.I.F.I.C.A.N.C.E. The first significant. Important thing.

Of his resurrection. Was to prove his authority in the spiritual realm. To prove his authority in the spiritual realm.

Over all forces of evil. His resurrection had struck at the root. Out of this woman Jesus had cast seven demons.

I'll repeat. The first significance of the resurrection. Was to prove his authority in the spiritual realm.

Over all forces of evil. His resurrection had struck at the root. He cast out of that woman seven demons.

And as a result. She responded to him. With all her love.

She appeared first. To Mary Magdalene. Now.

Who's that word. Appeared. Circle it round.

Ring it round. Underline it. Now you're studying the epistle to the Hebrews.

Aren't you? Or you have been? Yeah? Have you got as far as chapter nine? No. All right. I'll just get it in front.

For one minute. And ask you to look at chapter nine. A moment.

To intrude. Where angels might appear to tread. Just to support Billy.

Is it Billy? Oh yeah. Hebrews chapter nine. Ring round the world here.

Look. Verse twenty four. Twenty four.

Right? Hebrews 9. Twenty four. For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear, circle that word, in the presence of God on our behalf. Verse twenty six.

For then he had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world, but as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He has appeared. Circle the word there.

Verse twenty six. Verse twenty eight. So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time.

Not to be with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. It's a very interesting word. Because none of those words are the words that Mark uses.

He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Hebrews 9. Twenty four. He has entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God.

And that means, the word means literally, to give information. The word is emphazial, but you don't need to put it down. It's the word from which we get emphasis.

To give information. To appear in the presence of God on our behalf. In verse twenty six, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age, to put away sin.

The word is evidence. To give evidence that he's put away sin. And then in verse twenty eight, Christ will appear a second time.

A second time. Not to be with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. He will appear.

He will be seen. It's the word from which we get optician. Optical.

He'll be seen, literally seen, a second time. But none of those are the words that John uses, that Mark uses. You've got those three, just as a matter of interest, so that you have a note of that, when you come perhaps to that chapter in Hebrews.

Hebrews nine twenty four, the word is to appear, to give information. Emphasis. I'll give you the word if you like.

E-M-P-H-A-N-I-Z-O. Doesn't really matter. To give information.

Hebrews nine twenty six. He has appeared, once for all at the end of the age, to put away sin. Evidence.

He's accomplished it. And the third word, Christ will appear a second time, will be seen, literally, up to man. To those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Well, if those are not the word in John, what's his word? It's a word which means shine. Literally, it's shine. It's the same word that you have in Revelation one sixteen.

When John, on Patmos, saw the risen Lord and his face was like the sun shining in its full strength. That's the word. You find it again in Revelation twenty one twenty three.

Revelation twenty one twenty three. The city has no need of the sun or moon to shine upon it. Revelation twenty one twenty three.

That was the word. He appeared, he shone first to Mary Magdalene. A great blazing light in her heart.

He shone. Same word in 2 Corinthians four verse six. God, who said, that light shiner of darkness, has shone in our hearts to give the light to the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

That's it. He appeared. Like that.

Not to give information or evidence, but a tremendous revelation of his power. Now, did you get those verses? Yes? You have a wonderful, wonderful little Bible study all on your own with those verses. Want them again? Quickly.

Hebrews nine twenty four. Now to appear in the presence of God to give information. Hebrews nine twenty six.

He appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin. Evidence. To put away sin.

Hebrews nine twenty eight. Christ will appear a second time. Will be seen a second time.

But the word here in Mark sixteen. He shone. Shone.

Same word as Revelation one sixteen. His face like the sun shining in full strength. Revelation twenty one, twenty three.

City. City has no need of the sun or moon to shine upon it. Its light is the Lamb.

But when Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, he shone like a blazing light into art. That's what you need. That's what I need.

He has commanded light to shine out of darkness. Second Corinthians four six. Has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Not to give me evidence or information. But a tremendous dynamic power. A mighty revelation of his power.

And he's been doing it ever since. In lines like Mary's. It encouraged me.

It tells me this. Maybe we all just need reminding of it. That Jesus is greater than all our sin.

And that kind of deliverance is sufficient for the worst of us. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Right? Love rewarded.

Rewarded with a tremendous in-shining of glory in our heart. And then, peace replaces fear. Verses 19 through 23.

On the evening of that day. That is Easter Sunday. The first day of the week.

The doors being shut. Where the disciples were for fear of the Jews. Jesus came.

And stood among them and said to them. Peace be with you. When he had said this he showed them his hands and his side.

And the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them. Again.

Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them.

Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.

One or two important things to notice in those verses. I have said to them. Peace replaces fear.

See these disciples were hiding in Jerusalem. The Lord comes to them through shut doors. Stands in the midst.

And says. Peace. Verse 19.

His body wasn't a kind of phantom body. It was a resurrected body. Spiritual body.

And his appearance to them. Is just. As he tells it here.

Is told us in such a way that. It's a fulfillment of the promises he made. Before the Calvary.

He imparts his peace. Chapter 14. 27.

My peace I give to you. As the world giveth, give I unto you. My peace.

John 14. 27. Here he says.

Peace be to you. Verse 11 through 18. This is in the morning.

Verse 19 to 23 was in the evening. Verse 11 to 18. One person Mary.

Verse 19 to 23. The rest of the disciples. One.

Easter Sunday morning. Out in the open. Two.

In the evening. Behind closed doors. They're all shut in.

For fear of the Jews. Notice. Closed doors.

People afraid. Thomas. Departed.

Disciples began to fall apart. Then Jesus came. And.

Verse 20. The disciples were glad. When they saw the Lord.

