

Welcome to our Telephone Service on this second Sunday of Easter
We begin with the Easter shout Christ is risen **he is risen indeed** Alleluia **Alleluia**

Song Jesus Christ is risen today From 'Lyra Davidica'

1. Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia; our triumphant holy day, Alleluia;
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia; suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia
2. Hymns of praise then let us sing, Alleluia; unto Christ, our heavenly king, Alleluia;
Who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia; sinners to redeem and save, Alleluia;
3. But the pains that he endured, Alleluia; our salvation have procured, Alleluia;
Now above the sky he's King, Alleluia; where the angels ever sing, Alleluia.

God's Word, the Bible, says in Revelation 1

- 4 Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
- 6 and has made us kings & priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen

Collect Almighty and eternal God, who for the firmer foundation of our faith, allowed your holy apostle Thomas to doubt the resurrection of your Son till word and sight convinced him, grant to us, who have not seen, that we also may believe and so confess Christ as our Lord and God, through the same Jesus Christ, who is alive for evermore. **Amen**

Reading John 20:19, 24-end

- 19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."
- 24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.
- 25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."
- 26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"
- 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."
- 28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"
- 29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."
- 30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;
- 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Song Open our eyes Lord by Robert Call

Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus; to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him
Open our ears Lord, and help us to listen. Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus.

Reflection

How do you feel when you miss the bus or train; a program on TV or radio?

When we had our lockdown: Did any of you miss a birthday party, or a holiday cruise? What about church? How did you feel? and what about now?

Maybe you feel like Thomas - missing out.

Everyone was buzzing because one way or another they seem to have all met Jesus

Mary Magdalene met him in the garden, Peter on his own, the 2 disciples walking on the way home to Emmaus & then there was Easter evening when the 10 apostles met Jesus in their locked down upstairs room

Thomas, for some reason, wasn't there with all the others

We can miss out by circumstances *Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came* or by choice "Unless I see the print of the nails I will not believe

It may have been fear, family commitments, or just plain forgetfulness.

Maybe he was disheartened about Xt's death. Maybe depression that kept him at home

Whatever it was he missed the Lord

Don't be discouraged if you're stuck at home. You are part of the church now, by sharing in our telephone service Jesus can meet with us wherever we are.

In the 1980's I was on a sabbatical at a lovely lively Anglican Church in Chorleywood when, one weekend, my mum (from West Bexington) unexpectedly arranged that she and I would stay with my aunt in her flat in South London.

Although it was great at Auntie Lily's, I was aware that my friends at Chorleywood were enjoying a visit of a 'faith-sharing' team from California. God was doing some amazing things, and I felt that I was missing it all.

But praise God he sees our heart.

So while I was having my night time prayers Jesus came specially close to me at my Aunt's flat, and filled my heart with his Spirit. and I was (like Wesley wrote) *lost in wonder, love and praise*. I didn't miss out!

Jesus is so kind - he cares so much. He doesn't want us to miss out on what He promises in his Word (the Bible)

A week after Easter, Jesus came to the upper room again - I think, specifically for Thomas.

First, *Jesus stood in the midst of the disciples, & said, "Peace to you!"*

Then (using Thomas' own words from the previous week *'unless I see and put my fingers in the nail marks ... I will not*

believe")He said to Thomas, "Thomas come here. Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." Thomas, Don't miss out!

We can miss some things because we aren't pro active - or because we procrastinate. CS Lewis in his book Screwtape Letters (which is about an older devil teaching a young devil how to defeat Christians) gives us this interesting insight. Screwtape says: Don't tell them to **disbelieve** or to **disobey** just to say: 'Not yet, not now, not yet ' and so, they miss the opportunity

Isaiah wrote in ch 55: *Seek the Lord while he may be found.*

The Lord doesn't want any us to miss out on what He promises in his Word (the Bible). HE doesn't want us to miss the Easter Experience of meeting the risen Christ and of knowing eternal life through him.

