

The sin of unbelief (Quality: Average)

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Date: 09 December 1990

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[0 : 0 0] Lord has laid his word upon my heart to come with and you will find it in the Gospel of Mark chapter 16 reading the 14th verse the Gospel of Mark chapter 16 reading verse 14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not on them which had seen him after he was risen

Mark's Gospel chapter 16 and the 14th verse Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen I do not know how any of you feel within your hearts as I have read this verse The Lord knowing what a dreadful sin is the sin of unbelief And yet if the Holy Ghost may indeed come upon me to help me

I desire first of all to speak to you regarding two very sad sins which were found in the hearts and lives of the Lord's own beloved disciples and also the dear women who came to the sepulcher at the rising of the sun before the rising of the sun it says I believe in another Gospel in this one it says they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun First of all then to speak regarding the sin of fear which gripped many of their hearts and then the sin of unbelief which also took hold of them and I am sure there are those here with myself who feel thankful that these things are recorded because we have in this account the eleven beloved disciples of the Lord we have the godly women that are also mentioned first of all then that we might consider this part of the subject and then to be helped to speak regarding the wondrous power of salvation which has been wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ upon Calvary and whatever we may pass through if indeed we belong to him our souls can never be lost our salvation is sure because it is founded upon the rock of ages and whilst we must first speak regarding these two particular sins that are recorded in this sixteenth chapter of

Mark and in other places yet how merciful the Lord was to them he didn't cut them off because of their fear he didn't cut them off because of their unbelief he didn't say to them well here you are in this dreadful condition I'll have no more to do with you I'm finished with you and your salvation is no longer certain because of your sins we first begin our meditation in Gethsemane there to begin to try and trace out this part of the subject that is so upon our heart you will remember I'm sure some of you will at least remember how

Jesus going into Gethsemane took with him his disciples and then he took Peter James and John that much further than the others he will but where do we find them in Gethsemane those favoured disciples Peter James and John we find them asleep one hymn writer I believe it is Joseph Hart who says concerning this to shun the sight they fallously and yet if we know anything of our own hearts and in one way this is a comfort to me and I hope it will be to you you see although we are so completely helpless regarding the things to do with our never dying souls we cannot bring ourselves in it all and whatever blessing we have received or may yet receive it can come alone from God by and through the divine work of God the Holy

[7 : 1 0] Ghost well those three favoured disciples they could not sustain Gethsemane Gethsemane in that beautiful hymn of Joseph Hearts 802 it comes in like this and it has touched my own poor heart at times tis not now for such as ye to sustain Gethsemane it's impossible for us it was impossible for them and it is impossible for us if we are to be led even a little into Gethsemane the judgment hall and to Calvary and indeed to the glorious resurrection of our Saviour it can only be by and through God the Holy Ghost let me make that very clear it can only be through God the Holy

Spirit that we can enjoy or receive any true blessing in our hearts now I feel there's the need for another thought here may none of us rest in this what I mean is it is to be prayed for it is to be prayed for that is what we need we need prayer if we are to be favoured individually and collectively here as a people it can only come by and through God himself and through the work of the Holy Spirit and as we are favoured with prayer and secret prayer dear friends is the secret I feel of it all I'm going to ask you all a question here has there been secret prayer in our hearts in our lives throughout this past week has there been secret prayer now that's very vital and then we go on a little we think of dear

Peter how he denied his Lord he followed afar off he denied him and yet the Lord turned and looked upon him and that broke his heart he went out and he wept bitterly I'm sure of this that dear Peter could never forget that day that time of denial of his Lord God it was all in the school of teaching for him in his future ministry so that he could speak with authority and assurance concerning the things of God we go a little further we think of the godly women and we are told in this gospel

Mark's gospel in the 15th chapter and there is this record of the godly women concerning the crucifixion of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ there were also women looking on afar off among whom was Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joseph and Salome where do we find them looking on afar off do you find that it's like that with you do we find so often that the Lord has to say to us what could ye not watch with me one hour you have to prove this you have to prove you cannot watch with him one moment let alone one hour we can only watch with him as grace is given as strength is given and some of us

