

# (1986 Prairie Series) 4 - Rediscovering Christ

by Major Ian Thomas

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*Peter's conversion and the rediscovery of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and the understanding of the scriptures in a new and deeper way.*

**Duration:** 1:19:19

**Scripture:** Luke 22:32, Luke 24:49, John 5:39, John 14:6, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:11, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, 1 Peter 1:18-19, 1 John 1:1-2

**Topics:** "Prairie Series", "Resurrection Power", "Living in Christ"

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## Description

Major Ian Thomas emphasizes the transformative power of recognizing Christ's resurrection in the life of believers, particularly through the experience of Peter. He illustrates how Peter's denial and subsequent conversion led to a profound understanding of the necessity of Christ's sacrifice and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Thomas explains that true Christian living is not about self-effort but about allowing Christ to live through us, highlighting the importance of faith and divine empowerment. He encourages believers to embrace their identity in Christ and to share His life with others, moving beyond mere religious activity to a genuine relationship with the risen Lord.

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## Transcript

Said Peter This voice we heard Which came from heaven when we were with him in the holy mount But that which then was so utterly unmeaningful Only in the light of the more sure word of prophecy Became charged with divine Significance Peter was converted Do you remember how the Lord Jesus Luke 22 32 Said something to Peter that must have been at that time somewhat bewildering to him said he I prayed for you Peter and When you're converted Strengthen the brethren That Must have come as quite a shock To Peter when you are converted Long since he had considered himself to be one of the most devoted of the devotees of the Lord Jesus surely Anna a Disciple a name to be an apostle when the art converted Strengthen the brethren and And then immediately you remember when the Lord Jesus warned his disciples when the shepherd is smitten you like frightened sheep will scatter and Somewhat to justify his affirmation that he was a True disciple of Jesus Christ immediately Peter said that all men forsake you I Will never forsake If needs be I go to jail or die for you But the Lord Jesus wasn't all that impressed He didn't challenge Peter's sincerity his sentimental attachment his sincere affection His zeal or enthusiasm But He knew Peter's heart a man who stilled him then didn't want the cross Nor believe in the resurrection He said Peter before the cock crows twice You will have denied me three times And of course Peter was that much more indignant But there came in a servant girl you're one of his and He denied him within

touching distance three times until to add color to his denial with Curses and oaths like the Galilean fisherman.

He had been he said I know not this man And the cock The Lord Jesus never said a word he just looked straight into Peter's eyes and He fled Weeping bitterly It's a wonderful thing in your life When the cock crows For you see Peter then graduated out of despair out of the bitterness of self-discovery at last he was recognizing the bankruptcy of his soul And you see when the cock crows it heralds the dawn Of a new day and From that time on you see the Sun began to rise I Think this is what Peter had in mind When he said this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the Holy Mount we have also a more sure word of prophecy one unto you do well that you take heed as Unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day And the day star rise in your hearts He said it was only in the light of this more sure word of prophecy that finally I discovered the need of all that God had Purpose to accomplish in his own incarnate son who had laid down his sinless life that reconciling act That would restore peace between a guilty sinner and a holy God and make it possible for him without doing violence to his own Righteousness to restore to him all that was lost in Adam in the day that he fell which was the day that man died the Sun rose In My life when I realized the need for what he did Because of what I've done and who he is to take the place Of what I am Not redeemed with corruptible things of silver and gold But with the precious blood of God's dear son as of a lamb without blemish not drifting to disaster but verily for ordained before ever the world was being born again by his resurrection from the dead as He laying down that life that he alone of all men possessed on earth since Adam fell that life Restored to him might now by him in us be restored to those who are numbered amongst the redeemed who pled Cleansing through his blood and now become the recipients of his divine indwelling by the gift to them of his Holy Spirit Peter's converted Say where did he get his new Bible?

The more sure word of prophecy that now had come alive and Given him that divine revelation that made So significant to him all that then had been So unmeaningful as our Lord Jesus as we discussed last evening together with Moses and Elijah Talked of that Decease that he would accomplish a Jerusalem. Where do you get the new Bible? Turn with me for a moment to the gospel of Luke the last chapter 24 You remember what the Lord Jesus said To Peter James and John as they came down from the Mount of Transfiguration 9th verse 17th chapter of Matthew You'll remember said he to them not a word of the things that you've seen or heard there in the mountain not a word Until the Son of Man is Risen from the dead It was the resurrection of our Lord Jesus that Transformed the lives of Peter James John all the others named to be apostles and those who on that Fantastic day Entered into the good of that for which the Lord Jesus had died Becoming the recipients as God's gift to them of his resurrection life When the two disciples who had encountered the Lord Jesus on the road to Emmaus came bursting into the upper room Who had ridiculed the women because they said that Jesus was alive.

I don't tail said thee said they to them And Explained how he had Become recognizable to them as they sat around their table he their guest playing the role of host two pairs of eyes watching one pair of hands and they saw the print of the nails and they knew him and suddenly disappeared out of their sight and they came Told what things were done in the way verse 35 at that Luke's gospel 24 How the Lord Jesus was known to them in the breaking of bread and as they thus speak Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and said peace beyond here But they shrieked in terror Frightened suppose that they'd seen a spirit rather than believe that the women were right or the testimony Corroborated by the two who encountered him on the road to Emmaus. They'd rather believe that he was a ghost But Said the Lord Jesus to them why you troubled why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Didn't you hear what these two told you about my hands

have a look in my hand and For good measure have a look at my feet Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself I am I Handle me and see touch me You'll find I'm pretty substantial for a ghost Touch me Come on Peter touch me. Come on.

Come on touch me Don't think Peter was all that enthusiastic He was sort of going green around the years have you ever touched a ghost I Imagine I imagine the Lord Jesus turned away from Peter and said John come on Peter scared you touch me. Come on Yes, one more step and you're there. Come on.

