

Mark - Come, See: Go, Tell

by J. Glyn Owen

The sermon emphasizes the significance of Jesus' resurrection and the importance of sharing the good news with others, highlighting the women's love and sacrifice, the angel's message, and the commission to tell others about Jesus' life-changing power.

Duration: 49:11

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 14:27, Mark 16:1-2, Mark 16:6-7, Mark 16:9, Mark 16:15, Mark 16:20

Topics: "Mark"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the significance of the empty tomb and the resurrection of Jesus. The women who discovered the empty tomb were initially stunned by the realization that Jesus, who had died, was now alive again. They were instructed by an angel to go and tell the disciples, specifically mentioning Peter, that Jesus was going before them to Galilee. The speaker highlights the importance of this message and the commission given to those who have witnessed the resurrection to spread the good news far and wide. The sermon also emphasizes the sacrificial love demonstrated by the women who went to pay their last respects to Jesus, showing that love is daring and sacrificial in its actions.

Transcript

Now shall we be turning prayerfully to the passage of Scripture that was earlier read, focusing very particularly on the first eight verses in Mark chapter 16. Can I simply read now at this stage verses six and seven, just to remind you again of the heart of the message that we have there. Don't be alarmed, said the angel to the women folk who had come to the tomb.

You were looking for Jesus the Nazarene who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here.

See the place where they laid him. But go tell his disciples and Peter he is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him just as he told you.

The cardinal affirmation of that passage is found in those words in verse six. He is risen. And in those words are found the most glorious truth ever uttered in the years of mortal man.

The unadorned statement contains the most glorious news ever heralded abroad. That God, having sent his only son into the world to bear away the sins of men in dying under the curse that our sins deserved, having so done is alive again. And not simply alive for a while again to die, but alive forevermore as the

Lord of life and death.

So that this morning it is possible for us to know one who is competent to be our savior. Our Lord Jesus Christ is competent to save the most wretched and the most miserable of the two counts very specially. That he died on the cross to take our sin away and procure pardon for us.

And having so done, after being buried in the garden tomb, he rose again and is alive forevermore. So that ours is not a savior who simply did something in the past. He did that but he does more.

He is alive to give us of his presence and of his power and assures us of his intercession into the present, into the future, however far the future may take us. As the writer of the epistle to the Hebrew says, seeing that he ever lives, his is life without an end. Seeing that he ever lives and that in the power of an endless life, he is able to serve to the uttermost those that come to God by him.

In his book, *The Trouble with the Church*, Helmut Tillich wrote, I am shocked, he says, by the casual matter-of-course way in which the news that Christ has risen is taken. Anybody who has grasped what that means would be rocked in his seat. The implication of Tillich's statement, not Tillich, but Tillich, the implication of his statement is, of course, that many of us who have never been thus rocked have never appreciated the significance of the Easter event.

Well now, we have been following the narrative in Mark's gospel coming up to the crucifixion of our Lord. That is why we are taking this passage from Mark chapter 16 this morning as basis of our meditation on Easter morning. There are two things I would like us to see here.

First of all, we have an invitation, come, see, as the King James Version puts it, come and see. And then we have a commission, go and tell. And I trust that as surely as these women folk of old heard and responded to both, so too may we this morning come and see something for ourselves.

And as the significance of what we see dawns upon us, may we have the grace and the courage and the dedication to go and tell. Our world is languishing for the knowledge of the living Lord Jesus Christ, who alone can deal with a problem of the human heart and of human society. And if anyone is to tell them, it must be you and myself together, all of us united with a common purpose and dedication.

May the Lord grant us that grace today. Now, look first of all then at the invitation. Mark is the most concise of the four gospel writers, and this means that many things recorded by the others are left out by him.

Though he has some very lovely touches of his own, but he's concise here. Look first of all at the action planned by a group of women, as told by Mark, verses one and two. And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, bought spices so that they might go and anoint him.

And very early on the first day of the week, yesterday, very early on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. No sooner were they free to do so, they could not do so until the Sabbath was over, and they dare not do so during the hours of complete darkness. No sooner were they free to do so than this noble group of women set out, as they thought, to pay their last parting respects to their dead Lord and Master.

