

Rediscovery of Jesus Christ

by Major Ian Thomas

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the gospel as a gift of life, rather than just forgiveness, and the need to share this gift with others.

Duration: 47:25

Scripture: Matthew 16:13-14, Luke 24:44-49

Topics: "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of repentance and putting trust in Jesus Christ. He explains that God created humanity to be inhabited by Him and to share in His resurrection. The preacher highlights that everlasting life is found in God's Son, and those who do not have the Son do not have life. He also mentions that the disciples were not initially ready to fulfill their responsibility as witnesses, but Jesus promised to send them power from on high.

Transcript

...to turn with me to the fifth chapter of the book of the Acts and we'll begin our exploration at that point. It's always an exciting thing to turn to the Acts, as you have no doubt on many, many occasions been reminded. Although the book is described as the Acts of the Apostles, in many sense it's a misnomer because it isn't really the record of the Acts of the Apostles, it's a record of the continued Acts of Jesus Christ.

This, Luke makes abundantly clear in his opening remarks, the former treaties have I made on Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach. I've written one book, says Luke, about all that the Lord Jesus began to do and to teach. Now he said, I'm going to put on record in this second book, all that he continued to do and to teach.

The only difference being the humanity that he used with which to do it and to teach it. What I have recorded in the Gospel, Luke might well have said, was that which the Lord Jesus began to do and to teach, clothed with his own humanity, that humanity that the Father provided for him on the day that he was born at Bethlehem. And this record is the record of all that the same Lord Jesus, the very same Lord Jesus, continued to do and to teach, and the only difference was that he clothed his activity with the humanity of forgiven sins, already redeemed in his blood, and now indwelt and filled with his Holy Spirit.

And that's why it's always exciting, because it's the record of divine activity, clothed with redeemed humanity. It's been said of the early Christians, these early disciples, that they were incorrigibly happy, utterly unafraid, and nearly always in trouble. That was characteristic of the early disciples.

Mind you, they had good reason to be happy, and they had good reason to be unafraid. They knew what they believed, and they believed what they knew. The trouble, by and large, with the Christian church today is that the church doesn't know enough of what it believes to make it happy, and it doesn't believe enough of what it knows to make it unafraid, and it neither believes nor knows enough ever to get itself into trouble.

But that wasn't true of the early church. There was action, real action, and it was divine action. And that's why it goes on to say here in the twelfth verse of the fifth chapter of the book of Acts, by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people, and they were all in one accord in Solomon's porch, in verse 14, believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.

This was the normal experience of the normal church at that time. Multitudes were added to the Lord, both of men and women. And notice the description that they gave in that day of a convert, one who had been convicted of the Holy Spirit, and in repentance toward God had put simple saving trust in the Lord Jesus, was described as being added to the Lord.

They weren't added to an organization or a religious club, added to the Lord. They rejoiced in the fact that this boy, this girl, this man or woman who had claimed redemption through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus, was now inhabited by the Lord Jesus Christ, and this boy, this girl, this man or woman had been added to his body corporate. So the Lord Jesus now had another pair of hands.

He had another mouth to speak with, another heart to love with, another mind to think with, two more eyes to see with, and two more ears to hear with, added to the Lord, a new living member of the living body of the living Christ. This was their concept of a convert. This was the one thing that preoccupied all their concerns, that people might be added to that body corporate, that fellowship of redeemed sinners worldwide, through which the Lord Jesus now was to continue to do and to teach.

And you'll notice it was for this reason, in the verse that I skipped, the 13th verse, of the rest, just no man joined himself to. Nobody was in unholy haste to identify themselves with the body corporate of Jesus Christ, because in those days they knew perfectly well what the implications were of becoming a Christian. There was no cheap and easy way to become a Christian.

To become a Christian, by the very nature of the gospel that was preached, involved total commitment to Jesus Christ. It meant that a man, body, soul, and spirit, with all that he had and all that he was, became utterly monopolized by the Lord Jesus and expendable for God. And you can imagine there was no particular unholy haste on the part of those who weren't prepared to accept that kind of commitment to identify themselves with the Christian church.

They knew perfectly well that if they were only pseudo-Christians, they'd be exposed for the impostors that they were in no time. So nobody dared call themselves a Christian in those days, who wasn't prepared for the Lord Jesus to have the place of preeminence, to occupy their humanity, and to monopolize their humanity. The record in this particular chapter tells us that it wasn't long before they found themselves once more the guests of the government.