Come on And he touched him and he was real He was real and flung his arms around his neck And when they all saw that he was real they too came and gathered around him. We're told they could hardly believe for joy That's what you are Now you might think I'm making that up Well, I may be reading a little bit between the lines, but I think I'm right Keep the place then Luke 24 and just look for a moment at the first chapter first epistle first verse of John 1 John chapter 1 and verse 1 We know of whom John here writes because he thus begins the gospel in the beginning was the word the word was with God was God by him all things were made without him was not anything made that was made in him was life that life Which is the light of men? That which gives to man the moral competence to shine to reflect the glory to discharge that office Which man was made so that all creation looking at man would know what God was like That which was from the beginning says John he in the first verse of his first epistle of The word of life our Lord Jesus Whom said he we've heard Seen with our eyes looked upon and our hands have handled What does he mean? Well, he's he's thinking back to that moment in the upper room and the Lord Jesus Scared them stiff as he risen from the dead appeared and he said handle me touch me. He said we touched him We touched him But the life was manifested verse 2 the life was manifested he whom we thought was dead and buried We buried him the life was manifested.

We've seen it.

We bear witness We show unto you that eternal life who was with the father was manifested to us that which we have seen and heard declare We unto you that you also may have Fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son Jesus Christ and says John 4th verse this first chapter These things right we unto you that your joy may be full We want you to have the same full-blooded joy that became ours in the day that we touched him Peter put it later in the first chapter of his first epistle joy unspeakable and Full-of-glory a joy that was ours then that could never be described in any known vocabulary unspeakable He'd begun to enter into this superlative of Christian life I thought the Lord Jesus meant when he said I'm come that you might have life that quality of

life That is in an entirely new dimension Life more abundant so that you can reign in life by one Christ Jesus and be more than conquerors Your joy Was the first consequence that was theirs in their rediscovery of the Lord Jesus in the power of his resurrection, but what else Back in the Luke chapter 24 and The 44th verse said the Lord Jesus to them These are the words which I speak unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled Which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me Then opened he their understanding That they might understand the scriptures nothing wrong with the scriptures Never has been never will be there had been then something as still today wrong With our understanding But our risen Lord Jesus opened their

understanding that they might understand the scriptures It said unto them thus it is written and thus it behove Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day But I came into this world born according to the scriptures I lived and died and rose again and I ascended to be with my father according to the

scriptures and As we've discussed already the Lord Jesus Opening their understanding So enlightened them that at last they could see that he didn't drift to disaster that he was born dead on schedule that he lived that sinless life so that he could die dead on schedule and Accomplish the redemptive act that would precipitate that regenerated purpose that would restore to man the life that was lost in Adam a new Bible And once they saw that the Lord Jesus the Living Word

was the Substance of the shadow the written word then both the Bible and Jesus began to make sense in an entirely new way And their hearts to began to burn within them as did those of the two disciples who met him on the road to Emmaus You see there were two mistakes that were being made at the time of our Lord Jesus being here on earth one by the theologians and the other by the disciples and And In point of fact they there were same mistake, but in reverse you see the theologians detached the written word from the living word The Lord Jesus rebuked them those who prided themselves on their biblical scholarship He said you search the scriptures in them you think you have eternal life, but they are they that testify of me John 5 39 But said he you will not come to me that you might have

life That which I alone can give and if you study the Bible without coming to the one of whom the Bible testifies Then you've got a dead Bible.

It can't possibly make sense Study the Bible without that divine revelation that only he can give who authored the book and who delights to take the things that are Christ's and reveal them unto us study the Bible without that revelation All you can do is deduce from the scriptures that you study without divine illumination deduce your own theological and philosophical Propositions and finally you'll turn them into a systematic theology on on the base of that systematic theology that comprises the theological propositions of Those who study a Bible without revelation you'll produce what you'll call quotes a system called Church And Then in the course of time you'll vest in that church the authority to decide what is truth and error it'll become the final authority of faith and practice a System organized on the basis of a Bible studied without divine revelation man-made philosophy man-made theological propositions and then one day The world hears a baby cry the biggest thing God ever did and Jesus Christ is born the way the truth and the life The truth about the way how to become a Christian he died the truth about the life How to be a Christian the one who rose again to share his life with us live that life in us and live that life through the truth Eternal Unchanging the same yesterday today and forever and the truth walks by But the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ is incompatible to the then church that apostate form of Christianity And when the truth walked by incompatible to the church the church did then what the church does now perpetuates the church And crucifies the truth that Was the first mistake being made by those who detached the written word from the living word so they had a Bible that didn't make Sense so he came unto his own and his own received him not he was unrecognizable But the mistake you see that was being made by the disciples were that they detached the living word their Lord Jesus for whom they had an immense amount of personal affection and in Whose service with no little loyalty and enthusiasm they Got involved they detached him as the living word from the written word So the justice of the theologians the Bible didn't make sense because they detached the Bible from the living Christ The living word so you see to the disciples Jesus Christ didn't make sense because they detached him from that Revelation that God had given of why he had come that's why they didn't want the cross And that's why they didn't believe in the resurrection So you see the Lord Jesus was always doing the wrong thing and saying the wrong thing When finally as foreshadowed in the prophecy of Zechariah the Lord Jesus ended in the city of Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and the crowds were Outstrewn his pathway with palm branches and shouting hosanna to the highest The disciples really got excited the movements off the ground.