That's why John in his gospel wrote *These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name*

John, in his gospel, says: I've written this so that you might know the Lord, and know his life in you!

Too many people (even Christians) live without confidence..... and often that's because they don't have, or don't know, Jesus Christ in a personal way

God wants us to have **confidence** in the risen Christ

Later, three times John (in his 1st letter) wrote: *we have confidence*

God doesn't want us to be hope-so but know-so Christians

I love the way John puts it in 1John 2:3 *Now by this **we know that we know Him** - we know that we know!*

Sixteen times in that 1st letter John used this alternative word for confidence: **know**. The Bible is full of it!!

And here John ends his Gospel in ch21:24, writes about himself and what he is saying. *This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and **we know** that his testimony is true.*

ie John's Gospel is written by someone who knows what he is talking about. Do we?

God wants us to know; to be confident (not 'Me' confident but 'He' confident)

So, it's no surprise that here in John 20:29 Jesus said *Blessed are you Thomas, because you have seen **Me** you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

Thomas knew Jesus was alive and was Lord because he'd now met the risen Lord personally.

It was this sort of passion and assurance that led Thomas and the disciple to ride into the jaws of death crying: *God has exalted Jesus to His right hand to be Prince and Saviour. We are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."*

Friends, be sure of God's Word.

Be sure of the 'gospel facts' - 1. Christ has died; 2. Christ is risen

Be sure of the promises that Jesus gives.

Be sure of **Jesus**.

Don't trust **anyone** else, don't rely on **anything** else Put your life, personally, into the nail-pierced hands of Jesus the loving living Saviour and confess him, publically, like Thomas, as *'My Lord, and My God'*

Song All heaven declares by Noel & Tricia Richards

All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord.

Who can compare with the beauty of the of the Lord

For ever he will be the Lamb upon the throne

I gladly bow the knee and worship him alone.

We begin our **prayers** with a confession and a commitment to Jesus

- For failing to love you with all our heart soul mind and strength, and failing to love our neighbour as ourselves

Lord have mercy

- Thank you Jesus you died to forgive my sins and rose to give me life everlasting. I ask not just that you would forgive me but to come and live in me as my Saviour and Lord, and please give me your Spirit to assure me of your presence

Lord have mercy

- How our world needs to know your risen presence and power! Thank you Jesus that as you came to save us one day you will come again to bring in your kingdom of goodness and grace to earth. But we need you now. Our world is being destroyed by self interest. People are dying from hunger, violence, sickness, abuse. Come Lord Jesus, come in power and change our world.

Lord have mercy

- You have placed your people, the Church, the Bride of Christ, to be a light to the world. But our light burns low. We ignore, despise and defy your eternal truth. Fill us with your Spirit to blaze with the light of Christ in our dark and disheartened world. Fill our leaders with holiness, grace and courage, to be good shepherds of the flock, and guides to the sheep that are lost

Lord have mercy

- Lord Jesus you suffered and died and so know what it's like for us. Thank you that rose again and are The Overcomer. Be with the sick, troubled, dying, and the bereaved in their need

Lord have mercy

- Give to us all the joy of your salvation, the power of your resurrection, the certainty of your purposes for us, and the transformative gift of hope.

Lord have mercy

Lord's prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name

Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom, the power and glory, for ever and ever Amen

Song: Thine be the glory by Edmond Louis Budry

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|---|--|
| 1. Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son
Endless is the vict'ry thou o'er death hast won
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
Kept the guarded grave-clothes where thy body lay
<i>Ref: Thine be the glory
Risen, conqu'ring Son
Endless is the vict'ry
Thou o'er death hast won</i> | 2. Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom
Let the church with gladness hymns of triumph sing
For her Lord now liveth; death hast lost its sting.
3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of Life;
Life is naught without thee; aid us in the strife.
Make us more than conqu'ers through thy deathless love
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above |
|---|--|

Blessing:

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen**

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