They were in prison. The high priest rose up in verse 17, and all that were with him, which is the sect of the Sadducees, were filled with indignation, laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth and said, go stand and speak in the temple to the people.

And notice again how the message was described. All the words of this life. That was the gospel.

All the words of this life. The gospel involves an entirely new way of life. It was life in a new dimension.

And of course, that as we know is the heart of the gospel. The gospel doesn't involve simply the provision by God to you and to me of the means whereby we escape the punitive consequence of our guilt, how we get out of hell and get into heaven. That isn't gospel.

That's purely incidental. I rejoice in the fact that for his dear sake who died in my place, my sins are forgiven. I'm happy to know that I'm not on the way to hell and I am on the way to heaven, but that's purely incidental to my salvation.

That doesn't constitute my salvation. That simply constitutes the inevitable consequence of my salvation. It was the premise.

It was the first prerequisite, if you like, of my salvation. That my salvation involves infinitely more than that knowing for his dear sake who died historically in my place, and vicariously, that my sins are forgiven. It involves the fact that the one who gave himself for me is the one who deliberately gave himself for me in order that he himself might give himself to me.

It was the gift of life, not the gift of forgiveness. Forgiveness is simply the prerequisite. Forgiveness is an essential premise.

But the whole purpose of God has been consummated in the purpose and the person of the Lord Jesus in that he has given us himself. That's why the Lord Jesus said, He didn't say, I'm come that you might have life. He didn't say, I'm come that you might have forgiveness.

We can only have forgiveness because he came. But that was the means to the end. The means to the end that we might enjoy and share his resurrection and live on earth as those who have already been raised from the dead.

It's beautifully put in Paul's epistle to the Philippians and especially as it's rendered in the Amplified New Testament. You'll be familiar with the passage. It's the third chapter of the epistle of Paul to the Philippians, the 10th and the 11th verses.

My determined purpose is that I may know him. That I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with him. Perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of his person more strongly and more clearly.

And that I may in that same way, that is to say in coming to know him. In that same way, come to know the power outflowing from his resurrection. Which it exerts over believers.

The power that outflows from his resurrection exerted over believers. That I may so share his sufferings, be identified with him in death, as to be continually transformed in spirit into his likeness. Sharing his resurrection life.

That if possible, in verse 11, that if possible, I may attain to the spiritual and moral resurrection that lifts me out from among the dead, even while in the body. That's it. Isn't that tremendous? Paul says my concern is that I may so know him that I may enter into the good of spiritual and moral resurrection.

A moral resurrection which must inevitably spring from a spiritual resurrection. And resurrection of course involves nothing less than the restoration of life once forfeited. That's the nature of resurrection.

You can't be resurrected unless an original life is restored. When the Lord Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he simply re-impacted life that had been forfeited. And he abolished physical death by the reintroduction of physical life.

And you and I are spiritually resurrected when God, by the gift to us of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who credits us with the life of Jesus Christ, there is restored to us that life that was forfeited in Adam. And on the basis of this spiritual resurrection, there takes place a moral resurrection. That the righteousness of the Lord, demanded by the law and never negated by grace, that the righteousness demanded by the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but now after the new principle that governs our behavior patterns, after the Spirit, by whose gracious presence we share the resurrection life of Jesus Christ.

And so Paul says this is going to be the characteristic now of those of us who've learned to enter into the good of that power. We shall enjoy a spiritual and a moral resurrection that lifts us out from among the dead, even while still in the body, with our two feet still on the ground, heaven on the way to heaven. This is the word of life that the angel commanded the disciples to go on preaching and release them to their... Well, you'll know how the story continues.

They were re-arrested. This, of course, was somewhat to the dismay of the high priest and his colleagues. And being re-arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin, the high priest once more addressed them, asked them saying in verse 28 of Acts chapter 5, did not we straightly command you that ye should not teach in this name? Behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

You've filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. Have you ever paused to think what the doctrine was with which they filled Jerusalem? You might be tempted, of course, to say out of a sort of traditional background of sound conservative evangelicalism, you might be tempted to say that the doctrine with which they filled the city of Jerusalem was Jesus Christ and him crucified. But that wouldn't be true.