This is the day we've been waiting for fantastic But then probably Peter nudged John said I hope he doesn't spoil it John probably said he will he always does And in Chased the money changes out of the house of God upset their tables got rid of the animals and said you've turned my father's house into a den of thieves And Insulting groups of disciples outside said he's done it again. He's torpedoed the whole thing. This can only end in disaster and To them it did But now you see he's opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures Thus it is written and thus it behoved Christ to suffer to rise from the dead the third day that repentance and remission of sins might be preached in his name among all nations Added to their new joy a new Bible that made sense added now to their new Bible a new message Not just the repentance that they had preached as recorded for us when Jesus sent them out two by two Including Judas Iscariot in Mark chapter 6 not just that men should repent bad people be good naughty people Be sorry for their sins said Lord Jesus now you can tell people who are sorry that they can be saved You can go out and preach repentance and forgiveness new joy new Bible new message and said the Lord Jesus your witnesses of These things I'm going to remove the prohibition.

I'm going to lift the band for these were those to whom the Lord Jesus Had pronounced that total prohibition Matthew 16 Matthew 17 that they should tell nobody that he Jesus was the Christ now He said you're going to be my witness Because now you come to see the intelligent purpose which my father sent me incarnate to lay down my life a ransom for many now finally Recognizing that I am alive again. You've touched me. You're convinced to the truth Before too long you're going to enter into the good of it And it won't be long to before you demonstrate the fact of it preach in the power of it and live in the joy of it Life for you is never ever going to be the same again They rediscovered you see the Lord Jesus in the power of his resurrection And behold said the Lord Jesus I Send the promise of my father upon The tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high Though I'm releasing you from the prohibition though now I'm going to send you out to the outermost ends of the earth do not embark upon your new Responsibility until you have received the new enabling for added you see to the new Joy, the new Bible the new message the new responsibility was to be the new enabling powerful and high Not an impersonal power But also to know here all of us know here tonight somebody who would come to seal that redemptive Transaction in the gift to the redeemed sinner of the life of Jesus Christ by the presence of his Holy Spirit through whom once the father Had lived in and through the son and through whom now the Lord Jesus risen from the dead was to come and live in and through They judicially executed in the person of another So That reckoning themselves to be dead and to that Adamic principle of self-sufficiency they might now reckon themselves to be alive unto God through Jesus Christ Recognize that the father would know only one who had the right to live in and through them Clothing himself on earth with that new body to which they as individual members in particular would be added To his new body corporate He the head and they subject to his supreme and unchallengeable jurisdiction This was the revelation that came to them somebody in Somebody the Lord Jesus by the Holy Spirit clothing himself on earth with their humanity Peter was converted Recognize the need for the shed blood of the Lord Jesus is of a land without blemish and recognized that he can only be empowered from on high in the measure in which he shared that Resurrection with the Lord Jesus receiving that life the father restored to the son restored now by the son to him What is it really that Peter came to understand?

That the Lord Jesus miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit had to come as he came to be what he was In The sinlessness of that humanity in which at all times there was seen the perfection of deity So he had to come as he came Not born as you and I were born uninhabited by God inhabited only by sin he born uninhabited by sin Inhabited only by God So that he could turn to his disciples and say the prince of this world is come but he hath nothing in me From the moment of conception Jesus being full of the Holy

Ghost and that doesn't mean that he had some ecstatic experience and simply meant that he settled though God for the role of man though the Creator he was prepared to play the role of creature and He knew that he is God and so created man that the presence of the Creator within the creatures indispensable to his humanity He knew that man Could only be recognized as distinguished from the animal kingdom by quality of life that would have no possible explanation But God himself and so humbled himself emptied himself made himself nothing All that he knew was God a man to be without God So the father could be the sole author of everything he did and said and was without my father.

I can do nothing He that has seen me Seen him that sent me Peter discovered he had to come as he came to be what he was in the sinlessness of his humanity But he recognized now that he had to be what he was so that he could do what he did redeem For he alone Was that one man on earth? Who was born both physically and spiritually alive and therefore the only one who could suffer that death that had already been incurred in Adam When he fell Redeemed not with corruptible things or what money can buy But with the precious precious precious blood of God's dear son. He's discovered the need for the redemptive act He had to come as he came to be what he was to do what he did But Peters discovered something more than that. He had to do what he did so that he might have what is his So That claiming that which he had created on the grounds of redemption The father might present to him every boy girl man or woman who in true repentance toward God Recognizing their guilt would turn in simple childlike faith to Christ and embrace his grace God's riches at Christ's expense Paying a bill a debt.

He did not owe because we owed a debt We could not pay Not that we might get out of hell in the heaven though, that's gloriously true and I'm glad But so that he might come once more out of heaven into men Had to come as he came to be what he was had to be what he was to do what he did He had to do what he did so that he could have what is his So that on the day of Pentecost He might reinvade the humanity of forgiven sinners and they be endued with that power from on high which is somebody in somebody Christ In you your only hope of glory But of course the marvelous thing is this that when? Doing what he did so that he might have what is his the moment he has what is his we have Who he is? That's it We're restored to that relationship we in him and he and us as once he was in the father and the father in the son So we had to come as he came to be what he was to do what he did so that he might have what is His and we have all that he is Magnificently furnished by his divine indwelling unto all good works So that we can step out into the dawn of every new day in the measure which we're prepared to Present our humanity to his divine indwelling and know that that day is going to be as big as God so long as we have Entered into what he describes. Do you remember that in the first chapter of his first epistle like precious faith? That disposition on the part of man that recognizes the indispensability of his creative There without faith. It's impossible to please God because whatsoever is not a faith that doesn't derive that which doesn't derive from the Activity that we invoke of Divine origin by a disposition that says I cannot you never said I could but you can and always said you would Whatsoever is not a faith is sin.