I believe have had moments in Gethsemane when we have watched with him a little we have been with him into the judgment hall at times for a few moments especially in this and Jesus held his peace we've been there a few times we've been with him to Calvary when we have known what it is to cry out in our own little measure my God my God why hast thou forsaken me when we have known a little of the conflict and the warfare within our poor hearts and in this way have had a little fellowship with him in his suffering but here we are then so completely incapable of anything that is truly gracious we cannot bring ourselves into

[1 3 : 0 0] Gethsemane the judgment hall or Calvary we cannot do anything in ourselves but sin nothing but sin I thee can give does that find you on this Lord's day morning nothing but sin I thee can give the mercy is nothing but love shall I receive now these dear godly women and the disciples although they were found in this condition that I must just seek to bring before you and yet the Lord loved them he had given himself for them he had cried out upon calvary it is finished salvation's work was done dear friends our salvation in Christ is assured we stand upon the rock we do not stand upon ourselves we do not stand upon our own merit we do not stand upon our own works we have nothing whatsoever that we can bring or give but our whole salvation it rests upon

Jesus Christ now that is the foundation for the lost and the ruin made feelingly to know it in the fall and in their own hearts I do want to look at this account here a little more we find these godly women come into the sepulcher and they had prepared spices now there's something very precious in this they prepared spices they rested on the sabbath as they had it there and then very early in the morning they come with their spices they come with the desire in their hearts to anoint him whom their soul loved now it takes me back to a thought that

I've already expressed to you you see there was preparation for the sabbath as we know it today in our day it is the first day of the week the Lord's day is the first day of the week with us it has been so since the resurrection of the Lord Jesus now have we been found then friends how did you spend Saturday how did we spend yesterday I'm sure many of you would rightly respond and you would say well we had our work to do we had our responsibilities we had our duties and all those things that we must attend to but oh dear friends did you have any thought about the Lord's day did we have any thought about the Lord's day I have felt exceedingly burdened during the past week concerning my solemn position here as an under shepherd and I'm so aware of this that it is only as God maintains and upholds and continues to bless his word in our midst that there can be any blessing at all you see the Lord could remove his favour and his blessing from us here in a moment does it trouble you does it exercise us so I just leave that thought for you to take home how did you spend yesterday how did we spend it in the midst of all our duties and responsibilities where we compelled to pray about the Lord's day these godly women this is how they came to the sepulcher that is really an aside to the subject but I've expressed it and I feel it the more prayer we know the more secret prayer we know as a people the more hope there is of blessing yet in our midst and surely this is what we so need we would not rest all glory in the form without the power then where do we find them and they said among themselves who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher and when they looked they thought that the stone was rolled away for it was very great

I just pause here I desire to be led by the Holy Spirit perhaps there are those of you here and in your life at this present time it is just as it was with these dear godly women there is this great stone that is in the way have you as it were a great stone that stands in the way in your life at this present time to put it in simple words have you things in your life that you do not know what to do with you have said with Jehoshaphat neither know we what to do but oh friends these dear women and I believe it will be with you as you lay it before the lord you will find that this great stone that is in your life the lord will roll it away as he rolled it away for them the lord can roll away your stone and mine oh that you might go home with this an awareness of what the lord can do for you lay it before him for with man nothing is possible with god all things are possible and what I desire most of all to come to know is this you see as poor trembling women and as they came to the sepulchre they looked and they found that the stone was rolled away for it was very great but the lord had rolled it away for them and then we find this recorded and entering into the sepulchre they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed in a long white garment and they were affrighted they were affrighted we read of this in more than one place we're hoping to sing for our closing hymn that beautiful hymn of top ladies and it begins like this from whence this fear and unbelief from whence this fear and unbelief how fearful we are of death how fearful we are of things that I know of no other way to express it but things that belong to the spirit world you see we are poor fearing creatures

