

Belief in the Son of God

Part 2

Speaker	Frank Wallace
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[00:00:01] I'd like to continue the subject that we had before us last night, as to the value of believing in the Son of God, and things that can be derived from it. The first scripture is in John, chapter 11.

John, chapter 11, and verse 17.

Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already, that is Lazarus.

Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary sat still in the house.

Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. [00:01:06] But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wouldst ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus said unto her, My brother shall rise again.

Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

Believest thou this?

She said unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

Now chapter 12.

And verse 44.

[00:02:03] Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

I am come, a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

In a well-known portion, chapter 14.

And verse 1.

Let on your heart be trouble.

Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

[00:03:03] In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself. That where I am, there ye may be also.

Now verse 12.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also. And greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. Now lastly, chapter 20.

[00:04:02] Verse 24.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Bidamus, was not with them when Jesus came.

The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were with him, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the door being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God. [00:05:04] Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name. Now you'll see again from the scriptures that we have read together, that they emphasize the importance of belief in this glorious person, the Son of God.

As we said yesterday afternoon, it's not so much believing in a person who was here, an historical personage, but rather believing who he is. [00:06:04] Believing what he said about himself. Believing the ministry that he brought. Believing all that was revealed through him, in connection with his God

and Father, and with our blessings. And this belief, as we sought to show yesterday afternoon, brings many great blessings, much great encouragement to those who know him as the Son of God. We want to continue this then, and you know the story of Lazarus, how he died, and the Lord Jesus waited a considerable time until he went to the tomb. And then he called Lazarus by name, and Lazarus came out from amongst the dead, glorious demonstration of the glory of the Son of God. This had never been seen before. Here was the evidence that he was the Son of God. You remember in the epistle to the Romans, it was declared to be the Son of God by resurrection from among the dead. [00:07:06] Now that's not particularly connected with the Lord's personal resurrection. We understand that the construction of the Greek indicates it's the resurrection of dead persons. And the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, was declared to be such when he raised Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow woman.

And there was a demonstration of his greatness and power as the Son of God. Well, he comes to the two sisters, and they're very upset, Martha and Mary.

Mary perhaps showing the intelligence that faith brings. She sat quietly in the home, but Martha, the industrious one, she went to try and see what could be done. And she spoke to the Lord, and here we find him speaking to her. And he says, the verses that we've read together, Jesus said unto her, thy brother shall rise again.

[00:08:06] Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. This was something that was away in the distance as far as Martha was concerned. It wasn't something that she associated with the Lord's presence there. She knew that eventually there would be a resurrection. Even the Old Testament saints had this faith. But the Lord says, I am the resurrection and the life.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

Wonderful statement, this. I know that this statement of the Lord's is often read at the graveside when there is a burial. And I sometimes wonder if the joy of it and the truth of it is known by those who repeat it in such a pirate-like fashion. Read off the book, sometimes so cold with very little feeling in it, just part of a burial service.

[00:09:09] Now I'm sure if we enter in to the warmth and reality of this statement, its joy, its blessing, its power, its assurance, its confidence.

I am the resurrection and the life. The Lord Jesus saying, all the hope in relation to death and life is centered in me. Without me, it has no meaning whatsoever. And he says, suppose a person dies, he shall live.

Now we know that we have to turn to many other portions of the word of God to not exactly explain what the Lord meant, but to show how important a part it is in the Christian teaching. But when a Christian dies, it's not the end.

The casket, as we heard at Weston-super-Mare, is that which is committed to the Lord and to the grave. [00:10:05] The vessel of clay.

The spirit has gone directly to be with Christ. But then there is to be a life. Life in a body.

And a glorious body will be the portion of every believer in Christ. Now while they are living in the presence of Christ in their spirit, yet the final thought will be clothed upon, according to 2 Corinthians chapter 5, when every believer gone to be with Christ will receive the glorified body. The living, they'll be changed.

The dead, they'll be raised. And every believer will be clothed upon with this wonderful body of glory which is similar to the Lord's body of glory. The Lord says, though he has died, he shall live.

And these are the words of the Son of God himself. He's emphasizing in a most emphatic way that for those who believe in Christ, life is given a different kind of life. [00:11:07] A life that death cannot touch.

Some here might remember an older brother who used to serve amongst the saints, James McBroom. And he often said, what have we got that death cannot touch?

And we say, praise God, we've got a life that death cannot touch. That receiving eternal life through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we have something that death cannot touch. Never.

He that believeth in me, though he have died, yet shall he live.

