

Demonstration of God's Great Love

by S.D. Herron

The sermon explores the profound ways in which God's great love is revealed through the resurrection of Jesus and his personal encounters with his followers.

Duration: 35:37

Scripture: Luke 24:27-45, John 20:1-4, John 20:18

Topics: "God's Love"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of knowing Jesus Christ. He explains that Jesus reveals himself to people in various ways, such as through the scriptures and acts of obedience and worship. The speaker encourages the audience to not wait for spectacular visions or unusual happenings, but to seek Jesus in the ordinary course of life. He reminds them that Jesus can manifest himself even in the darkest and most difficult times, and that through the wondrous cross, we can witness the greatest demonstration of God's love for mankind.

Transcript

I am asking you to look with me this morning into the Gospel of John, Chapter 20. You will turn and follow the reading. The Gospel of John, Chapter 20, again with the first verse.

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark under the sepulcher, and seeth a stone taken away from the sepulcher. Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciples, whom Jesus loved, saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher, and they ran both together, and the other disciple had outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher.

He stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie. The napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Then went in also that other disciple, which first came to the sepulcher, and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own home.

But Mary stood without at the sepulcher, weeping, and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked in the sepulcher, and seeth two angels in white, sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. When she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Robona, which is the same Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, that he had spoken these things unto her. I wonder this morning if we were given by some mysterious process the privilege of selecting one, and only one, instant out of the life of Christ, if we were given the privilege of being an eyewitness to that one event.

What would you choose? Some perhaps would choose the incarnation of Bethlehem, hear the angels singing, announcing his birth, listen to the story of the shepherds, look into this table where the little babe lay, overcome in our hearts by the sense of awe and wonder that this is God in a baby. Somebody else would perhaps say, I'd like to have been at his baptism when the heavens were open, the Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Someone else might have said, I'd like to have been on the Mount of Transfiguration.

I'd like to have been there when the inward deity of the glory of our Lord shone forth through the human housing and those who were privileged to see the glory and splendor of our transfigured Lord. But some might even say, I would want to be at the cross. Not that we enjoy the thought of the dark, dismal scene there, but remembering that when we survey the wondrous cross, we are beholding the greatest demonstration of God's love to mankind.

But perhaps all of us would do like Miller this morning, we would say the greatest event, the event that I would like to see more than any other, was the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But we are not given that privilege, but we are given the privilege of seeing the first appearances of Christ and those who saw him first. Wouldn't that be a privilege? To be among that group to whom Christ revealed himself on that first day of his resurrection.

You will note that he showed himself to them. He revealed himself to them. Not everybody saw him.

After the resurrection, between then and the ascension, Christ was selective as to who really saw him, who really realized who he was. Why did Christ pick these particular ones to reveal himself to that first Easter day? Why did Jesus choose these people instead of some others? Was it just convenience? No, I don't think so. I think there's a purpose in the selectivity of Jesus Christ in showing himself.

Here we see to whom he revealed himself, why he revealed himself as suggested, and how he revealed himself. These may be suggested to us, for Christ wants to reveal himself to us in this day. And perhaps here in this first Easter Sunday, we can find somewhat of a pattern or somewhat of a suggestion as to what it means and how Christ reveals himself to those.

But I myself feel that it's a distinct honor and privilege for any of these that we're going to look at this morning to be among the group, among those who first saw the Lord. Of course, heading the list was a woman, Mary Magdalene. Mark puts it in those disputed verses at the close of his book, Christ arose early the first day of the week.

He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Why would Christ want to appear to Mary Magdalene? Was it just that she happened to be there? Was it just convenient for him to do so? No, I don't think so. I think there's a purpose and a motive back of it.

You remember that Jesus said, he that has forgiven much, loves much. Mary Magdalene had had great things done for her. Mark also makes the statement, Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Now, the Bible has a number of Marys in the New Testament. Heading them, of course, is Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, Mary, the mother of James, and at least the number among them is Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene perhaps has been besmirched, her reputation undeservingly.

There's no evidence that Mary Magdalene was an immoral woman, although it is clear that she had been possessed of seven devils. That's enough without any immorality attached for any woman to labor under. But one day, Mary Magdalene heard about a man named Jesus.