The presence of Jesus always changes fear to joy. Now. What does verse 22 mean? Oh.

Here we come. With all the theological discussions and arguments. Verse 22.

When he said this. He breathed on them and said to them. Receive you the Holy Spirit.

Did the Holy Spirit come before Pentecost? No. At Pentecost. He came to indwell.

So. What can this mean? Westcott. He suggests.

A suggestion. This. Was the gift.

Of the Holy Spirit. The power. Of the new life.

Proceeding from the person. Of the risen Lord. In anticipation.

Of his indwelling. At Pentecost. Think that one through.

I give it to you again. Westcott's commentary suggests. This is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

The power of the new life. Proceeding from the person of Christ. Of the risen Christ.

In anticipation. Of his indwelling. At Pentecost.

Notice something else here. Verse 23. If you forgive the sins of any.

They are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any. They are retained.

I go slowly. For a couple of sentences. Important.

Right. Jesus gives. His disciples authority.

Jesus. Repeating. Gives his disciples.

Authority. Publicly. To declare.

Forgiveness of sin. In his name. Publicly.

To declare. Or to declare publicly. However you like.

Forgiveness of sin. In his name. To repentant.

Believers. And condemnation. To unbelievers.

Repeating. Jesus gives. To his disciples.

Authority. Publicly. To declare.

Forgiveness of sins. In his name. To repentant.

Believers. And condemnation. To unbelievers.

It's not a question. Of deciding. Who will be forgiven.

And who will not. Compare Luke. 24.

Verses 46 and 47. Which I will read to you. Verses is written.

The Christ should suffer. And the third day rise from the dead. And that repentance.

And forgiveness of sin. Should be preached. In his name.

To all nations. Beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses.

Of these things. Witnesses. Of.

These. Things. So again I repeat.

It's not a question. Of deciding. Who will be forgiven.

And who won't. The power. One more sentence more here.

The power given. Is. Authority.

To declare. Forgiveness. On the basis.

Of the death. Of Jesus. The power given.

Repeating. Is authority to declare forgiveness. On the basis.

Of. His death. And that authority.

Was to be theirs. And incidentally ours. Because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

That authority was to be theirs. And ours. Because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

And that authority is given to the whole church. Not just to ordained people to the ministry. The presence of everyone who has the indwelling Christ.

In his or her life. Peace. Is turned to fear.

I mean fear. Is turned to peace. Sorry.

Now look something else. Certainty. Takes the place of doubt.

Verses 24 to 29. Jesus again appears to his disciples. Verse 24.

Now Thomas. He's back now. One of the twelve called the twin.

Was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him. We've seen the Lord.

But he said to them. Can't you hear him say it. Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails.

And place my finger in the mark of the nails. And place my hand in his side. I will not believe.

Eight days later his disciples were again in the house. And Thomas was with them. The doors were shut.

But Jesus came and stood among them and said. Peace be with you. Then he said to Thomas.

Put your finger here and see my hands. And put out your hand and place it in my side. Do not be faceless but believing.

Thomas answered him. My Lord. And.

My God. And Jesus said to him. Have you believed because you've seen me.

Blessed are those who have not seen. And yet. Believe.

Thomas was always a skeptic. He wanted evidence. He wanted evidence.

Jesus said. Touch. Invited him.

And put your hands inside. It's my conviction. But I can't say I have any authority of it.

He never did so. He just simply saw the nails. Saw the mark.

And fell at his feet. And said my Lord. And my God.

Very interesting. Would you just put a wee little cross reference there. To 1st Thessalonians.

Just put it here. 1st Thessalonians. Chapter 1. 1st Thessalonians chapter 1. And verse.

7. 1st Thessalonians 1 7. This. Mustn't get diverted. But this is the most amazing church.

In the whole New Testament. It grew so fast. Disciples were only in Thessalonica three weeks.

And then they were kicked out. But. You became an example.

To all believers. In Macedonia and Nicaea. Example.

Same word. Except I see in his hands the print of the nails. That's the word.

You became like the mark of the nails. In Macedonia and Nicaea. People want evidence.

Some evidence for what we believe. Let me see the marks. Got any marks on you? Not necessarily physically.

But got some marks. To give you away? Evidence. That's what they wanted.

That's what people want now. The evidence. Have you no scar? You know that poem by Amy Carmichael.

Tremendous. I hear you hailed as mighty in the land. But have you no scar? What's the evidence? And death.

And so Thomas saw the evidence of a risen Christ. And he fell to his feet. My Lord.

And my God. The whole purpose of the gospel. In verses 30 to 31.

Verses 30 to 31. The whole purpose of the gospel. Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples.

Which are not written in his book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is a Christ, the Son of God. And that believing you may have life in his name.

The purpose of the gospel of John. In those two verses. Is that.

The readers of it. Should believe in Jesus. Even though.

They've never seen him. And let me repeat this and underline it. And think back.

Of the hours. Few hours that we had in this. Any reading of this gospel.

I'm speaking at dictation speed. Any reading of this gospel. Which does not lead.

To belief. In the deity of Christ. Repeating.

Any reading of this gospel. Which does not lead to faith in the deity of Christ. And to receiving eternal life.

Is a misreading of it. The principle words. Of the whole book of John.

Are believe. Life. Believe.

And life. So that. Though we may not have seen him.

Yet we love him. Just let me give that to you again. Because it's so important.

That's the purpose of the record. Verse 30 and 31. Any reading of this gospel.

Which does not lead to faith in the deity of Christ. And receiving eternal life. Is a misreading of it.

The principle words. In the whole book. Are believe.

And life. So that though we have not seen him. We may yet love him.

1 Peter 1 chapter. Verse 8.

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