There's no doubt about it. They're words of assurance, words of confidence, words of power. And that's the position today. We believe in the Son of God. We die in faith. We fall asleep in Christ, whatever term you like to think of. And then when Christ comes, he'll raise us out from amongst the dead. [00:12:02] We'll have that body of glory and we'll be with him forever. Consequent upon believing in Christ. And then he says, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

Believe is found in this. And we say, yes, Lord, we do believe. Because these are the two parts that Paul refers to in the rapture. Those who have died in Christ.

And those who are living at the time when the Lord comes. And they'll all receive this wonderful change. Wonderful thing that those who are living upon earth when the Lord comes will never die. They'll never go through death. They'll never know what the article of death is. Wonderful, wonderful dignity and blessing and privilege for those who are alive upon earth when the Lord comes. Never to go through death. Paul says, I would like to die.

Oh, I would like to be like my master. [00:13:03] And by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from amongst the dead. He says, my master died. I want to die too.

He knew the power of resurrection. I want to know it too. How like the master Paul was.

What the Lord is emphasizing is life. That because he is the resurrection and the life, then these things will be true of every believer. If a believer falls asleep in Christ, he'll be raised. If a believer is living upon earth, he'll be changed. And that's the wonderful hope that we have at the present moment. And never do we find in connection with a saint who dies, the thought that that's the end. If we read about a sleep, we know it has a reference to the body. Certainly not to the sleep of the soul as some teach. The sleep is connected with the body. The body is in a condition of sleep. And then the Lord, he awakens it by divine power and changes it completely. [00:14:04] What a wonderful thing it is to be a Christian. If death does overtake us, oh the assurance that we have as we enter into it that

all is well. That life is yet to be ours in the fullest possible sense. Our spirits go immediately to be with Christ.

Oh what triumph, triumph there is in those words. I am the resurrection and the life.

A positive statement.

Our hopes, our confidence, they're bound up in Christ.

The one who is the resurrection and the life. And the Lord says to Martha, believest thou this?

Good question to ask at all times.

Do we really believe it? Is it a statement in the Bible that we accept and has it entered into our souls? Do we really believe it? And if death should overtake us, all is well. We go immediately to be with Christ, waiting for the fulfillment of God's purpose for us. [00:15:06] And we shall all be conformed to the image of God's Son. Think of how many people are frightened for death. Oh what fear there is in the hearts of men and women. Taking them away from everything they love. And they have nothing else. Awful thing.

But the question is not like this. The Lord has shown me, says Peter, that shortly I'm going to put off my tabernacle. Paul says, I've reached the end of the course. I'm finished. I'm ready now to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Confident statements.

Statements of power and blessing. Showing that they really believe what they have heard concerning Christ. It was an established matter with them. They were ready and they believed in the resurrection and the life. And then she says, yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, that should come into the world. [00:16:06] Just one little remark about the statement of coming into the world. I think there are two ways in which we can view the coming of the Lord. The coming in service when publicly he comes after John the Baptist.

That is his coming in public service. And you remember John the Baptist says, he who comes after me is before me what he was before me.

John is taking a backward place in the one that's coming into public service. But then there's this initial coming, which is the incarnation. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And I think this is the coming that's here, which should come into the world. Now we move on to chapter 12.

Jesus cried and said, he that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

[00:17:16] See here is what we've been referring to, that it's not only believing in a person who was here. A historical person, but a person who came with credentials from God.

He stepped out from the presence of God and came into this world. That could not be said of any other person. Many persons might ascend into heaven, only one person came out of heaven. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. Here we find a man with a mission.

And as people believe on Christ, they're indicating that what God gave him to do was accomplished by him. [00:18:02] They're not only believing in the Son, they're believing in the Father too. They're not only believing in the Son of Man, they're believing in God who sent him. And this is a very wonderful thing, that we view the whole scope of the coming of Christ. And see this was part of a plan, a definite plan. Not an afterthought. God's never in a crisis. God fulfills his purpose step by step.

And so he sends his Son, his Son comes into the world, his Son accomplishes the will, the work that God gave him to do. It's wonderful to see this. It's all part of the one plan. Part of the great scheme whereby God could bring us to himself. He goes on to say, And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me. What a wonderful statement that is. I might be sent as an ambassador from the Queen. I might say I've got the Queen's will to declare.

[00:19:03] But I couldn't possibly say that when persons see me, they see the Queen. They might see the Queen's authority, but they couldn't possibly see the Queen. But the Lord says, He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

There he is the image of the invisible God.