Their ardent love for him was probably matched only by their fear at this point. There is a development in their experience, but at this point they were very much afraid of many things. I guess for one thing, they were afraid that the body was in process of decomposition already, and they were afraid of many other things.

And so as early as they possibly could get out, they have these spices with them, and they go to anoint the feet, to anoint the body of their Lord Jesus. They knew, of course, that Mary of Bethany had anointed him whilst he was alive, and Jesus said, she has done this on me in preparation for my dying. They also knew that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus together had poured a hundred pounds of spices in between the folds of the linen clothes as they buried him in Joseph's unused tomb.

A hundred pounds in weight. Enough, says one commentator, to cover the floor of the entire area around the tomb. Enough, says another one, in terms of value to pay for the ransom of a king.

But you see, love is never satisfied that someone else has done something. Love always wants to do something oneself. And these women, the Lord bless their memory, these women wanted to do something themselves.

And out they went, they have their spices, they have their ointment ready, and they go early in the morning. The gospel narratives vary in the way they put it. Evidently they started out before it had actually dawned.

By the time they got there, it was just dawning. But they set out to do what they could, as they thought, to pay their last respects to the dead Savior. Love is daring.

Daring in its actions and sacrificial in its donations. I tell you, it cost these women more than money to do this. It cost them money, I can't tell you how much.

Few of us, few ladies I'm sure, would like to pay a visit to a modern cemetery early in the morning at the dawn of day. But these women, folk, were glad to be up. And with haste, without any man near, alone they went into the cemetery to pay their respects to the Savior.

They were as courageous as they were eager to impart the fruit of whatever material possessions they had. The action they planned, the anxiety they expressed. Look at verse three.

As these women are going along, three of them, they are saying one to another, says Mark, who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb? As far as this big-hearted group was concerned, there was only one major problem which seemed insurmountable as they were now on their way. That is because they had forgotten a lot of other things. They had forgotten that the tomb, the stone at the mouth of the tomb was sealed with a Roman seal.

And they had forgotten that there were soldiers on guard when last they saw that tomb. And so the one thing that fills their horizon at the moment is the fact that it's that massive stone on the mouth of the tomb. Who on earth is going to roll away that stone? Now, tombs in these days had no actual doors as such, but simply a space serving as an opening in the wall for entrance and for exit.

The door, properly so-called, would be a stone that would be rolled to cover that space. And in this case, it was a massive stone, apparently, far greater than the normal. And according to the custom, in all probability, there was a groove outside the entrance into the cave into which the stone would fit so that

you couldn't easily move it, especially when it was of these proportions.

Now, the stone at the mouth of this tomb then was large, exceedingly large, and the women knew it. And the one thing that fills their minds at this moment is, who rolled away the stone? This is the one problem we've got. We've got our spices.

We're on our errand. We're on the way. But how on earth are we going to get into the tomb and here show our respects to the dead Savior? The third thing I want you to notice is the astonishment that awaited them.

And I want to stress that, the astonishment that awaited them. The stone, if you please, had been rolled away before they arrived. Look at verse four.

And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back. And again, it was very large. Who rolled that stone away? Who had been planning ahead for the entry of those few women into that garden tomb? Who had wanted them to see inside? Who had planned it? Who had thought of it? Who was responsible for the removal of that stone, which they themselves could not remove? Mark doesn't tell us.

Matthew does. Matthew says this, and behold, there was a great earthquake. For this was no ordinary earthquake.

There was a great earthquake because an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow. Now, ere you get too absorbed with the angel for a moment, whose appearance took the form of a young man dressed in white apparel, ere you get too absorbed with him, let me remind you of the significant truth here.

The angel is only a messenger. The angel obeys orders. He doesn't initiate the action that he's going to do.

It didn't originate in his mind whoever the angel is in Scripture. The angel is a servant. So you see, somebody commissioned that angel to leave wherever he was and to make his way to that garden tomb and to take his position there.

And he moves from place to place as we see from the different from the different gospels. In fact, there were two angels at one point and three another and maybe more. But at this point, these women saw one angel.

What I want you to notice is this, that the angel comes at the behest of someone else. That the angel is a messenger doing the will of someone else. Behind the angel's presence and action lies his master's command and his master's concern.