It simply perpetuates the satanic creed of human self-sufficiency Peter had learned you see that Apart from our faith in the Lord Jesus that invokes his divine activity. He won't do What we can't do But he recognizes also now That without Christ he can't do what Christ won't do There it is in all its sublime simplicity Apart from our faith in the Lord Jesus. He won't do what we can't do and apart from Jesus Christ.

We can't do what he won't do So, how do you end up? dead last And peter had found that out in the bitterness of despair when the cock crew The futility of trying to live a life then that he never had But now he realizes redeemed in the blood of Jesus born again by his resurrection He's a man on earth invaded again by his creator. God. He never ever more than man And the Lord Jesus never ever less than God

Isn't that amazing of our Lord Jesus as I have already reminded you he never ever less than God came into this world Insisted that for 33 years He should behave as though he were never ever ever more than man didn't have to do that He could have stayed in heaven and let us perish man In his arrogant conceit and pride struts across this planet and though he's never ever more than man behaves as though he were never ever less than God That's the difference But true repentance recognizes my office as man that to be and the office of God his to act Then the world no longer sees what i'm trying to do for him the world at last sees only what he can do through me That's the great discovery of the risen christ Had to come as he came to be what he was to do what he did so he might have what is his and we have All that is he is So that we might be what he was Living the power of his divine indwelling the christian life the life that he lived then lived now by him in you and me As the supreme privilege of placing ourselves at his disposal On numerous occasions it was my great joy and I was reminded of this by somebody from that particular church congregation to minister christ in oakwood baptist church in toronto One of the men who attended those meetings in those days who I believe now lives in london Geddes broadhurst.

He gave me a piece of paper Hmm and my heart nearly always sinks when somebody comes with a determined look on their face in my direction with a piece of paper In their hands because it's nearly always poetry And most of it's awful Like the man who said do you think there's enough fire in my poetry and his friend said I don't know But I don't think there's enough of your poetry in the fire and that was a little Unkind Hmm But this was among the few that are good This is what he said when jesus died for me on calvary. He paid the penalty for all my sin. He suffered all the pain My simple heart to gain And now his spirit Witnesses within I'm, just a suit of clothes that jesus wears My body is the house in which he lives.

My voice is his to talk. My feet are his to walk I'm, just a suit of clothes that jesus wears He rose again to bring abundant life to justify before his father's face. I lived no more, but he lives out his life through me I'm, just a vessel fashioned By his grace As life goes on I fear not come what may he carries all my burdens and my cares for me the battle's done For he's the victory one I'm, just a suit of clothes that jesus wears This was the sublime discovery that peter made That his was not To plumb the depths of the infinite potential of a human being until he equates his creator But in all humility to recognize that apart from the god who made him he is nothing has nothing can do nothing And allow the illimitable resources of deity to be released through his humanity on earth To the timeless benediction of his fellow man In other words peter discovered that the christian life doesn't derive from carnal sweat a man no matter how nobly trying as he did Only to fail And to hear the cock crow Not carnal sweat but divine unction Do you like just to turn to the 16th chapter for a moment Of the book of leviticus Leviticus and chapter 16 This is what makes the bible so exciting to me Just have a look at it The lord said to mooses speak unto erin thy brother that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before The mercy seat which is upon the ark that he die not on pain of death.

I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat he shall Verse four Put on the holy linen coat. He shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh He shall be girded with the linen girdle and with the linen mitre shall he be attired. These are holy garments Holy garment has that ever had any particular significance to you A linen breeches a linen girdle linen mitre holy garments I'll remember the best commentary on the bible is the bible throws an immense amount of light on most commentaries ezekeiel chapter 44 Look at ezekeiel in chapter 44 and you'll see the commentary Speaking of the priesthood verse 16 of the 44th chapter of ezekeiel They shall enter into my sanctuary and they shall come near to my table to minister unto me and they shall keep my charge And it shall come to pass that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments Verse 18.

They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads and they shall have linen breeches upon their loins linen Middle of verse 17 no wool shall come upon them Whilst they minister in the gates of the inner court and within only linen and never wool why not End of verse 18 they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat. Isn't that great? God cannot tolerate sweat People who come, you know sweating it out into his presence mopping their brows as though they had been keeping god in business He can't tolerate it He doesn't need your sweat Only that divine unction that flowing river from the innermost being That derives from the endless source in Jesus Christ himself whose life we share Verse 23 they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane They'll cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean that which derives from noble human endeavor, but is Nothing, but the wood the hay and the stubble of a wasted life but that which otherwise derives from the person of my dear son enthroned within the heart of those who know their own wickedness and Recognize his lordship as the redeemer who's cleansed them from their sin reconciled them to God so that he might invade afresh their humanity No sweat You know as a young man once I went to a voice trainer Once She didn't really think it was worth her while that I should go more than once I think it was a she She was very masculine You know buxom Hmm Almost frightening And before I'd even crossed over the threshold into her studio she barked at me She said expire I said expire I'm too young You know, I thought that was funny she didn't So I expired She said that isn't way that expire. This is the way to expire man.

Did she expire? And she was about she was about half the science by the time she'd expired then she barked at me again. She said inspire So I inspired And she said that isn't a way to inspire before she inspired she expired And when she'd expired man, did she inspire? She sucked so hard the pictures came off the wall I You know the grand piano began to move across I thought she was gonna I thought she was gonna swallow it And then she said this it was the most famous marvelous sermon I've ever heard She said you'll never ever ever learn to inspire till first you have learned to expire You'll only perspire Now wasn't that good? Now that's the whole Christian life in a nutshell Hmm Until you've learned to expire. You'll never learn to inspire.