Somebody said, Mary, I wouldn't doubt what this man Jesus we're hearing so much about could heal you if you could get to him. Like a drowning man grasping for a straw, Mary said, Get me to him. Anybody that can help me, anybody that can deliver me from these awful, tormenting demons, I want to meet them.

And they led her to Jesus. I do not know we have any description of what took place, but we can use our imagination. Perhaps it happened with her as it did with the lad they brought to Jesus, whose demon the disciples could not cast out.

When it approached Jesus, it naturally fell. And demons always go down before Jesus. They always do.

And tore the lad until they thought he was dying. And perhaps these seven demons seized Mary Magdalene in an awful seizure. She writhed and waddled on the dirt.

But Jesus said, Come out of her. Come out. And Mary Magdalene was free.

And from that moment, she was a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. She was no doubt among that group of ladies from Galilee who ministered unto him during this Passover session. It was she who was last at the cross.

It was she who was first at the tomb on this Easter morning. There was a deathless, quenchless, passionate devotion of love in the heart of Mary Magdalene. And Jesus Christ, on that first Easter morning, honored Mary by putting her at the top of the roll of honor, being privileged to see first the risen Lord.

They had come with that unquestioning devotion of love. It dawned on them as they neared the tomb, How are we going to get in the tomb? Look, there's a huge stone in front of the tomb. Like other women, she never really counted.

They never really sat down and figured out exactly how they were going to do it. But love just felt like we can do it. And when they got there, lo and behold, the stone was moved already.

But Jesus Christ was not there. Other ladies left, but Mary lingered at the mouth of the tomb. And while she was weeping, she looked in and saw an angel.

And the angel said to her, Why weepest thou? She said, They've taken away my Lord. And I know not where they have laid him. And then Jesus, standing behind her, unrecognized, unseen, unknown, said, Woman, why weepest thou? And she, supposing him to be the gardener, said, If thou has taken him away, show me where you have laid him, and I will take him.

And Mary couldn't have taken that corpse. But love felt like it could. And to that kind of love, that uncalculating love, that unsparing love, that love that poured itself out in deathless devotion, Jesus revealed himself.

He said to her one word, Mary. And she knew him. He was revealed in that one word when he spoke her name.

She said, Rabbona, Master. And fell at his feet. And to Mary Magdalene, the one out of whom had been cast seven devils, goes down in history for all time to be the first living human being to lay eyes on the blessed Savior.

He revealed himself. Mary didn't have to find him. Christ came deliberately.

He didn't go to Cephas, certainly not. He didn't go to the learned scribes and elders. He didn't even go to John and other disciples.

He went to a plain, simple woman who had been delivered from seven demons, but who loved her Lord so passionately, so undearthlessly devoted, that he chose her to be the first one to see the risen Lord. What honor, what dignity, what privilege. Isn't that wonderful? She was the first.

Evidently the group of ladies, he appeared briefly to them. We'll pass on by to the second person to whom Christ revealed himself after his resurrection. That's Simon Peter.

The scene is not described for us. It's too sacred to be disclosed. But we have at least two statements that indicate it.

Later on in the day, we're going to notice when Jesus appeared to the ten, the two had come back from Emmaus and with the glad news, Christ had appeared to them. And they were met with the news that Christ is risen indeed and has shown himself to Simon. And Paul in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, when he is listing those who saw the Lord, starts off with Simon.

I don't know why Paul left out Mary Magdalene. I don't know why he left out those women and the women's live might not like it. But he evidently was taking up those who were apostolic messengers and had seen the Lord.

But Mark tells us he appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Evidently he appeared second to the most unlikely person, to the most undeserving person. The man who had sworn a few nights before that he did not know him.

The man who had said with an oath, I don't know this fellow, I know nothing about him. And when the cock had crowed, he had gone out and wept bitterly. And it was to him that Christ had addressed the words, Go tell my disciples, he told the ladies, Go tell my disciples and Peter.

And Peter and John had run to the tomb. Peter being more impetuous than John had gone into the tomb, but he did not see the Lord. I say God has thought it so sacred that he has drawn a curtain around this particular scene.

It's too sacred. But let's use our imagination a little bit. Perhaps coming back from the tomb, not running now, but walking slowly, head down, wondering, is he alive? Is he alive? What does all this mean? He wasn't in that tomb.