Who was this angel's master? Well, I don't care whether you say it was God the Father or God the Son, because they were one and are one eternally. I believe it is legitimate to say that the very Jesus who was buried in that garden tomb was the one who appointed this angel to come and stand sentry and tell these dear women all they needed to know in order to turn their darkness into light and their moroseness into joy unspeakable and full of glory. Jesus sent his angel.

So what the angel said he says for his master. You know there is a principle here. Can I just refer to it in proceeding? There is a principle here.

There are so many difficulties in life that God leaves astride our pathway for us to negotiate with him. He doesn't take them away. Just as he left a thorn in the flesh embedded in Paul's flesh and said to him, my grace is sufficient for you.

We'll bear it together. There are difficulties and dangers that God allows to remain astride our pathway and he tells us come and face it with me. We'll face it together and I'll give you my grace and I'll share my resources with you.

But you know blessed be his name there are some that he chooses to move right out of the way. And those who are prepared to go on in the pathway of obedience with him sometimes find just as these women found that something which was totally insurmountable has been suddenly moved out of the way. Now you read the autobiographies or biographies of some of our missionary pioneers for example and you'll find this.

It's so evidently manifested in the experiences of men who have launched forth in pioneering enterprise for the king of kings. I think of Paul moving into Europe. All the difficulties of wending his way through Philippi.

The difficulties that faced him as he set foot on the soil of Europe bringing the gospel from the Middle East. I think of William Carey the consecrated cobbler as he was called going to India. The multitude of mountains that stood astride his way.

But when it came to the point God dealt with them all. Or Mary Spesser as she plodded amidst difficulties and dangers galore in Calabar Calabar sometimes in sickness that was enough to cripple any man or woman. Or David Livingstone elsewhere in Africa Africa or Robert Morrison and later Hudson Taylor in China and so we could go on right down to the present time.

You see how the Lord is able to do this and there are stones that he deliberately moves out of the way that are too big for us to have anything to do with. So he does it himself. Matthew the stone of our text was rolled away from the mouth of the tomb not in order to let Jesus out but in order to let the women in.

Jesus could have got out of the tomb himself without the aid of anyone. A little later on in the in the resurrection narratives in the gospel according to St. John you will remember that when the disciples were in the upper room in Jerusalem the windows were closed and barred and so were the doors. But he entered in his resurrection body which was different of course from the body in which he died the same and yet different.

There were elements that were different about it so that he was able to come in when the doors were closed. So too could he have moved triumphantly out of this garden tomb without anyone moving the stone from the mouth of the cave. He could have done so but the women could not have come in you see.

The stone had been rolled away the difficulty they foresaw as a massive imponderable problem that difficulty had been dealt with by the Lord whom they thought was dead. And the sepulcher contained no corpse. Now we recognize the considerable love of these women for their Lord.

And what I'm going to say next must not in any wise be allowed to dim that fact. We recognize we salute them. Here they are just a handful of women early in the morning.

They're daring everybody and they're going out to do honor to the body of the one that they had learned to trust and to love. Even so we must not be blind to their faithlessness. You see over and over again the Lord Jesus had told his disciples that on the morning of the third day he was going to rise again from the dead.

And had they believed that they would never have moved out of home. They would have waited his coming to them. Over and over again Jesus had taught his disciples concerning his pending death and following it his resurrection.

He had said to them in various settings and under different circumstances in one way and another he had made it abundantly clear that he was going to die and then he was going to rise again. But somehow or other it had never got through or they heard the words all right. But the truth of it the reality of it the expectation of it it never penetrated.

So that you see in consequence the discovery by these dear women that there was no corpse in the tomb was a disappointment. Now you and I may smile at that. But they were disappointed that their Lord was not dead and that the body was not there.

They have their ointment they've come to pay parting respects to the body. And they wanted to see the body they wanted to do something for the body. And they were a little bit disappointed they've spent their money for naught.

It's all because the real significance of it has not yet dawned upon them. The sepulcher contained no corpse. Whether they in their frame of mind were able to take it in I don't know.

But John later and Peter you remember they noticed that the the grave clothes were still there. And surely they must have scented something of the aroma of the spices. But those were the only things left in the tomb to show that it had been inhabited for a little period.