You'll only perspire carnal sweat But you'll never know the joy of divine unction I am crucified with Christ Expire it's all I'm fit for Obviously in my present condition apart from who he is who created me to be inhabited by my creator I am nothing have nothing can do nothing and because of that alien agency that has invaded my soul that perpetrates the Adamic Creed of human self-sufficiency That violates the sovereignty of an almighty God that clenches its fist hostile to his demands Refuses to be bossed around not subject to his law. Neither indeed can be I'm I'm fit for nothing more nor less than what happened to the one who took my place sentenced executed and buried I'm crucified with Christ Nevertheless, I live it not I not I but please don't get me wrong Not only have I expired I've inspired on the grounds of that redemptive act where I was identified with my Lord Jesus in his atoning work upon the cross I've become the recipient of his divine indwelling his Holy Spirit And I walk by faith I walk in the Spirit for every new situation into which every new step takes me I breathe out To what I am and I breathe in For all that he is Walking by faith Invoking his divine activity looking to Jesus expecting him to get into business I don't deserve it But then he never said I did but he made me that way He made me in such a way that his presence now as God within me is as indispensable as once the Presence of the Father on earth was indispensable to him and it's enough for me to be As his disciple like my Lord his servant as my master You know, I was converted when I was a kid of 12 I was brought up in a good middle-class home in London A very respectable home. My parents were good people Cared for all my normal daily needs sent me to a good school.

I had excellent education. You might not think so, but I did. That wasn't the school's fault that was mine. If I didn't learn too much I had the chance and we wore that thin veneer of christianization, which is the mark of our western civilization. We were no more christians than the back leg of a donkey. But we would have charged anybody with insulting us, sued them for libel if they had suggested we weren't christians. What do you think we are cannibals? I mean we went to church on sunday morning always once never twice. Once was respectable twice would have been fanatical. We all had bibles. We never read them.

That would have been vulgar. You know what? I mean that thin veneer that stamps a home as being nominally christian without any of the substance of that. Which is to be theirs who've claimed redemption through the shed blood of our lord. Jesus now live in the power of his resurrection born of god. But a kid friend of mine who one year before had accepted christ in a boy's camp in england. Took me with him to his bible class.

He'd been reared in the same circumstance and that year before he had been converted. Discovered what it was all about and he was so delighted that he being a good friend wanted me to share the good thing he had found so he took me to that camp. I didn't go to become a christian because I thought why I was one I didn't know what a christian was. But I must be one because my name was thomas. And my face was white and I was born in england. What better qualification for getting to heaven than that? I went primed to sleep in a tent and go bathing and eat ice cream and have all the other things that you know are fun for a kid on vacation. But there was a man who spoke to us every morning and every evening. His name was lawrence head. We called him bubbly head because he frothed at the mouth when he spoke. And that was a great help to me. Because you see instead of watching the earwigs going up the tent pole.

I watched the bubbles on the side of his mouth. And it was a little game that I played all the time he was talking. You see which was which was the bubble that was going to burst first. And I kept score right and left. You see. One time right was three ahead and then the left side would catch up and overtake two ahead. It was heaps of fun. And you see as soon as one bubble burst that was the end of that game. And it started all over again because a new bubble began to develop. He had bubbles galore. He produced bubbles like a chicken laying eggs. Well, it kept me looking. But he had that, you know beautiful knack of being able to communicate. Kids of my ilk there are about 150 of us. And on the third night of camp from john's gospel chapter 10. I'm the good shepherd. The good shepherd laid down his life for the sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them. And they follow me and I give to them eternal life. They will never perish. Nobody will ever pluck them out of my hand. That's the first time i'd ever heard that. And very ably he explained to kids of our age just what it meant for the lord Jesus god's dear incarnate son to die that we might be forgiven. How that if we would only recognize his voice who calls us by name? He would receive us as forgiven sinners and give us that quality of life, which alone is eternal. I didn't become a theologian in that week. I couldn't have explained many of the terms. But the holy spirit graciously ministered to my heart and showed me that god loved me enough to give his son to die for me. So that my sins might be forgiven and that I might have a quality of life that till then i've never known. There was no invitation there was no. You know. After meeting or instruction, but at the end of that meeting he said, you know. If you've never thanked the lord Jesus for dying for you, don't you think it's time you did? Well, I thought that was pretty smart.

And so. At the end of the meeting when we all prayed I prayed myself very simply. Admitting myself to be the guilty sinner that I had come to know myself to be in those few days. Recognizing the love of god in christ and recognizing my need of him as my redeemer. I simply said lord Jesus nobody told me this before but I invite you to become my savior and he did. Quarter to nine saturday night 13th of august 1927. I could almost take you to the blade of grass if it was still there and it isn't. But that's where I was converting and

i've never ever had cause to doubt that In all the years since that that was the moment when I was reconciled to god My sins were forgiven and he for christ's dear sake said I will remember your sins no more And I had received Whatever it might then have meant to me eternal life I was god's child I was on the way to heaven And I was glad I didn't have any encouragement in my home They called me bible bill I had to share a room with a room with an older brother and he was very aggravated if I wanted to read my bible So he'd fling it across the room and I had to buy a flashlight and read it under the blankets But I did it because I loved the lord jesus and the bible the bible began to live to me You see it told me about him And I can honestly say that I had a genuine and sincere love for the lord Jesus and wanted so much to serve him by the age of 15 I was preaching in the open air in the parks of london hamstead heath I became the leader of the christian group at school We had a prayer meeting every morning before school began monday lunch hour.

