

John 20.24-29

4 April 2010

Beloved, today is Resurrection Sunday. We mark the very important event of Jesus rising from the dead. Two days ago, we mark Good Friday, the event of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins. And we joy in our hearts, we confess and believe with all our hearts that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and He appeared to his disciples as proof of his resurrection.

The importance of this event in the life of Christ can be seen in the fact that without the resurrection, Christ died as a mere man and he did not die for our sins. And the result is that we are still in our sins and unwashed and we are on our way to hell. And all the preaching of the gospel of the gospel are all vain and all preachers and the church are tricksters and the birth and death of Jesus Christ is the great hoax that the world has ever known. But, Christ did rise from the dead. And after Christ rose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples in the upper room to encourage and comfort his disciples. The disciples were fearful for their lives after seeing what had happened to their lord would also happen to them. What great joy Christ gave to his disciples by appearing to them: that he was once dead and is now alive. And he especially appeared to Thomas who was not present when our Lord first appeared to the disciples. And when Thomas saw him, he confessed a beautiful confession, "My Lord and my God"

This confession is the subject of our sermon this morning.

THE CONFESSION OF THOMAS: "MY LORD AND MY GOD"

First, we see a beautiful confession. Secondly, the basis of that confession and finally, the benediction.

A Beautiful Confession. Thomas confessed that Jesus is Lord and God. It was a confession of love to his Saviour. Thomas one of twelve disciples of our Lord, he loved the Lord very much. He heard the teaching of his master, saw the miracles that he performed and the various conversations with the Pharisees. And he spent much time with the Lord alone with the other disciples. And when the news came that his master was seized by the soldiers, judged by Pontius Pilate, scourged and hung on the cross to die, he was filled with much sadness and grief. His world collapsed. The master whom he greatly loved has died and all the wonderful times that he enjoyed with him had all disappeared. All hope was gone. And Thomas felt the loss of his master all the more because he had a gloomy outlook to life or he tends to look at the dark side of things. This is seen in John 11, Jesus was informed that his beloved friend had died. Then Jesus said, it is good that he was not there at the time of Lazarus's sickness to heal him so that the disciples might believe that Jesus is the Lord. And he says, let us go unto him. And Thomas responded, "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (verse 16)! And in another instance in John 14, here Jesus speaks of going away to prepare a place for the disciples in his father's many mansions. And he will come again so that he will receive them unto himself and the disciples will be where Christ is. Then Thomas said, "Lord, we know not where you are going and how can

we now the way". But, in spite of his gloomy attitude, he loved the Lord greatly.

And in his confession, he called Jesus, "my Lord and my God" He owned Christ as his lord. His master was once dead and now he is alive. His grief and sadness were all disappeared when he saw his master and was replaced with joy and gladness. It is wonderful, it's a miracle – Jesus is alive, he is risen from the dead! As Christ as his lord, he stands as a servant to Christ. And he stands ready to obey the every command of Christ. And confesses that he has been redeemed or bought by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, both soul and body. The result of that redemption means that he has been delivered from the power of the devil. And notice the personal confession, "my Lord". And so as a result of that redemption, he does not belong to himself but unto Jesus Christ his lord. Redemption is achieved by paying a price, and that price is the Jesus himself who offered himself for a ransom. Christ offered himself and he died by the cruel death by hanging on the cross. Thomas not only confessed that Jesus is his lord but also his God. That Jesus is not only a mere man, but also the eternal Son of God. He came by the will of the Father and he was send by the Father to be the Messiah to die. He is very God himself.

Thomas' confession is also the Christian's confession, that the resurrected Lord is both "my Lord and my God". But is the resurrected Christ, your Lord and your God? Notice that you take Christ, not only as your God but also your Lord. And to take Christ as God and not your Lord would mean that you are a Sunday Christian, doing the bare minimum to satisfy your conscience that you are a Christian. And that you are a formal Christian, doing all the externals of the Christian religion. You may even be a member of CERC, you worship the Lord regularly on the Lord's day, bring your children for baptism and even are a partaker of the Lord's Supper, but Christ is not your Lord and master for you seek your own pleasure and do your own will. You must live out your life in such a way testifies that you take Him as your Lord. And to make it more pointed, who is the resurrected Lord to you? Once Jesus was on the coast of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "whom say ye that I am?" And Peter answered, "thou art the Christ, the son of the living God". And Thomas likewise confesses, "you are my Lord and my God". Today, Jesus is asking you, "whom do you say that I am". And the true Christian confesses, "You are my Lord and my God!"