They didn't need to fill the city with that kind of doctrine. Everybody knew that Jesus Christ was crucified. Every smallest child knew that Jesus Christ was crucified.

If you'll remember when the Lord Jesus drew himself near to the two disciples who were on their way back to Emmaus and saw them sad and asked them what they were talking about, they turned to him and said, are you the only stranger in the city that doesn't know what happened? Are you the only person that's ignorant of these events? Nobody needed to be told that Jesus Christ was crucified. Everybody knew that. So what was the doctrine with which they filled the city? Peter and the other apostles answered verse 29 and said, we ought to obey God rather than men.

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew, a hand on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a savior, for to give repentance to Israel, forgiveness of sins. And we are his

witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

The doctrine with which they filled the city of Jerusalem was that this Jesus whom they had crucified, God had raised from the dead. That he was alive. And not only was he alive, but they insisted upon the fact that by the gift of the Holy Spirit they shared his resurrection.

That they were sharing the very life of Jesus Christ, and he was alive not only in heaven, but he was alive by his gracious Holy Spirit in them. That was the doctrine with which they filled the city of Jerusalem. This was the message, this was the invitation that they broadcast.

Repent toward God, put your trust in Jesus Christ, and he will come by his Holy Spirit, and he will occupy your humanity, you'll share his resurrection, and your humanity once more will be inhabited by God for God. And of course, that's what it takes to be a Christian. God created man to be inhabited by God for God.

We don't have time to examine that in closer detail, but that was the nature of our creation. This is the basic principle of our humanity. God has given to you and to me what he didn't give to any other form of created life.

The capacity to receive and enjoy and enter into the good of God's own life. To be spiritually alive by possessing the very life of God. That's the nature of everlasting life.

This is the record God has given to us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath a Son hath life, exactly what the Son is, life. He that hath not the Son of God hasn't got what the Son is, life.

We're told in the fourth verse of the first chapter of John that in him was life, the word that was in the beginning with God and was God, this word that was made flesh and dwells among us, in him was life. And this life that was in him was the life of men. The only life that made a man shine with the glory of God.

We were made that way. That's why it takes God to be a man. That's why it takes Christ to be a Christian.

Because Christ in the Christian puts God back into the man. That's what the gospel is all about. That's why he died.

He died to liquidate the sin question. That on the basis of his atoning death we might enjoy his resurrection life. Well this was the doctrine with which they filled the city of Jerusalem.

When they heard that, verse 33, they were cut to the heart, gone underneath the skin, because all they had was a dead religion. They were Christians, of course. Every Jew was a Christian.

Every Jew believed in Christ. Every Jew believed in the Messiah. Saul of Tarsus, when he was persecuting the early church, was persecuting the early church in the defense of Christ.

His concept of the Christ, his concept of the Messiah, his Jewish concept, this perverted, corrupted concept of the Lord, the Christ, the Messiah. They had a very high view of the Christ, but they had a corrupted, perverted view of the Christ, because they had detached the Christ from the book. And when you detach Christ from Christianity, you've got as dead a religion today as Judaism was then.

If the real, living Christ comes, you won't recognize him. You'll crucify him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and they took counsel to slay him.

But there was a certain gentleman by the name of Gamaliel, Dr. Gamaliel, who was a very sensible individual. There's no hint here that he was a Christian, but at least he could talk sense. And he gave them some very, very valuable advice.

He was had in reputation among the people, commanded the apostles to be put forth a little space, and then he said in verse 35, You men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do is touching these men. What are you getting so excited about? Why, he's a child. What are you afraid of? Before these days rose up Judas, boasting himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves, who were slain, and all as many as obeyed him were scattered and brought to naught.

Says Dr. Gamaliel to the Pharisees, to the high priest, and to his colleagues, this isn't the first time something like this has happened. What are you afraid of? Judas arose, he had his followers, he was slain, his people were scattered. All came to nothing, just like a prick balloon.

After this man rose up, Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him, he also perished. All even as many as obeyed him were dispersed. Same thing happened to him.

And if this Jesus of Nazareth is no more than they were, you can be perfectly certain that it'll all come to naught. Now I say, verse thirty-eight, refrain from these men and let them alone. If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught.