Jesus is not there the body's gone. Can I intrude there? You know in one sense the women's very unbelief serves our purpose and is a blessing in disguise. You see there are those who have said that Jesus is not risen at all.

He died period. How then do we have people preaching that he's alive? All they said people wished he were risen. And they expected him to rise.

And then they believed it. They never saw him risen but they believed it. They imagined it and they were so enthused by their own imaginings they told others about it.

And they managed to persuade others that their own imaginations were true. You see you can't say that. The whole psychological pattern is such that doesn't hold water.

These women and the other disciples did not expect Jesus to rise from the dead. How then ultimately did they come to believe? How then ultimately did they come to preach in the Jewish society and the Roman society that the Christ whom the Jews and the Romans together had crucified and buried is alive again? I'll tell you they saw him. And they touched him.

And they handled him. And they listened to him. And they knew that he was alive from the dead by many infallible proofs.

So that when John comes to write his first epistle he says, that which was from the beginning. Which we have seen. Which we've touched.

Which we've handled of the word of life. And the word for handled is the word that you would use of a woman that's gone into the shop to buy some material for a suit. And you handle it.

And you find out how thick it is. Or how thin it is. Or what kind of material it is.

And you put it between your fingers. They handled him. I noticed Greg Scharf's text tonight.

Touch me. Yeah but not just a touch with a tip of a finger. Handle me.

Put your finger in the wounds. The stone was rolled away. The sepulcher contained no corpse.

But this the most precious thing along with these. Their entire circumstances had been foreseen and provided for. The angel tells them everything they need to know.

Everything they needed to know at that point. Never was there a friendlier messenger come to the aid of anyone than that unnamed angel at the tomb. He knew that they were coming.

Of course their Lord knew. He told the angel. The angel knew their errand.

I know he says I don't need to ask you. You're coming to seek for Jesus the Nazarene who was crucified. Well he says he's risen.

Just come and see where he lay. And then he gives them the message the commission. But you see he knew all about them.

And he told them everything they needed to know. What did they need to know? One he was not there. He doesn't need the spices.

Hallelujah. He wasn't there. He wasn't in the tomb.

But more than that he's risen. He's risen. And he's going before you into Galilee and there you'll meet him if you want to.

And you'll see him. I do love those words. Death cannot keep its prey.

Jesus my Savior. He tore the bars away. Jesus my Lord.

Up from the grave he arose with a mighty triumph for his foes. He arose a victor from the dark domain. And he lives forever with his saints to reign.

Come see. You see it? Have you got it? Does it grip you? Can you see what really happened? Does it touch you? Does it touch you? Are you rocked in your seat? If not it's only because you don't see. A word about the commission.

Whom God privileges with a spectacle such as this. Whom God allows to see his Son or to know his Son has risen from the dead and to be Lord of life as well as of death. He commands to tell the glad tidings far and near.

You can't keep these things to yourselves. If you can then there's something wrong somewhere. It was a staggering stupefying disclosure when with wide open eyes those women saw the empty tomb.

Even though the significance of it was very slow dawning upon them. And the recognition of what is meant that the Jesus who died is alive again. I say to you it was a most stupefying moment.

Go tell his disciples and Peter said the angel that he is going before you into Galilee. There you will see him as he told you. Now let's just ponder for a moment on these words.

I want to pose and answer three simple questions. Tell what? What are they to tell? First of all that the body of Jesus the Nazarene who was really crucified, really buried, because he was really dead, is now really risen again. And his body is not a corpse.

That was the first ingredient in the message that these women were commanded to declare. Now without that you see there could be nothing else. This is the foundation of the Christian message.

That our Lord Jesus really died as the bearer instead of sinners. And that he was buried and that he rose again and his body is not in the tomb. Without that fact there could be nothing more of any real significance to tell.

Since that fact is proven then the whole case that follows is at least a case that makes sense. What else could have happened to the body? Well you say as others have said in previous ages the Jews might have stolen it. Or the Romans might have stolen it.

But just pause a moment. Had the Jews or the Romans stolen the body of Jesus they surely would have been eager to show that they had possession of it. Because you see when once it grips the disciples that Jesus is alive from the dead they go out to preach and they charge all those involved in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ with the greatest sin against God in condemning him and in crucifying him.

They indict the Romans and they indict the Jews very especially. They put it like this, the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. God meant his son to be the most important stone in the building of his work.