I looked. I saw for myself. The linen clothes were there, but he was not there.

Could it be that he is alive? And if he is alive, what will he think about me? What will he say to me? How will he reproach me? And how will he rebuke me for my unfaithfulness to him a few nights ago? Suddenly, he becomes aware of a presence. A presence that's come from nowhere. And he looked up, and it's the Lord.

That's as far as we can go. For God has not chosen to unveil the rest of it to us. But somehow, somehow, by some word, Jesus Christ took Peter back into his fold, back into his discipleship.

Praise God. In Mary, we find Christ revealing himself to deathless devotion and love. In Simon Peter, we find Jesus revealing himself to dejected, defeated, despairing failure.

If there's anybody that looks like would not deserve to have Christ come to them that first Easter Sunday, it would have been Peter. But look, the second or third on the list, if you count the group of ladies, is Simon Peter. And Jesus Christ, on that first Easter morning, that first Easter day, is out looking up the fellow that had denied him, that had sworn he didn't know him.

But he comes to reveal himself to that character, to that person. Isn't that wonderful? Bless his name. Let's move on.

The next group we see to whom Christ reveals himself is the two on the way to Emmaus. Two of his disciples are two followers of the Savior. Later in the day, were on their way to Emmaus.

And as they walked along toward this little village about seven miles or so from Jerusalem. Evidently, no further than you were supposed to walk on a Sabbath day's journey. A third party joined them.

I suppose if they had calculated where did he come from. He seemed to drop out of heaven. I didn't notice anybody following us.

I didn't see anybody on the side of the road. But here's a third party. And he said to them, Why are you... What are you talking about? What you're so disturbed about? What are you looking so sad about? One of them said, Are you the only person in Jerusalem that don't know what took place? What they said? What things? There's things they said concerning Jesus of Nazareth, the prophet, mighty in word and deed before God and the people.

They said, We had hoped that he would be the restorer of Israel. And they have taken him and crucified him and slain him. We had some rumors coming that some of the ladies went early in the morning to the

tomb and the tomb was empty.

And Jesus said to them, Oh, foolish morons, slow of heart to believe all the things written in Scripture concerning me. And beginning at the beginning and carrying through all the Scriptures, he opened their minds to understand the things written concerning the coming of the Messiah. And as they went along, they came to the little town where they were going.

And Jesus made it as though he would go on for he was the third person that had joined the company. They said, It's almost evening. Come in and spend the night with us.

Take a meal with us and spend the night with us. And he went in with them. And when they sat down to eat, he took the bread and broke it and blessed him.

And in the breaking of the bread, their eyes were opened. For he said that along the way their eyes were holy and held. They could not recognize him.

And remember this, friends. We do not have a revelation of Christ any time we desire it. This is his own selective choice to reveal himself to whom he wishes and who are worthy or who are prepared to receive it.

They realized there was something unusual about this man. For they testified later, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the Scriptures along the way? But when he took the bread, that familiar gesture, it dawned on them, This is the Christ. This is the Lord.

This is he who was crucified three days ago. This is the Son of God risen from the dead. I imagine they talked to each other later and said, Ah, when he took that bread, I knew him.

I remembered how he took it and fed the 4,000. I remember how he took it and fed the 5,000. I remember time and again seeing that gesture of his of breaking the bread and blessing it.

I knew him in the breaking of the bread. It was not some great profound theological discussion. It was not some great emotional upsetting experience.

It was not some weird manifestation. It was a simple act of worship. A common act of saying the blessing at the table.

And in that act, Jesus revealed himself to these disciples. Praise God. As simple as sitting down at the table and eating and yet finding Christ as your guest.

Bless his name. So they got up. Jesus, of course, disappeared.

They got up and made their way back to Jerusalem. You see, these men were departing. They were dejected.

They were discouraged. They were disconsolate. They were just ordinary folk.

They weren't apostles. They weren't chief leaders. They weren't the big wheels.

They were not Peter and John and James and Matthew and Ptolemy and Philip. They were just ordinary, common, everyday followers of the Lord. But the tragic thing about it is they were going away.

They were leaving Jerusalem. Jesus was at Jerusalem. But Jesus won't let them go.

He won't let them get away. The risen Lord, who ought to be back at the right end of the Father, receiving the applause of angels and archangels and seraphim and cherubim and all heaven resounding his praise for the mighty acts of redemption. But he isn't.