But if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it. Lest, happily, you be found even to fight against God. Are you going to defend your concept of religion in the face of God himself? Are you going to dig your toes in and defend your barricades to maintain the status quo in the face of God? That was good advice.

Maybe we still need it today. We can barricade ourselves by an evangelical tradition. Dig our fundamental toes in.

And defy God to himself. If God wants to do something original, we say, oh no. You may be certain of this.

If you or I are not prepared to let God do anything original in anybody else, it's because we are not prepared to let God do anything original in us. We may be absolutely certain if we are not prepared to let God take the initiative in other people, or whatever nation, or class, or culture, then it's because we've never allowed God to take the initiative in our own lives. To him they agreed.

When they'd called the apostles and beaten them, they couldn't deny themselves that luxury. They commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the Count, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name, and courageably happy.

And daily in the temple, in the place of worship, in every house from door to door, they ceased not to teach and to preach that Jesus was the Christ. That was their message. That all that God had foreshadowed from the Old Testament scriptures, the promised seed of faithful Abraham had found its consummation and glorious fulfillment in the person of the Lord, the risen Lord Jesus.

That was their message. Now that's the backdrop against which I want you to consider another picture. Because you see, it wasn't always like this.

Don't imagine that the disciples were always consumed with this conviction. They weren't. You turn with me to the 16th chapter of Matthew's gospel.

Matthew chapter 16. In the 13th verse of the 16th chapter of Matthew, when Jesus came into the coast of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? He said unto them, that they said, some say that you're John the Baptist. They say that he's had his head put on again, he's around the town.

Some say that you're Elijah. He never died, so he's come back again to die. Others say that you're Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

He said, but whom say ye that I am? And then Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ. You're the Messiah. You're the promised Savior.

The Son, the living God. Jesus answered and said, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, flesh and blood doth not reveal it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven. That's a divine revelation.

You haven't come to this conclusion on your own. You're right. That's exactly who I am.

And you may well imagine that now having identified the Lord Jesus and having dared publicly to give utterance to that, that the disciples now were highly qualified to go out into the highways and the byways and a shout from the housetops, we found the Messiah! We found the Christ! But almost surprisingly, in the 20th verse, then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he, Jesus, was the Christ. Now, this is exactly what they were doing in Acts chapter 5, in the temple and from house to house. They ceased not to teach and to preach.

Teaching is an intelligent presentation of the facts. Preaching is an exhortation to act in obedience to the truth that you've taught. And they ceased not to teach and to preach that Jesus was the Christ.

The very thing that the Lord Jesus strictly forbade them to do in Matthew 16. He charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. Does that strike you as a bit quaint? Calls twelve apostles to himself, then forbids them to preach the message of the gospel.

Missionaries without a mission. Preachers without a sermon. Apostles with no apostolic office.

Why did he forbid them? Very simple reason. It was one thing to recognize him to be the Christ, another thing to understand the purpose which he'd come to be the Christ. It was one thing to say, you're the Messiah, quite another thing to understand the messianic mission.

And at this stage of their knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, they hadn't got a clue. Enthusiastic? Of course they were. Dedicated? Utterly.

Prepared to sacrifice it for sake of it all. Left their homes, left their business, left everything. Loyal? Completely.

But they hadn't got a clue what it was all about. And if at this stage they'd gone out into the highways and the byways and shouted from the housetops that they'd found Jesus the Messiah, they could only with the best will in the world have taught unadulterated sentimental nonsense. And the Lord Jesus Christ isn't terribly enthusiastic about people who preach simply sentimental nonsense about him.

The Lord Jesus Christ, quite frankly, isn't interested in your dedication. He's not interested in your enthusiasm. He's not interested simply in your human loyalties.

He's interested that you should know the truth and do it. That your humanity redeemed in his blood might become available to become for him that which makes him articulate. And at this stage they just hadn't a clue what it was all about.

Verse 21. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day. He gave them a panoramic preview of all that was to be accomplished in his person as the Christ.

He was going to Jerusalem. He'd be delivered into the hands of wicked men. He'd be crucified.

And on the third day he would rise again from the dead. And just so soon as he had outlined the program, Peter moves into the situation, verse 22, took him, began to rebuke him, saying Be it far from thee, Lord. This shall not be unto you.

And under no circumstances. We don't want this kind of a Christ. This cannot, this must not, this will not happen to you.