You disowned him, you threw him aside, you cast him aside as an unwanted stone. But God has raised him from the dead. The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.

God has turned your whole concept of things upside down. I say had the Romans or the Jews had the body of Jesus they would have shown it they would have brought it out and said no no your charges don't stick against us. Here is the body we have it.

What happened of course was the exact opposite. Some Romans and many Jews when they were when they were given the opportunity of hearing the full tidings of the good news repented of their sin and turned for pardon and for peace and became Christian men and women. Just imagine it, proud arrogant Romans calling Jesus Lord, the very title they gave to the Emperor.

Persuaded that he was now none other than the Son of God and the destined Savior of men and as such they trusted him as their own. So they were to declare in the first place tell what? That the body of Jesus the Nazarene who was crucified and buried is no longer in the tomb, he's risen. Tell what? Tell that he planned to keep his promised rendezvous with his disciples in Galilee.

I guess I see things very simply but this simple fact really grips my soul whenever I read it. You see Jesus planned, we were we were studying it, Mark's record of it just a few Sundays ago in chapter 14. Jesus said to them you will all fall away for it is written I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.

He told his disciples that before his death. You're all going to be scattered abroad he says like a crowd of frightened sheep. The Prophet in the Old Testament foresaw that and foretold that but then he said he ended his statement but after I am raised up I will go before you into Galilee.

I mean to rise from the dead and I mean to go before you and I'm telling you where I'm going to I'm going to our beloved Galilee where I called you in the first place and where we spent most of our time together and I'm going before you into Galilee so you know where I'll be and you can meet me there. Now the cross and the death and the ignominy and the burial has not caused him to change his plans one iota. That's the glory of it.

He bore the anguish. We saw the mangled form on Golgotha's brow. We see the blood flowing.

We see the crown of thorns placed upon his head. We recognize the ignominy but listen my friend his plans needed no changing no revision. He says tell them I'm going to Galilee just as I told them.

The cross was no tragedy in his estimation. It was an event ordained of God accepted as a necessity by him as the will of God and now the plan continues and the program goes on. What a heartlift that was when those dear women really had time to take it in and the grace.

Tell who? If that's the message they are to tell then tell who? Well tell his disciples and Peter. Oh there are so many precious things hidden there but the one thing as far as the disciples are concerned is this you see Jesus still cared for his disciples. The last few we have of them is of as a crowd of frightened sheep that have scattered everywhere when he was crucified.

They didn't know what to do. They were nonplussed as if he hadn't told them anything at all about it. They're frightened and bewildered and scattered.

You can imagine the kind of talk that went on among them. I don't know the Bible doesn't say this and I allow my imagination perhaps too much reign here but don't you think they would have been a little bit angry with Peter? And don't you think that they said to themselves that they could kick themselves that Judas had been with them so long and they didn't recognize him to be the traitor he was? And don't you think they wanted to kick themselves that they did not recognize some duty that they could perform to their Lord and did perform right up to the end? They hadn't done it. They did nothing that he asked them.

They did everything other than that but he cared for them. The most unworthy among them. Now these three women have come out so early in the morning with their spices to pay their respects so they evidently show their affection for him and their love of him if not their faith in him.

But you know a way back there in Jerusalem in an upper room there's a seven or so of them huddled together and they will not come out into the streets for any money. They're ashamed to look men in the face and they're afraid. What are they to say about one who was crucified as a scoundrel and the off-scouring of society? What can they do? What are they to say? Whether they loved him anymore or not is a question.

But he loved them. That's what I want you to notice. Whatever their thoughts of him he wanted them to be blessed.

He loved them still. And the capstone to that of course is this. That he tells these women to go very especially to Simon Peter.

Tell my disciples all of them all of them who sinned and forsook me and fled but especially Peter. Tell my disciples and Peter. Why? You see this proved to the women that he was exactly the same person as he was before he was risen from the dead.

They had known him in those days as the great pardoner of sin. He not only touched the physical leper he gathered the moral lepers into his arms and he said thy sins are forgiven thee. Go in peace.

And here he is telling the very one who denied him with oaths and curses. Telling the women go and tell Peter I'm alive. He's thinking of Peter.