We had a gospel meeting thursday evening a bible study And we did it because we loved christ we wanted to be a testimony in that school a public school I became a counselor later at the camps where I too had come to know christ seeking to help others To recognize that the lord jesus as he had died for me died for them By the age of 17. I decided I was graduating from high school that i'd become a doctor going to london university St. Bartholomew's hospital so that as a doctor then I might go to africa Nigeria was my target And during those two years of university education Trained to become a doctor i'm happy to tell you I never became a doctor That's why so many people are still alive But after two years studying medicine Heavily involved with no little enthusiasm and all the activities of intervarsity fellowship I Came to that moment in my life of sheer despair utterly exhausted Desperately disappointed at the futility of all my endeavors try as I would nothing happened I couldn't think of anybody who definitively I had led to know christ redemptively I'd witnessed to my friends given away tracks always at the prayer meeting recognized to be the one Upon whom folks could count if something needed doing And I didn't think that you know a big deal I was simply in love with christ and I wanted to be expendable in his service But baffled at my own impotence until finally with a breaking heart one night On the top fourth story of a victorian home in hamstead which was where my family lived and where I was born I got down on my knees in tears and said lord.

Jesus. I love you with all my heart I have no greater ambition, but to be a missionary. I want to evangelize the world, but i'm tired Exhausted Depressed Frustrated I'm burned out I Don't want to quit I can't quit being a christian.

You've redeemed me heaven's my home. I'm going to see you one day when I get there But I don't have what it takes What's the use of me going to africa to be as useless there as I have in england It wouldn't be fair to them. It wouldn't be fair to you and it wouldn't be fair to myself If somebody else has got what it takes i'll support them i'd give them all the encouragement I can i'll put my dollar in the plate But count me out I'm through I quit I thought he was going to be terribly disappointed I mean to lose a promising young man like me You know, it was almost in that moment of despair as though the lord jesus was right in the room And he said i'm the way the truth and the life And he captured my attention I said I get it and the life You see as the way i'd received him as the truth i'd proclaimed him as the life I'd never counted upon him I didn't realize you see that when the lord jesus gave himself for me.

He did that so he could give himself to me Nobody told me Please don't forget to tell Those whom you lead to the lord. Jesus is the crucified redeemer That he didn't die to get them out of hell and into heaven but to get him out of heaven into them You see if you lead a boy to christ and you forget to tell him that the

christ who died for him rose again to live Within him. How are you going to how are you going to teach him to live the christian life? All you can do is program him And they program me And everything they taught me was good read your bible every morning and every night and if you do that You'll have a good day.

If you don't you'll have a bad day Quiet time Well, I learned I learned that that was the methodology of living the christian life So if I for a good or bad reason didn't read my bible I had a bad day I had to have a bad day. They said i was going to have a bad day But she said I wasn't living through christ. I was living through a procedure It's a marvelously good thing to begin the day with god's word and end it with god's word But that isn't the christian life I was to witness to my friends go to prayer meeting attend bible class Have tracks in my pocket.

They programmed me But you see all I was trying to do was to re-educate an adamic nature to behave like a good bible believing evangelical And I discovered that the old adamic nature that is hostile to god had no enthusiasm Whatever save in that measure in by by virtue what I did other people would recognize how keen I was Thumped me on the back for my involvement And that was totally unsatisfying I suddenly discovered And I can honestly say I never heard it from the lips of man I never picked up a tract or a book in which it was explained I only knew the jesus who did his thing 2 000 years ago to get me out of hell and into heaven So that on earth now I could do all I could out of a sincere sense of duty and love affection and thankfulness For somebody who was up there in heaven peeping through the clouds watching me do it. There was a dichotomy between My christianity on earth good sound evangelical bible believing christianity a dichotomy between that and christ himself Unwittingly, you see i'd substituted christianity for christ as so many substitute religion for god and ritual for reality If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to god by the death of his son much more being reconciled. We shall be saved by his life This was an entirely new understanding saved by his life Nobody ever told me I was saved by the life of jesus christ They've told me again and again i'm saved by his death Well, I am in a limited sense from the penalty of my sin.

It gets me off the hook Changes my destination But all too often the lord jesus on that basis simply becomes the doormat upon which I work wipe my dirty feet And get out of hell and into heaven. He did die for me and in that limited sense I'm saved from the penalty of my sin, but that doesn't change my character That doesn't make me holy That doesn't give me the roots of righteousness He did so much more than just die for me He rose again from the dead as peter discovered that we might become partakes of the divine nature That he might become the source in us of his own divine activity He now once more the origin of his own image and the cause of his own effect the one who alone by his presence Is the dynamic of all his own demands and suddenly the truth dawned That all the things that I had been begging for for seven solid years Were already mine in christ. I didn't need a new experience I didn't need some psychedelic high All I needed to recognize was that the one who redeemed me as a boy at a quarter to nine on a saturday night 12 years of age was the one who at that very moment in time came to take up residence and for seven Weary years with all my activity i'd kept him unemployed out of business That's why it was such a relief for the lord.

Jesus when at last I discovered that for seven years I've been trying to live for him with the best will in the world a life that only he could live through me What a relief And in that moment, I said lord. Jesus. Thanks.

I see it now. It's all so clear and it was It was a moment of truth A moment of truth. I was just the glove He was the hand and a glove is as strong as the hand that's in it So long as I was prepared now as a cleansed sinner to clothe the mighty hand of god Then everything possible to him would become possible

to me within his jurisdiction I couldn't dictate to him what he was going to do.

I was simply the suit of clothes that Jesus wears the hands he could work with the feet he could walk with the lips he could speak with eyes to see with ears to hear with Mind to think with heart to love with added to the Lord I suddenly saw the exhilaration of being a member of his body on earth of which he is the head subject to his direction Exercising an authority that would never ever derive from me, but only by my submission to his authority Allowing Jesus Christ to be God Well, you know amazing thing happens in the next five weeks nothing sensational spectacular people just got saved that's all You know knocked on the door And they literally knocked on door And want to know how they could find Christ Christians will release from the frustration and futility of self-effort all that Despair that comes from doing your best for Jesus and know that you're achieving nothing Making a lot of noise and raising a lot of dust but nothing left when it's all settled and the shouting's over But you know those five weeks were hilarious And at the end of them and all I did was say thank you instead of please Not please give me strength suddenly. I realized he doesn't give me strength. He is my strength He doesn't give me victory is my victory.