Again he says in chapter 14, He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. All that God is, his attributes, his nature, his glory, his greatness, has seen Christ. Isn't that a marvelous thing? Oh how great he was.

Oh how great he is.

He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

Then he goes on to say, I am come a light into the world, and whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness. Now this is a simple thing that I want to draw your attention to. When we're talking about darkness, we're talking about spiritual darkness. [00:20:06] Blind eyes, unable to see, not knowing where you're going.

And all these things are true of those who do not believe in Jesus. Who do not believe in the Son of God. They may have a great deal of intellect. They may know a great deal about this world's affairs. As to their own future, as to the future of the world, as to what will happen, they know nothing at all. It's all darkness.

How wonderful that simple people like ourselves, who believe in the Son of God, know something of the future in relation to ourselves and in relation to the world. This truth has entered into our hearts. The light has dispelled the darkness.

You remember the psalmist who spoke about thy word is a light. The light my path.

A lamp shone away from my feet.

[00:21:03] Well, this is what Christ did. Came into the world. Dispelled the darkness.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

And for the first time in the world's history, there was a man who dispelled the darkness and brought light into the lives of men and women. And brought light into the lives of people so that they could see. See which way they were going and look forward to the future of the greatest possible continents. Dear Christian friends, we are not in the darkness. We are sons of light.

We are sons of the day.

The darkness has been dispelled. The true light now shines. And oh, how wonderful that because we have believed in the Son, we have this confidence. We know where we're going. We know the course of this world. We know how things will shape. And we know God's great plan for the future. It's as plain as daylight in the word of God. [00:22:01] That's the appropriate word to use too. It's plain as daylight because we are not in the darkness. We are following the Son of God. You remember it says, He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

You remember Paul says in the epistle to the Colossians, We have been transferred from the authority of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. The authority of darkness. Oh, how great that power is. And it really concerns us deeply, greatly that he seems to be making great inroads into a country where there was great light. And now the darkness seems to be sweeping over the land. How sad.

Praise God, those who follow the Son of God. The darkness has been dispelled.

And we have the light of another world in our hearts. [00:23:01] How wonderful this is.

And all through the New Testament we find this theme referred to again and again and again. And when we think of the final feature of it, at least one of the final features in the city, in the book of Revelation, It doesn't need any candle. Plenty of light there.

Not a single vestige of darkness in any way whatsoever.

Its light is the glory of God.

Lightened with the glory of God. Wonderful place to be.

Wonderful thing to look forward to. But wonderful at the present moment. Not to be in darkness.

Not to be blind.

The Pharisees were extremely religious. Very, very religious.

Very punctilious in the way they obeyed all the conditions. But they were as dark as dark could be. They were blind.

Didn't know where they were going. Didn't understand what the will of the Lord was. The Lord says, [00:24:01] I am come a light into the world that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

We have to confess that there are many things that we don't know. That's not exactly darkness. We

have to confess that there are some things very difficult to understand in the word of God. But that's something we can learn on our knees. But not to know where we're going.

Not to know our ultimate destiny.

Not to know what will happen in this world is darkness of the very worst kind. I remember when we were in Palestine about 18 years ago.

Some of us were privileged to go into a place called the Tomb of the Kings. And we went into a square room about twice the size of this. And off from it were little passages.

And in the passages there were little niches on the wall where presumably the bodies had lain. [00:25:05] Well, the more we went into those little passages, we began to feel we were in a rabbit's world. And the guide, he had tapes.

And he was showing us how to go, where to go. And his little light was burning. Well, after about ten minutes his little taper burned down and he would light another one and so on. Well, when we were coming back, we asked him, Adel, will we find our way back?

You see, your taper went out. Will we find our way back? You would find it very difficult, he said, in the darkness. He says, I would find my way because I'm accustomed to this. So he was told, it's a good thing to have light, isn't it?

Ah, yes, I know what you mean. I know what you mean. And Adel, though he was, he knew that we were referring to the light that comes from Christ. And oh, how wonderful it is.

[00:26:03] That where all is dark, moral and spiritual darkness, the labor in Christ knows to follow him.

Because he is the light. And as we follow him and his teachings, we are set by never coming to any darkness that will hinder us spiritually. He is the light.

And as we follow him, we are in the light too. Now, chapter 14.

Let not your heart be troubled.

Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

When we read through the Gospel of John, we come face to face with plain statements that Christ is God. It states so emphatically in the opening verses. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [00:27:01] We've read, and we'll come to it in a few moments, that Thomas says, My Lord and my God. And the Lord Jesus didn't rebuke him for making that statement. And many, many other portions. Indeed, the Jews sought to stone him because he said God was his own father. Because by so saying, he was making himself equal with God.

Twice over, that is in the Gospel by John. Because he said statements that made him equal with God.

Here's another reference. Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Now, that statement coming from a mere man would be absolute blasphemy. The Lord Jesus is saying, You believe in God, I want you to believe in me too. Now, that would be blasphemy from any man. Coming from the lips of the Son of God, it was definitely correct. Here is a belief that warms the heart of every believer.

[00:28:02] When he opens up this wondrous truth concerning the Father's house. He says, You've got a troubled heart. You've got some heart trouble if you like. Well, he says, By believing in me, that trouble can be dispelled. It's often been noted that previous to this, the Lord Jesus was often troubled.

Troubled in his spirit, distressed in his spirit for various reasons. Though how wonderful in the midst of all that was approaching for him, the cross and all that it meant to him, he could find time to comfort and encourage the hearts of his own. Let not your heart be troubled. My heart may be troubled as I think of approaching death and all the sorrow connected with it. I don't want your heart to be troubled. Oh, how considerate.

He says, In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.

[00:29:01] I think that's one of the many sweet statements that the Lord made. He's virtually saying, I wouldn't dream of keeping anything back from you. I want to tell you all that's in my heart. I want to encourage you and to show you what the end will be. Now here is real wonderful light that certainly dispels darkness.

In my Father's house are many mansions or many abodes.

Not everybody believes in what Brethren have taught, but I believe with all my heart that the Father's house is a conception of the blessing of God for every family that has been created, whether they are angels or Israel or the nations or the church, every family will be included, the whole concept of God's blessing.

But there is a special place, the Lord says, for you, those who believe in Him, those who believe in His life and testimony, [00:30:03] His death, His person, a special place for them. And He says, I go to prepare a place for you.

Now that's a very comforting thing. The Lord had a special desire for His own.

Some might say, what is He referring to His disciples? He's speaking to them.

It's the disciples particularly that He's concerned about. Well, if you read all the other chapters, 15, 16, and the prayer in 17, you'll see that while He is praying for His disciples, He set the thinking of those who are going to follow, because particularly in His prayer, He says, So the Lord is taking into account all those who are going to receive Him through the ministry and service of the apostles and those who will follow. So we're all included in this. There's a place for us all, all those who believe in the Son. [00:31:06] And this is a particular wonderful moment in time when we're privileged to take sides with a man who's been rejected and ridiculed and cast out, and yet we say, that's the man for us, the Son of God. We believe in Him.

We believe all that He claimed. We believe His person. We believe in His work.

We believe all that's written in the Word of God concerning Him. He says, Now, in our natural thinking, we might imagine someone going to prepare an elaborate room in a great mansion for special guests.

And I suppose that's the kind of figure that the Lord is presenting to us. On the other hand, we believe that the preparation that is made is the fact that He, as man, has entered into the presence of God.

[00:32:03] And that is the guarantee that millions more will follow.

He's the forerunner who has entered in. And the very term forerunner is an indication that there will be others who will be following. Now, I believe with all my heart that the Lord Jesus, having gone out of death, having ascended into the presence of God, has prepared the place in that sense that He's gone, as man, and thank God, all believers in Him will follow. That's a very, very wonderful thing. We've read in our history books and books about explorers and missionaries. They blazed the trail.

They went first.

They cut a path through the wilderness so that others could follow. And if we can use that reverently in connection with the Lord Jesus, how true it is of Him that He has shown the way. He is the way, as He says later on in this chapter. [00:33:02] And He's gone to prepare that place for us. How wonderful.

Then He says, And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again.

I will come again.

Oh, how wonderful these words are.

They've been the hope and encouragement of believers down through the Christian testimony. Many believers, oh, how eagerly they looked for the coming of the Lord for many reasons.

We think of that tremendous time of persecution during the Reformation, and I'm sure prior to that, the early ages of persecution in the first two centuries, two and a half centuries of the Church. Tremendous persecutions when thousands died and were treated in a most awful way. I'm sure many longed for the coming of the Lord. And also, those in the Reformation period [00:34:03] being burned at the stake and tortured in many ways. And sad to say, thousands of believers today who are in prison and persecuted for their faith, I'm sure they're thinking the same thing. What a blessing it would be if the Lord came.