This confession came as a result of seeing the body of Jesus. Thomas insisted on seeing the body with all the wounds of Christ, before he could believe that Christ is alive. For when the other disciples testified to him that they have seen the Lord, he refused to believe. He said, "except I shall see in his hands and the print of his nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails and thrust my hand into his side, I will never believe". He wanted to feel, touch the wounds, hang and legs of Christ and only then would he believe. And eight days later, Jesus appeared to Thomas in the upper room. Notice he did not rebuke Thomas for being so doubtful and slow of heart to believe but sought to answer all the doubts of Thomas had concerning the resurrection. This Christ did by asking Thomas to reach his finger and see his sides and

thrust it into his side. And he exhorted Thomas, be not doubtful but believing. Is it wonderful that our Lord meets us exactly where we are in our doubts? He is sympathetic to our concerns and doubts and answers them one by one. But he does not want us to continue in our doubts but believing. Perhaps, you doubt the existence of God or that Jesus Christ is your Saviour from your sins. Fear not, be assured that the Lord will meet you in your doubts and strengthen your faith through the taking heed to the preaching of God's Word and the diligent partaking of the Lord's Supper.

To Thomas, the nature of his faith was on one of "seeing is believing". He only believed because he saw Christ and the wound of his hands and side. Thomas' faith was weak because his faith depended upon seeing the Saviour. We may be tempted to judge that Thomas had no faith at all because he wanted to see Jesus before he would believe. But, we must note that Jesus did not rebuke Thomas for his weak faith but instead showed him the evidence of the wounds, so that Thomas would believe.

Oh, we ought not to think that our faith is stronger than Thomas is. In fact, the reality is that our faith is often weak. Often our faith is dependent upon what we see and have in our hands. Do we often need constant reminders of the love of Christ for us? And do we often need the Lord's Supper to remind us that the Lord did intend die for us and that we are members of the covenant of grace? And when we lose our precious possessions, e.g. Our loves ones, suffered a breakdown in the relation with our spouse in our own family, lose all our wealth and investment, do not our faith waiver, like a ship tossed to and for in a fierce storm. Do we not put our faith on things that we can see, like the miracles and healing? And the Lord took note of the faith of Thomas that he believed because he saw our Lord and our Lord wants Thomas to have a faith that be based on the unseen for he said to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed"

By this benediction, Jesus pronounced his stamp of approval of those who have not seen and yet have believed. But only such a faith glorifies God. Not in doubt in God in what he has recorded in his word for this is displeasing in the sight of God, but full of faith and trust in his word. True faith is not only a certain knowledge what I hold for truth what God has revealed t us in His Word but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works in my heart, remission of sins, everlasting righteousness and salvation. And the point is that assurance is based on God's Word for without the Word of God that is no true assurance. Hebrews 11.1 tells us that faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. And Noah and Moses are the examples. By faith, Noah build the ark not because he could see the evidence of the coming judgment of flood but because he feared God and so he obeyed God's command to build the ark. The same could be said of Moses, who fled from the king of Egypt, not because he was fearful of the king but because he saw him that was in invisible. In the case of Thomas, the object of faith was the resurrection of Christ. Our faith in the resurrection is not based upon Jesus appearing to us in a dream or vision with the scars and wounds on his hands and side. But our faith in the resurrection is confirmed by the testimony of the apostles and Thomas.

But, our ground of believing is in the historical event of the resurrection of Christ. His death and resurrection of Christ is first in importance and the reliable witnesses of the resurrection of Christ are second. The witness is dependent upon the fact, for without the fact, the witness is false. And now, what do we do with the wonderful news of the resurrection of Christ? We go everywhere preaching that Jesus Christ was dead and is now risen from the dead. And he appeared to his disciples and they have testified that he is alive, so that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and through believing you might have eternal life. Amen.