I don't rush around trying to win souls for him I make myself available for him to do that Which is essentially his business the only one who can raise the dead and give life to the lifeless It was fantastic end of five weeks. He said you can't have my life and your program You can only have my life and my program So you're going to quit the university leave the medical school? And go up and down the British Isles and tell people what you've discovered that I'm alive not just in heaven But in them go on off you go. You don't have to If you want to you can go to Africa and be a missionary But without me And you can come back every three or four years with a little box of slides And then tell your story Well, I'd tried that route And it didn't take me long to decide within five weeks.

I quit And I've been to Africa And I've got a little box of slides in spite Of all that you see but there was something different now. It wasn't a program It wasn't even a field you see The need is the cold never there are a thousand needs do we have a thousand cold? That can only use to lead us to confusion we are called to Christ then he sends But he cannot send until you have responded to his call Not to a field not to the pastorate not to a pulpit not to a program The Lord Jesus says come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden when he calls it's to himself If any man thirsts let him come to me You're not called to the mission field you're not called to a pulpit you're not called to a program you're called to Christ And when as a member of your body you're available to him he'll send you how shall they Believe on him of whom they have not heard. How shall they believe on him? Of whom they have not heard How shall they hear without a preacher? How shall they preach except they be? sent Sent but you'll never know what it means to be sent and put until you've answered the call I Put down the British Isles.

It was my privilege simply to share Jesus Christ And let him loose in the hilarious expectation Not of anything that I could accomplish for him because I tried that and knew that without him I could do nothing But God so signally owned his testimony The witness of the scriptures that speak of our Lord Jesus and God honored his son War broke out seven years serving in the Royal Fusiliers. I reminded some folks the other day That's the most famous regiment in the British Army and largely responsible winning World War II though. We are thankful for those who helped Headquarters in the Tower of London and when war was over Reverting to the reserve of officers.

It was our privilege to establish In a beautiful old country home in the northwest of England Capon Ray Hall the torchbearer fellowship with Bible schools now circling the globe 17 or 18 of them can't quite remember but a way off in Australia New Zealand in Indonesia In India in Germany and Switzerland in France in Spain

And you see this is what god had in mind When in sheer despair finally I got to the place and quit and said god I can't And he in so many words said no I never said you could But I can And always said I would You But will not cannot and do not unless you let me all i'm looking for is a perfect heart That is prepared to say God show yourself strong on my behalf Because apart from who you are. I am nothing have nothing and I can do nothing But all that you are i've got I can't have more I need never have less You see I had my plans I dreamed my dreams I saw my vision I could recognize myself carving my way through the african bush But god Spoiled my picture And replaced it The artist Standing on the platform beneath the lofty cathedral dome Huh Step back to gaze at his own handiwork. It was magnificent.

It was intoxicating for sheer beauty And he drank it all in it was his own handiwork He did it his skill his artistry His genius and that he might drink it all in to better advantage. He stepped back and then again and still again and then again Until one last step would have sent him plunging to his death On the flagstone beneath him And at that moment his assistant on the platform looked up and with incredible presence of mind Leapt forward grabbed a bucket of paint and threw it all over that beautiful mural on the underside of the great cathedral dome And the artist leapt forward in a rage and said you've spoiled my picture Very quietly he said yes I spoiled your picture But I saved your life Which would you rather have Your picture or your life you'll live sir to paint again You know god God sometimes spoils your picture Maybe even this week he's been spoiling your picture You've been gazing at it Admiring your handiwork Evidencing god's power in your life, but it's your picture Which would you rather have your picture or his life You'll live to paint again But the hand that holds the brush Will be the hand of god The master I'm going to ask you in a moment to pray with me See we've come to a place in this conference as we have been listening to god's word So faithfully unfolded for us each morning in those bible hours And in all the other events in which we have been involved But you know truth demands a moral option So that we may not know only be instructed but that we might allow by our obedience to the truth the holy spirit to flesh it out in terms of our humanity And you know there's a boy a girl man a woman here and you're not even redeemed You may be just the mom or the dad of some student some high school kid or one who's graduating you're here as a relative a brother or a friend There are some of you younger ones who've been reared in a christian home and you've learned all the facts from your mother's knee You're not insincere you're not even hostile But you've never come to christ You've tried sometimes to live like a christian, but you've been trying to live a life you haven't got An awakened soul may be but you've never been regenerate born again Because jesus has never been invited by you personally to come into your heart and live there and clothe himself with you You've never said lord. Jesus.

Here's your suit of clothes. Have a good day Wouldn't it be a lovely thing if tonight you were to do that Wouldn't it be a lovely thing if you've been sweating it out pushing the car with a full tank doing your best for jesus? If suddenly you recognized The divine provision that god has made by virtue of who his son is living now where he does in your heart And you're prepared to bow yourself out and bow him in and say lord. Jesus.