He's out walking a dusty road, finding a couple of discouraged disconsolate ordinary disciples and stopping them and turning them back to Jerusalem. Oh, I love that. Praise God.

He does not come to the high and the mighty and the learned and those who are rich in position. But just two ordinary folks, Jesus Christ, takes part of this first resurrection day and looks them up and reveals himself to them. And they can't go then.

They hasten back to Jerusalem. And they find the place where they sometimes turn. We say the twelve and really the eleven because Judas was gone and actually the ten because Thomas was not there.

These men, coming back from their trip toward Emmaus, burst in upon the meeting of the disciples. They probably knocked first because the door was locked for fear of the Jews. But they burst in the meeting and began to try to tell them what had happened, how he was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

They said, It's true. The Lord has risen indeed and he's appeared to Simon. For Peter had had that experience somewhere during the day.

Somewhere Christ had found him. Sometime he had found him prior to this night's session. And he had burst back upon the disciples and said, I saw him, man, I saw him.

It's too sacred to tell you what he told me. I can't go into it. But he's alive.

He's alive. I saw him with my own eyes. Praise God.

And I'm restored back in the circle with you men. And these men greeted these from Emmaus saying, It's true. Yes, we know it's true because he's appeared to Simon.

And then to their amazement, to their joy, to their astonishment, Jesus stood in their midst. Here he comes to reveal himself to the faithful fellowship. To Mary he revealed himself to the undying, quenchless devotion of love.

To Peter he revealed himself to the despairing, desperate need. To the two on their way to Emmaus he revealed himself to two who were discouraged and disconsolate and departing. Now he comes to the whole fellowship.

That reminds us, he had told them before where two or three are met in my name, I'm there in the midst. He was there all the time that he couldn't see you. Praise God.

He fulfilled his word where two or three are met in my name, I'm there. And I want to tell you this morning, he's here. He's always there.

He always will meet where his people meet. If you want to meet Jesus, if you want to have a revelation of Christ, get with his people. Get with the fellowship.

I know every man will answer to God for himself. But I also know that there's something about the fellowship that God honors. The church of Jesus Christ.

And where the church is, Jesus is. It may be a faltering church. A church that's open for rebuke and correction.

But he's there. We saw that, we see that in the revelation of John. Christ among the candlesticks.

The candlesticks representing the seven churches. And in the midst of those seven candlesticks was Jesus. Some of those churches he had to rebuke.

Some of them he had to threaten to take their candlestick. But he was there in the midst of them. Praise God.

And he meets today where his people meet. He's there. So he met, he revealed to them his presence, gave to them his peace, and breathed upon them his power, his blessing.

He said to them, Peace be unto you. My peace I give unto you. And he breathed upon them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

There you see it. Jesus Christ will reveal himself where his people are, where his people meet together. He comes to them.

They were afraid. They were doubting. They were wavering.

They were desperate. But he came anyway. He didn't come and say, I'm not going to show myself to you because you doubted.

He came to dispel their doubts. He did not come and say, because you fled and left me on that night, I'm not coming to you. No, he came to give them strength that they would flee no more.

And the church is not necessarily a household of all saints, people that don't need any help from God. There are people who are candidates for God's grace. The way to get God's grace is get in the house of God.

Get among the fellowship of God's people and you can find the help that you need. How many of you, how many of us have come to the sanctuary many a time with the burdens crushing us down and loads waiting us. But somehow, somehow, he came.

He stepped into the midst. He breathed upon us. His peace flooded our soul.

And we went home refreshed. We went home strengthened to meet the test and to face and bear the burden that he gave us to meet. These are the people to whom Christ came that first Easter Sunday.

And just to this kind of people he wants to come today. Go on precious heart with that undying devotion that pours out your life in service for Christ unrewarded, unnoticed, unheralded. Go ahead.

Jesus will come like he did to Mary Magdalene. You may not be among the elite of the saints. You may not be among the select circle of the twelve.

But remember Jesus came to Mary Magdalene, a poor, demon-possessed woman who had been cured and delivered by Jesus. And she was given the privilege and honor and distinction of being the first to lay eyes on the blessed risen Lord. She was the first to fall at his feet and worship him after he was risen from the dead.