What kind of a gospel do you think that Peter would preach? He didn't want the cross because he didn't understand it. And he did not believe in the resurrection. Would you have invited him here to your church? As your spiritual life speaker? He didn't want the cross.

He didn't believe in the resurrection. He knew better than the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus turned and said to Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan.

Thou art an offense unto me. Thou savest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. The Lord Jesus, as the Son of Man, was speaking with the mind of God.

Peter, destined to become a Son of God, was still speaking with the mind of a man. He had a purely human concept of the purpose which the Lord Jesus was incarnate. And his human concept of the coming of the Messiah did not include the cross and did not include his resurrection.

Little wonder the Lord Jesus told him to keep his mouth shut. He said, Peter, if you talk, you'll talk nonsense. And if you can only talk and talk nonsense, then don't talk.

And human talk said. I wonder how many pulpits would be vacant today. I wonder how many church doors would have a notice out of business.

If the Lord Jesus were able today to insist, or willing today to insist, that only those who could talk sense about him talked in his name. Forbidden to preach that he, Jesus, was the Christ. Quite obviously, something must have happened between Matthew 16 and Acts chapter 5. For what they were forbidden to do in Matthew 16, they're doing in chapter 5 and the Holy Spirit in chapter 5 is witnessing to what they're doing.

Not in Matthew 16. What happened? It's recorded for us in the 24th chapter of Luke. Luke 24.

You will remember that to the women the angels have appeared and rebuked them for looking for the living among the dead. They've come, burst into the disciples from the upper room and told them of the good news that Jesus was alive. And we're told in the 11th verse of the 24th of Luke, their words seem to Peter, James, John, and the rest of the apostles, their words seem to them as idle tales and they believe them not.

Said the disciples to the women, you're suffering from hallucinations. You're hysterical. We've all had a rough time.

Our nerves are all on edge. We can understand it if you've cracked beneath a strain, but we know he's dead. Go home and take a couple of aspirins and have a good night.

You'll be alright in the morning. This was Peter, James, and John. And when the two disciples who met the Lord Jesus on the road to Emmaus, and you will remember, unwittingly invited him to their home, and he sat, and though their guests played the role of hosts, took the bread and break it, and they saw the print of the nail, as two pairs of eyes watched one pair of hands.

And they knew him. He vanished out of their sight. They said, did not our heart burn within us while he opened to us the Scripture? And they now in their turn rushed to the upper room, and they said, the women were right.

They said the angel rebuked them and they told us that they met Jesus on the way to us, and we laughed at them, and I laughed at them. They're right. We've seen him.

He was in our home. And you will discover in Mark 16, neither believe they then. They told, verse 35 of Luke 24, what things were done in the way and how the Lord Jesus was known to them in the breaking of bread.

Neither believe they then. And they were disputing with these two disciples, and at that precise moment, verse 36, as they thus say, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. They didn't even believe it then.

They were terrified and frightened, and supposed they'd seen the Spirit, thought they'd seen a ghost. The Lord Jesus said to them, Why are you troubled? Why do thoughts arise in your heart? Behold my hands and my feet. That it is I myself I am.

Handle me and see. The Spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me now. Come on, touch me.

I am. Hear the hallmarks of my Saviour. The first thing that the Lord Jesus did was to identify himself by the marks of the cross.

He said, Touch me, come on, touch me. The Spirit doesn't have flesh and bones as you see me now. I think Peter may have hesitated.

Have you ever touched a ghost? I don't think he was very enthusiastic. Maybe John was the first to touch him. I think that's what John means, you see, in the first chapter of his epistle.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we've seen with our eyes, which we've looked upon in our hands of handled of the word of life. The Lord Jesus said, Behold my hands and my feet. Handle me and see.

Touch me. And John in the first verse of his first chapter of his first epistle says, We heard, we saw, we looked upon in our hands of handled of the word of life. The life was manifested.

He's thinking of the upper room. We've seen it. We bear witness.

We show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father manifested unto us. Verse four of chapter one of the first epistle of John, These things write we unto you, says the apostle, that your joy may be full. Because in the day that we handled him, in the day that we rediscovered him in the power of his resurrection, we realized he wasn't dead but alive.

We had such a joy we could hardly contain ourselves. Luke 24, while verse 41, They yet believe not for joy. Peter describes it later in the first chapter of his first epistle, Joy unspeakable and full of glory.