What about us?

In reasonable circumstances, affluent circumstances, have we longed for the coming of the Lord? That might be a bigger test than those who are passing through difficulties. I don't want to leave my nice home. I don't want to leave my young wife, my young husband, my family, my children.

Young brother and his wife were in our home one night, and we were speaking about the coming of the Lord. And he said, Oh yes, we are looking, but I would like you to wait a little longer. They had just been married, and I suppose naturally, we can understand what their feelings were. And we've all

had feelings more or less of that kind. [00:35:02] The Lord says, I'm coming.

And he says, I do want you to keep that hope right in your hearts. Because it's better than anything else. I will come again.

You remember MacArthur when he had to leave the Philippines in the early part of the war? He said, I will come back.

And he did, with an invading army, and secured the Philippines again.

That was a mere mortal man with all the backing of nations behind him. But here is this glorious man, the Son of God, and he says he'll come back again. Come back, not dictated to by anything that pertains to earth. Come back, within the fulfillment of God's purpose for us. And whether it's persecution, or whether it's conditions of peace, we should all be concerned that this is perhaps the greatest thing that we can consider the return of the Lord Jesus for us. [00:36:01] I will come again.

Is it conceivable that this promise will not be fulfilled? Not that we know who the Son of God is. David Livingstone, the former Scottish explorer, he said that the Lord Jesus was a gentleman who never broke his word. And how true that was in his life. He proved this over and over again, the reality of trusting Christ.

So it is here, I will come again.

I would think that the Lord would look favorably on a little company like this, a company reading his own words, I will come again. And what an opportune moment that would be to go from here, right into his presence, glorifying, reading his own words, anticipating his own coming. We were concerned about his coming. Oh, what a wonderful thing that would be. I will come again.

Then he says, receive you unto myself, [00:37:01] where I am, there he may be also.

Now, those mentions of the personal pronoun are very, very sweet indeed. He says, I'm not going to take you to heaven. I'm not going to take you to glory. That would be a wonder of the truth. But he says, I'm going to receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

And here we have the feelings of the Lord in relation to his own.

Those for whom he bled and died, he says, I want them beside me, just where I am. And what can be greater than to be with Christ?

I remember reading about that statement, I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

And another went to visit a dear servant of the Lord, and he thought to comfort him. But he misquoted.

[00:38:01] He says, I know in whom I have believed.

And the brother stopped. No, no, no, no, no, no. He says, I don't want a preposition between myself

and the Lord. I know whom I have believed.

And that's the great thing. And so it is here, the Lord wants us just to be in his presence. Nothing between. Nothing to hinder.

We have to confess that many things hinder the enjoyment of the Lord in our lives. Our own foolishness, our own waywardness, things that get into our lives that push the Lord out.

Oh, here he says, I'm going to bring you to this prepared place where I am, and there will be no sin, and there will be no foolishness, there will be no attacks of the enemy, no attacks of the world, no attacks of the flesh. Oh, what a marvelous place. And if we read those opening verses in Revelation 21, and John says, this won't be there, and that won't be there, and he mentions the things that won't be there, [00:39:01] and we say, my, it must be a wonderful place, because we all know what tears are, we all know what pains are, we all know what death is, we all know what sorrow and crying is. Oh, we know these things. And when they're not there, what a wonderful place it must be. But the greatest of all, Christ will be there.

And every saint near to him, and in conditions when they can respond to him in affection and intelligence.

Now, where I am, there he may be also.

Now, the next scripture is in chapter, verses 12 to 14.

He says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.

[00:40:02] Now, I honestly believe that this was perfectly fulfilled in the lives of the disciples, when they depended upon the gift of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the fulfillment of the Lord's promise. Greater works.

Well, just let's take one.

When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, 3000 souls were converted.

The Lord never had that experience in his life.

When he appeared in resurrection, he appeared unto 500 brethren at once. Maybe a little more. 500 brethren.

And we can always say that that was, if not the sum total of his life upon earth, very, very near to him.

But yet, Peter, preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit, is used of the Lord to bring 3000 souls into blessing.

[00:41:03] And then, further on, we find, I think it's another 5000 that are converted.

The dead are raised.

People are healed.

The news spreads out from the confines of Jerusalem and out from the confines of Palestine into the whole world, into Europe, and into the Near East.

The word goes out, the servants of the Lord taking it with them.

I think it's in that context that the Lord speaks about greater works.