Maybe there's somebody here like Peter that's failed. Miserably, utterly failed. Disappointed yourself.

Disappointed God. Disappointed your people. Disappointed your friends and family.

You feel like you're in utter despair. There's no hope. I want to tell you something.

Jesus Christ took time to look up one of your tribe and a fellow named Peter one first Easter Sunday and restore him. And reveal himself to him. Think about Peter who had denied him.

Saw him. Saw the Christ. Recognized the Christ.

Had a revelation of Jesus Christ to himself. Maybe some of you feel like the two little males you feel like running. You feel like getting away.

You're perplexed. Things aren't working out like you thought. We had hoped, they said.

We had hoped. We had thought this is the way it was going to work and this is the way we had hoped it would be. But now our hopes are vanished.

They're gone. The back end have been knocked out of all of our hopes and the bottom has fallen out of our world. But remember Jesus Christ came to a couple of fellows in that kind of condition and sent them running back to Jerusalem in haste to say we've seen the Lord.

Everything's going to come out after all. We've seen the Lord. Maybe you're among a group that back home has a little small little group that meets.

Be faithful. Jesus is going to come and reveal himself to that group. He's going to show himself alive and living.

Praise the Lord. He does it by various means. To Mary was simply a word.

Her own name. Mary. To Peter, I do not know what it was.

We have to draw the curtain there. To the two to Emmaus, it was opening the scriptures. And in that common ordinary act of worship at the table, he revealed himself.

And you may look for it, friends. You may look for it. God will come and Jesus will come and manifest himself along the ordinary course of life.

Most of us are waiting for some spectacular vision. Most of us are waiting for some unusual happening. Most of us are waiting for some awing manifestation.

But it won't come that way. It'll come from the revelation of the word. It'll come through some simple act of obedience.

Our worship to God. And suddenly, he comes. And our hearts are warm.

And our souls are filled. And our spirits are refreshed. Why? He's revealed himself.

The living, risen Lord. Praise God. Why did he show himself to these people? First of all, he showed himself to them simply that they may know him.

That they may know him. Paul expressed it. That I may know him.

The chief aim, the highest ambition of his life, was that he may know Jesus Christ. Let me tell you something. You can never know him till he reveals himself to you.

The inner revelation of Jesus Christ through the word. Personally, if you'll allow me to share a bit of personal experience with you, I think the Lord speaks to me more through that method than any other. The revealing of the scriptures.

The opening up of the scriptures as he did to those. And I find my heart burning. And my soul refreshed with a new vision of Jesus Christ through his word, by his spirit.

You remember in John's gospel, Jesus said, When he has come, he will take the things of mine and show them unto you. And Paul in his writing said, No man can say Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Ghost. We may know all the details of his earthly life.

We may know the theological implications. But it's still unknown to our hearts and experience until he reveals himself. And I'm not talking about some vision.

I'm not talking about some emotional manifestation. But the inner revelation to our heart until he becomes the one altogether lovely, the fairest of ten thousand, the brightest morning star. We find ourselves falling at his feet and worshipping him.

Saying, My Lord and my God. Oh, how tragic to miss those times. You can miss them.

Thomas missed it. That first Easter evening. Ten of the disciples were present.

Judas was gone. Thomas was absent from the meeting. And Jesus came.

And ten men told Thomas, Thomas, we've seen the Lord. You ought to have been there. You should have experienced this.

Thomas said, I won't believe it. I won't believe it. Till I put my finger in the nail prints and thrust my hand in his ribbon side.

Oh, I'm so glad that Jesus Christ is so long suffering and patient with us. Eight days later they're assembled again. The fellowship is back together.

And sure enough, Jesus comes again. Praise God. Thomas is there.

Remember, Thomas had gone eight long days not knowing the Lord was risen. Not knowing that Christ was alive. He had the circumstantial evidence.

He had the empty tomb. He had the missing corpse. And say, fellas, that'll be a good sermon to preach sometime.

The case of the missing corpse. They haven't found it yet. They aren't going to find it because it's not a corpse anymore.

It's alive. He had the word that these disciples that said we saw him. He had their word that an angel said that he was risen.

But that doesn't satisfy. That isn't enough. Thank God for the empty tomb.

Thank God, sir, for the missing corpse. Thank God for the word of angels. Thank God for the word of men.