What was the first consequence then of the rediscovery of the risen Christ? Joy. Unspeakable joy. Fullness of joy.

Is this characteristic of you? Is your life contagiously happy? What was the second consequence of their rediscovery of the Lord Jesus in the power of his resurrection? A new joy, that was the first consequence. Look at verse 44 of Luke 24. He said to them, These are the words which I spake 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.

New Bible. A new joy and a new Bible. He said, None of these things should have taken you by surprise.

These are the very things that I related to you again and again and again, that everything must be fulfilled which was written in the law of Moses, the first five books in the Bible, the Pentateuch, in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, verse 45, that they might understand the Scriptures. Nothing wrong with the Scriptures.

But there was something tragically wrong up to that time with their understanding. But now he touches their understanding, the Bible might become a new book. This was the trouble with the disciples, as it of course was the trouble with the Pharisees.

You see, the Pharisees had a Bible but they didn't have Jesus. And the Pharisees, the contemporary theologians of their day, had a high regard for the Old Testament Scriptures. They believed them to be the word of God.

But of them the Lord Jesus Christ said, John 5, 39, as a categorical statement of fact, not as a command or imperative as it appears to be in the authorized version. He says, verse 39 of John 5, you search the Scriptures. In them you think you have eternal life.

They are they which testify of me and you will not come to me that you might have life. So you've got a Bible, you've got truth that isn't a lie because you won't come to me because I'm the only person who puts life into truth. So the Pharisees had a Bible but they didn't have Jesus.

And because they had a Bible that was detached from Jesus, they had a Bible that couldn't redeem them and they had a Bible that couldn't regenerate. Now the disciples had Jesus but they hadn't got a Bible. They loved Jesus, the person Jesus.

They were enraptured with the man Jesus. They'd forsake everything for Jesus. They were loyal to Jesus.

They were enthusiastic about Jesus. But they had a Jesus who in their connotation of this Messianic mission was totally detached from the Bible. No cross, no resurrection.

No, no, we don't want that kind of Jesus. We just love Jesus. If you have a Bible that's detached from Jesus, the Bible will neither redeem nor regenerate you.

If you've got a Jesus who's detached from the Bible, you've got a Jesus who can't redeem you. You've got a Jesus who can't regenerate you. But you see in the upper room, the Lord Jesus opened their understanding and might understand the Scriptures and they saw that he of the living word was the one who came to implement the written word and now Jesus and the Bible came together and they both make sense.

They got a new Bible. And you join the new Bible. Jesus, verse 46 of Luke 24, said to them, Thus it beheld Christ, to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, according to the Scriptures.

That, verse 47, repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. New joy, new Bible, new message. Repentance and remission of sin.

They'd done some preaching. The Lord Jesus forbade them to tell anybody that he, Jesus, was the Christ, but he did let them do some preaching. He gave them a little homiletic exercise.

You look in Mark, chapter 6. The Lord Jesus, verse 7, called unto him the twelve and began to send them forth by two and two and gave them power over unclean spirits. The Lord Jesus took the twelve. Twelve, who did that include? Judas Iscariot.

And the Lord Jesus took the twelve and two and two, including Judas Iscariot, sent them out preaching. You see, you don't have to believe in the Bible to be a preacher. You don't have to accept the cross to be a preacher.

You don't have to believe in the resurrection to be a preacher. You can be a preacher without any of that. By two and two, the twelve went out.

They didn't accept the cross. They didn't believe in the resurrection. And numbered amongst them, Judas Iscariot.

The best thing that can be said about Judas Iscariot is this. He quit the ministry. The others got converted.

And if I happen to be preaching at this moment to any minister who didn't accept the cross nor believe in the resurrection, then the best advice I could give him would be this. Either get converted or at least be as decent as Judas can. Quit the ministry.

I'm not suggesting that you do it the way he did it. That's a bit messy. But at least quit and earn an honest living.

Sell vacuums, please. Or insurance, if that's honest. And it is.

I'm insured myself. Verse twelve. Send out to preach two by two.

It says this, verse twelve, They went out and preached that men should repent. Period. Anything else? No.

They preached that men should repent. They had nothing else to preach. They didn't want the cross.

They didn't believe in the resurrection. So you can tell people to be sorry, but you can't tell people to be saved. Because you can't tell sorry people to be saved if you reject the cross and don't believe in the resurrection.