He loves Peter still. You know some of us here this morning may need precisely this word. You've denied him.

You've run away from him. You're not in the post of duty. If you were where you ought to be this morning you wouldn't be here.

You might be in Japan. You might be in the Middle East. You might be somewhere.

But you've betrayed your post and you've run away. But I want to tell you my friend he loves you still who set his eternal love upon you. It does not wax and wane.

Who tell these things? And I find this almost as thrilling as what we've encountered already. Who are to be the emissaries of such glorious tidings to the disciples and to Peter? None other than that small insignificant group of women folk whose names had never set them apart from others on any account whatsoever. And whose credentials were simply that they loved their Lord enough to get up early in the morning with a few spices that they had bought to go to the tomb and desire to pay their respects to him as a dead Savior.

They were the preachers. They were the heralds. They preached to the men that Jesus was risen.

They announced the glad tidings that the crucified was no longer in the tomb. They became the heralds of the fact that we have an undying, unconquerable Savior. A handful of nobodies.

But you see with a message such as this you don't need anybody with considerable excellence to declare the message. And this is why it is a principle in the New Testament. God chooses the foolish and the ignorant and the nobodies to confound the wise.

How can he do that? Because the message is so great. He can do with fools in his name because the message is so wonderful. Were it not for that many of us would never have been called.

There are men and women who are too wise to preach the gospel. They would take the glory to themselves. But our Lord, because he's the risen, reigning monarch of all the ages, can afford to take nobodies out of their places and say, go and tell.

He can do that because of the glory of the message. And despite the weakness and the frailty of the messenger, he does his work nevertheless. And he saves and sanctifies men and sends them out in his name.

Hallelujah. He is risen indeed. And has appeared to Simon, as one of the Gospels tell us later on.

Now I conclude. This is the exciting fact that lies at the base of the Christian faith. Jesus Christ is not simply a figure in history, much less a character in mythology.

He's no mere subject written about in a book, nor even an ideal for living. Oh, he's much, much more than that. He is the ongoing, ever-living Lord of life and of death.

He died, really died. He rose, really rose, and he lives on in the power of his endless life to save those who trust in him. Now you see, one consequence of that is this.

You can't play fast and loose with a man, with a person like this. He's too great to be trifled with. And if having heard that this is so, and it is so, you dismiss him as if he were but an ordinary person, I say to you in all sincerity and with all honestness of heart, honesty of heart, you'll have to answer for it.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. So the Jews are rejected who rejected him. And the Romans are rejected who rejected him.

And you and I will be rejected if we reject him. And my final word, and it may sound strange to you at first hearing, dare I put it in these terms, a word of advice in the light of this passage. You and I do well to get to know his angels a little bit better.

Now this is not a familiar theme, but I want you to know this, that our Lord thinks very highly of his angels, and he entrusts some very important matters to their care. Now lest you think I've gone off my theme, hang on one minute. One day he's coming back again with his angel train.

And he has told us in his word that he will command the angels to gather in bundles the tares, the wasted lives of men that have come to naught despite the fact that they've heard about him. And he has already commissioned his angels that on that day they should gather the tares to be cast into eternal fires, and to gather the wheat into his barn. May the Easter fact meet with a corresponding Easter faith in your heart and mine.

And when at last we shall hear the sound of the archangel and the trump of God, we shall be glad that having known that he was crucified for our sins and risen for our justification, we not only believed but we became the heralds of glad tidings to old and young, near and far. And we got involved not only in person, but as far as our positions are concerned, and to us to live was Christ. So that to die is gain.

Let us pray. Father in heaven, we bow before you before the great mystery of this momentous event that we remember today. Forgive us for our folly in unbelieving faith wilts in this world if left to itself.

And in many of our lives it has become like a wilted flower. Oh Lord, grant us to see the firm foundation upon which you ask us to repose our faith in Christ. And having so done to discover for ourselves that he is indeed the contemporary one who is always ahead of the edge and of the time, with whom we shall never catch up until he takes us up to be with himself.

Hear our prayers and receive those among us who come to you with penitence and come perhaps to acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and Savior for the first time. Oh Lord, receive us this morning and seal the work of your grace in each of our hearts, that we may be worthy of the privilege with which we are entrusted in Christ our Lord. Amen.

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