I cannot think for one moment that anything I can say or do will be greater than what the Lord said or did. That would be blasphemy. But the Lord, I think, is showing the expansion of the work that would be consequent upon his death and resurrection and ascension and descending down on the Holy Spirit. Now, I've said this often recently and I believe it to be true. When the Lord Jesus came into the world as a little babe, [00:42:01] how few there were that found him.

How few.

Aged people. Elderly people.

A few apparently insignificant people. Certainly not the elite of the land. Just a few.

I think that's a tremendous indictment against the law.

That's all that the law could provide. Those who were obedient to it. That's all that it could provide. A mere handful at the coming of the Lord into this world. What will it be when Christ comes again?

My, what a harvest.

Millions of people upon earth who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. I saw a brother writing recently.

A very brother, a brother wrote recently and he said in his estimation he believes that 25 million Christians in China at the present moment in spite of all the persecution against them and all the hatred that was hurled upon them in the cultural revolution [00:43:02] he believes in his estimation at least 25 million Chinese.

Mind, it's a nation of a billion people so that's quite a slice out though. 25 million.

And I believe if we knew the facts in relation to Russia we would be amazed at the Christians there. Sad to say we're a bit down to scale as far as blessing is concerned in this country when we consider that about 60 million people in Britain a very, very small proportion of them real born again Christians.

And yet if we take the aggregate all over the world every nation in the world provides some quota at least nearly every nation. Oh, what a change when the Lord comes. Millions of people waiting to hear that shout and all go to see him.

I believe this is the evidence of the greater works. The thousands and millions who are waiting to receive him. The evidence of the greatness of the death and resurrection of Christ [00:44:02] and the service of the Holy Spirit. Now we move on lastly I see the time is nearly gone. Chapter 20.

Very sad about Thomas.

We don't know why he missed that initial visitation from the Lord.

He wasn't with the other disciples. It's often being brought forward as a warning to us not to stay away from the gatherings of the believers when they gather to the name of the Lord Jesus. We might be missing something. Well, Thomas, he certainly missed a great deal. He missed that initial coming of the Lord to his own when the disciples were glad to see the Lord. He said, I'm not going to believe. You can say what you like. I don't believe it.

I won't believe it until I can put my fingers into the marks on his body. Well, the Lord very graciously came again [00:45:02] particularly, I believe, for Thomas' sake. And Thomas, it was to his credit that when he saw this and was able to do what he wanted to do all his doubts vanished. And he refers to the Lord in this way. My Lord and my God.

There isn't any doubt at all that it foreshadows the nation of Israel and their attitude to the Lord. First of all, unbelieving. And then, according to the mind of the prophet what are those wounds at their last in my hand? So what?

These are the wounds I received in the house of my friend. And then the nation comes to the realization that the one whom they despise Jesus of Nazareth is really and truly their Messiah. And Thomas' confession is an indication of what the nation of Israel will do in a coming day in response to Christ.

And never let us forget that it was an actual incident and the disciples saw the Lord [00:46:01] and confessed him as his Lord and his God. God was standing before Thomas in the person of the Son of God.

God manifests in flesh.

But then the Lord says a remarkable thing. Thomas, you've seen and you have believed you're a true Jew.

The Jews require a sign before they believe.

But he says, blessed are those who haven't seen and have believed. And that brings us in.

We've never seen the Lord. We've never seen those things that he did. We've never heard his voice. All that we have is in here and we accept in faith.

And ours is the most blessed portion. Ours is the most privileged portion. That we haven't seen him, the Lord, we haven't heard him but we believe in him.

By faith we appropriate these things and the Lord says ours is the most blessed portion. [00:47:01]

Because being brought into the faith scene we anticipate great blessings that Israel won't have and that's not disparaging Israel in any way whatsoever because their blessings will be perfect in relation to the promises that God gave to them. But to be united to Christ to form part of his bride to be living here for him in testimony and to be looking for him coming and many many other things is more blessing than actually seeing him as the Jews will in the future and have to confess their failure ours is the better place. O how wonderful that we are waiting for him the one whom having not seen we love.

Praise God for that.

We cannot boast of our love, not one of us but we can claim sincerely that it is there.

We love him for all that he has done for us we love him for all that he is and we worship him accordingly. So you can see [00:48:01] what tremendous advantages there are in believing in the Son of God. Now I hope that these few remarks yesterday afternoon and this afternoon will emphasize to our hearts in a deeper and fuller way what a dignified thing it is to be a believer a believer in the Son of God. May it be so.

Praise be to God.