That's all they could preach. Repent. But in Luke 24, the Lord Jesus Christ sends them out in verse 46 and 47 to preach repentance and remission.

Forgiveness. How to be saved. Why? In His name.

Jesus, Redeemer, Savior. For He shall save His people from their sins. Now you see the cross makes sense.

The resurrection makes sense. They see the Lord Jesus laid down His life for us, vicariously paid the price of our redemption. His precious blood was shed that we guilty sinners might be reconciled to a holy God.

So they could go out joyfully now and preach Jesus in His name. Forgiveness. And said the Lord Jesus, verse 48 of Luke 24, You are witnesses of these things.

In other words, you've not only got a new joy, you've not only got a new Bible, you've got a new message, and you've got a new responsibility. You're witnesses now. I placed a prohibition on you in Matthew 16, I told you to keep your mouth shut in Matthew 16, but now you're my witness.

For half a minute, said the Lord Jesus, you're not ready yet. You're not ready yet. You've got a new joy, you've got a new Bible, you've got a new message, and you've got a new responsibility, but you're not yet ready to fulfill that responsibility.

Tarry, verse 49, in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high. Because I'm going to send the promise that my Father has made. I'm going to fulfill what I told you, which you didn't understand in John 14.

That now I'm going to ascend to be with my Father, and in the person of the Holy Spirit, having given myself for you, I'm now going to give myself to you. And you're going to be my new body. That corporate fellowship or society of redeemed sinners, within whose humanity I'm going to live, and through whom I'm going to make myself articulate and continue to do and to teach.

You're going to be filled with the Holy Spirit, but first you must be baptized with the Holy Spirit. That is to say, simply become the recipients of my resurrection life. A new joy, a new Bible, a new message, a new responsibility, and a new enabler.

And what happens now, as since the day of Pentecost, the moment a man repents toward God and puts his trust in Christ as Redeemer, instantly he becomes the recipient of the Holy Spirit's presence, through whose presence he's sealed. As a child of God, baptized by the presence of the Holy Spirit into the body corporate, and made a living member of the living body of the living Christ. So in the last two minutes, turn back to Acts 5. Acts 5, verse 41.

They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and to preach that Jesus was the Christ. This was now their message.

This Jesus is God's Christ. And they did so rejoicing. A new joy.

Verse 29. Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus.

We recognize now that it's the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Moses, the God of Elijah, the God of David. We see now the Bible foreshadowed all these things. That if he came at all, he came according to the scriptures.

That if he died at all, he died according to the scriptures. That if he's risen from the dead, he's risen according to the scriptures. We've got a new Bible.

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom he slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted, verse 31, with his right hand to be a prince and a savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Repentance and new joy, new Bible, new message.

And, verse 32, we are his witnesses, new responsibility. We are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that are vain, new and able. New joy, new Bible, new message, new responsibility, new and able.

Where'd they learn that? Luke 24. In their rediscovery of Jesus Christ and the power of his resurrection. Not as the one whom they could prove chapter and verse was alive, but the one whose resurrection life in them became patently obvious to the world around.

Everybody knew in their presence that Christ was alive and alive in them. What's your address? Matthew 16? No challenge to your sincerity. You're no less sincere than they were in Matthew 16.

No challenge to your loyalty or love to Christ. No less loyal, no less loving to Christ, maybe, as they were in Matthew 16. Is that where you live? Or do you live in Acts 5? There's only one way to change your address.

Luke 24. To know him, and the power outflowing from his resurrection. That you may enjoy that spiritual and moral resurrection that lifts you out from among the dead, even while in the body, alive in Christ, and Christ in business.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. We bless thee, Lord Jesus, because thou art thyself far more precious to us than all thy gifts and blessings. All the privileges and joys of service and fellowship, for thou art life itself.

Thank you for the measure which we've learned to say and know that it's true. Life to me is Jesus Christ. I am crucified with Christ to all that I am apart from what he is.

Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I. Christ himself liveth in me. The life that I'm now living in this body.

I live one step at a time, one breath at a time, one day at a time. Through Christ, and by faith. That lets him loose.

We thank you for this, dear Lord. And for your name's sake. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0284.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/major-ian-thomas/rediscovery-of-jesus-christ/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net