No bravado. I don't make you any promises i'm simply available For you to reveal yourself through me as when and where you please i'm expendable to the uttermost ends of the earth I don't trust my own heart but you'll You'll do it you've said you would if i'd only let you I hardly know What the consequences will be I wouldn't even guess as to where it's going to put me but somehow hilariously in my heart tonight Lordy, I don't even care So long as I was sent and went and knew That i've been put So what i'm going to suggest is that we pray together Now i'm not going to ask you tonight to stand or raise your hand or look at me or even come to the front I'm, just going to ask you to pray To the lord jesus And it's just possible there's a

boy girl man or woman you don't even know how to pray In receiving christ, so the first thing i'm going to suggest is this very simply That I ask you christian folk and the vast bulk of you the vast vast majority here tonight can look back to that moment When you receive christ i'm going to ask you tonight because you love the lord jesus and therefore those for whom he died I'm going to ask you to help me help that boy girl man or woman who tonight would be too nervous Say to stand up or walk to the front or do anything else And if I asked them to do that they'd be facing the wrong issue The only issue i'm asking you face is faith To face is whether or not you really want the lord jesus to be your redeemer to live within your heart and share his life with you, that's the only The only issue i'm asking you to face And i'm going to ask these christian folks to pray Aloud after me in the same simple words more or less that I prayed as a kid unknown to anybody in my heart when christ redeemed me And they're going to pray after me not for themselves because you can only pray this prayer at once Because when he comes he comes to stay Forever Forever But they're going to pray these words aloud so that you without any embarrassment you can face the only issue I want you to face tonight Whether in true genuine repentance toward god knowing that you're the sinner that you are You want christ for the savior?

He came to be to reconcile you to god and come graciously To share his life with you on earth forever if that's true add your voice To ours and a marvelous marvelous thing will happen to me.

I may not know forever until we get to heaven It doesn't matter too much so long as the one person knows tonight to whom you're going to talk Lord jesus And then we'll just move on just in the same simple way but not at length, but quite briefly let's Unite then our voice and you who receive him tonight can join us in so doing and say lord jesus You're in business I don't know what it's going to involve but I know it's going to be marvelous All that you are In all that I am for time and eternity I want you to know that i'm expendable to the uttermost ends of the earth Let's pray I'm going to pray very simply As once I did as a child Christian folks are going to pray after me just sentence by sentence clearly allowed And without any embarrassment to you and i'm not tricking you i'm not

going to ask you to do anything after this Here tonight I'm not But if you want to know christ as your redeemer and you've never ever had that absolute assurance in your heart Would you forget that there is anybody here tonight but you and the lord jesus And as we seek because we love you to help you add your voice to ours make it the language of your heart You're not talking to me or anybody else save the lord jesus Jesus And a wonderful thing will happen He will accept you Though you don't deserve it You'll be born again Redeemed you'll become a child of god forgiven forever Let us pray dear lord jesus christ I know that on the cross No Though you never deserved it You were made sin Treated by god As though you had committed all sin In all time And you died To pay the debt To pay the

debt Your precious blood was shed To cleanse from sin I am one of those sinners lord jesus For whom you died I'm sorry My sin added to your load My sin But i'm so thankful That when you died lord jesus You remembered me I gladly receive you My redeemer To pay my debt To cleanse me from sin I received the forgiveness That I could never deserve But you so freely give And now I know Because you have promised I am redeemed My sins are gone By your holy spirit At this very moment You have come to live in me Forever never to leave me Nor to forsake me I am born again I'm a member of your body I share your life Thank you so much Thank you so much That I now am a child of god Now let's just thank him for the glorious prospect That is ours As we continue to pray in this simple way and all of us

can make this the language of our hearts Would you join me in the same simple way? as pray Dear lord jesus I thank you that you not only died But You rose again You're alive now And you're alive in me Thank

you for your strength Thank you for your victory Thank you for all that you plan To do through me in spite of me but because of who you are Living where you do In my heart I want to apologize lord jesus That i've hindered you so much In my stubborn self-will Misguided dedication Trying to do so much for you That only you can do through me But now I capitulate I quit And thank you For what you plan For my life I am available And eagerly anticipate Your rich blessing as each new day dawns As big as god As big as god Thank you for being my life My victory my future my god Anywhere To the

uttermost ends of the earth In your own dear and peerless name In your own dear and peerless name Jesus My lord Amen Just may I say this before I relinquish a platform Amen If tonight for the very first time you prayed as we did as I invited you so to do accepting christ I have the absolute right to tell you As he knows your heart and the sincerity with which you deliberately chose to receive him You have been redeemed You don't deserve it nor do I but that is his pledge And You you have the right to thank him That he's honored his word And you may say do you mean I can be saved without raising my hand or walking to the front or standing?

Yes of course Through that faith That takes And says thank you and lets god move redemptively into your life, but i'll tell you something In that others may not know that you've done that they can't help you too much Unless you let them know they want to help you.

They want to be your friend So may I urge you at the earliest opportunity? To let Your mom dad if you're a kid your brother sister or your child if you're a mom or a dad Or your pastor or your christian friend just let them know unashamedly excitedly. I receive christ. What do you think i'm redeemed? I never knew it was so simple.

I didn't deserve it, but I know i'm lost By nature a child of god's judgment, but he's forgiven me for jesus sake and I want you to know it and I want to get all the help from you and I want to be all the help to you and anybody else that Is in any way possible so get excited about having received christ and make sure that somebody knows So they can help you And so that you then can be numbered amongst those who can help others And those of you who as christians have quit pushing the car with a full tank Get excited about tomorrow Begin to thank him in advance Have no preconceived notions as to what he's going to do or how he's going to do it. That's not your business You don't tell god the head What you're going to do is a memory of his body you simply make yourself available and allow that spontaneous expression of his life To bring untold benediction of your upon your fellow human beings to his eternal praise and the unspeakable comfort of your own soul In other words go out and live it up Share his life on earth on the way to heaven and then forever Isn't that exciting? Oh the lord bless you if you got blessed serve you right. You shouldn't hang around Okay You've been listening to a sermon by major ian thomas if you've been blessed by this sermon You can find more sermons by him and additional resources on this subject at path to prayer dot com Again, if you've been blessed by this sermon, you can find more sermons by major ian thomas at path to prayer.com as well as other resources

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