But there comes a time when we must have a personal revelation of Jesus Christ to our own heart. I would, again, put the bounds about it. I'm not talking about some ecstatic experience, some emotional something that overwhelms.

But that inner revelation, that inner consciousness, Jesus Christ is Lord. Christ is risen. Christ is alive.

Bless his name. And nothing but that will meet the need. Nothing but that met Thomas' need.

But I want you to know he didn't have to touch his fingers into the nail prints. He didn't have to push his hand into his side. When Jesus said, Thomas, here I am.

Go ahead. Put your finger in the nail prints. Put your hand in my side.

Thomas didn't do it. He fell at his feet and said, my Lord and my God. Praise the Lord.

He was eight days late getting his revelation of Jesus Christ. But I'll tell you one thing, he never doubted again. Yes, he reveals himself that we may know him.

And that's the highest of our ambition. Not to be used of him. Not simply to have a reputation for being a Christian and a devout saint.

But to know Jesus Christ. In all his limitless beauty and holiness and purity and divinity. One of the writers told it, knowing that which passes knowledge.

But remember, the Holy Spirit has come to reveal the things of Christ to us. To make Christ real to us just as Christ made himself real to those early people on the first Easter Sunday. His second reason for revealing himself to us is that we may be witnesses of him.

He revealed himself to these people that they might be witnesses of his resurrection. And they went out to preach everywhere the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul, who was not there that first Easter Sunday, who was a long number of years before he ever met the Christ, he never saw him in the flesh.

But he said, would it please God to reveal his son in me? And in that list of those who saw the Lord, he goes down the list that he said to Cephas, to the other apostles, to 500, to James, and last of all, last of all, he said, as one born out of Ducey, he was revealed to me. And Paul said, this gospel that I preach is not come by man, I wasn't taught it, I didn't learn it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. That term, revelation of Jesus Christ can mean one of two things.

It can mean a revelation which Christ gives, or it can be a revelation of which Christ is the object. I think it's probably both. Christ revealing himself to the apostle Paul.

And if he revealed himself to Paul some 8 or 10 years after the resurrection, and Paul went out to preach everywhere that Christ was alive, as emphatically, as certainly, as Peter did, who met him that first day, as Thomas did, who had his doubts allayed, as Matthew, and Philipians, and the rest of them. Paul stood and said, he's alive. I know he's alive because I met him on the Damascus road.

And he wants to reveal himself to you and to me today. First of all, that we may know him. Oh, what a challenge.

What an invitation. What an enticement to know him, to know him. Paul said, I may know him in the power of his resurrection.

Know him as the risen Lord. And that's exactly what he wants to reveal himself as to you and to me this Sunday morning, this Easter Sunday morning. That same Christ is walking the aisles of this church, and the roads of this little village, and the streets of the cities about us, and all over Florida, and all over the world.

Those same feet, pierced feet, are walking the dusty roads of men, trying to find somebody that will stop and listen and have Christ reveal himself to them. He's here this morning to give you and me a fresh revelation of himself, that we may know him, and that we may witness to others, to share this with others. Peter said, when they were threatened and admonished not to preach and teach anymore in the name of Jesus, said we cannot but teach and preach the things we've seen and heard.

Peter could never forget that Easter Sunday when Jesus met him somewhere, somewhere, and restored him and brought him back to fellowship. And he never forgot him. He could never get away from him.

That we may witness. He may come in a different way than he came to thee, but he'll come. That we too may be witnesses.

The poet has put it like this, I saw not the hill nor the cross where they nailed him, nor heard his last word through his quivering lips, nor bore him hence to the tomb that received him, so silent and cold in the chamber of death, but greater than sighted is the faith that receives it, and greater than reason is God's witness to me. I know that Christ, for sin made atonement, I know that Christ died, for his blood cleanses me. I saw not the angel that came at the dawning to roll back the stone where the crucified lay, nor saw him arising in triumph and splendor, victorious over death on that first Easter day, but deep in my heart there's a peace that abided, and joy growing big like streams near the sea, not dead my Redeemer, he liveth, he liveth, for he liveth in me.

And Jesus Christ wants us to go out of this church this morning with that testimony for he wants to reveal himself a living, triumphant, victorious Lord. Shall we stand?

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