I do not know how many of you will respond to this thought but I'm sure there are those here you know what it is to be afraid of death the bible speaks of those especially who all their lifetime are subject to bondage through the fear of death the fear of the unknown the fear in this as we think of approaching death and we cannot understand we cannot enter into it we shall only enter into it as death comes so here you see they were very fearful and they were affrighted they couldn't understand they couldn't enter into the meaning of this but here we have the answer given to them and he saith unto them be not affrighted you you see

[21 : 52] Jesus of Nazareth which was crucified he is risen he is not here behold the place where they laid him but go your way tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee and there shall you see him as he said unto you and they went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre for they trembled and were amazed neither said they anything to any man for they were afraid why those fears there may well be those here this morning that may be full of fear fear regarding tomorrow fear regarding the future fear as concerning your end perhaps you've been brought there in your soul's exercise you stood as it were on the very bank of

Jordan but the thing is this why those fears behold is Jesus holds the helm and guides the ship spreads the sails and brings the breezy sent to wafer through the deep to the regions where the mourners cease to weep you see your life is hid with Christ in God your salvation is sure in him how fearful then they were we find in another place I just turned I believe it's in Luke's gospel when the two disciples on the road to Emmaus their saviour came to them walked with them and blessed them and as they arose up the same hour and returned to

Jerusalem and they told what things were done in the way and how he was known of them in breaking of bread but then we read this and as they thus spake Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and saith unto them peace be unto you but they were terrified and affrighted and supposed that they had seen a spirit do you know what it is to be terrified and affrighted oh dear friend your life is hid with Christ in God the Lord will not give to his people dying grace until a dying hour we must not expect dying grace until a dying hour you see we've sung this morning be still my heart these anxious cares to thee are burdens thorns and snares they cast dishonor on thy

Lord and contradict his gracious word oh the Lord will never forsake the work of his own hands Jesus having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to the end so then why those fears you say I'm so fearful I'm so fearful what you need is the Lord to come in the blessed words that he spake on one occasion and this is what we read he said it is I be not afraid it is I you see it's Jesus this affliction that may be upon you the Lord is in it this that you might even be wondering whether it's going to bring you to death and yet the Lord is in it oh he's laid it upon you so why those fears then isn't it true as another hymn writer puts it creatures of fear we drag along and fear where no fear is we're so prone to fears and we're so prone to sinful fears sinful fears brought safely by his hand thus far now you must acknowledge that brought safely by his hand thus far your

Lord has brought you through many dangers toils and snares you've been brought through afflictions sorrows bereavements troubles temptations thus far and you see it's because your life is hid with Christ in God and then I must attempt to come to what perhaps is especially upon my heart what do we read about these beloved disciples we read this dear Mary Magdalene out of whom he had cast seven devils and she went and told them that had been with him as they mourned and wept and they when they had heard that he was alive and had been seen of her believe not and then again it says after that he appeared in another form unto two of them as they walked and went into the country and they went and told it unto the residue neither believe they them oh this dreadful sin of unbelief do you find it works in your heart do you find that this dreadful sin is so often with you do you know what it is for the devil to come in like a flood and he says to you there's nothing in religion you're deluded there's no life after death it's the end do you know what it is to be tempted by satan do you know what it is for the devil to come and to say to you there is no god he may come and he may say to you look at the world and all the things that are going on there and as many many people will say if god is a god of love why then all the dreadful things that are taking place oh the awful power of unbelief and the most solemn aspect of unbelief is this that it fights against god's love what i perhaps feel particularly on the one hand there is this dreadful sin of unbelief and in the verse that i have read to you afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meet or as they were together and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen oh friends do you find yourself a companion to these beloved disciples of the lord his eleven disciples that were with him judas now had gone to his own place but here we have the eleven disciples of the lord the lord had met with them he had said to them follow me they had left all they followed him they had been with him they heard his voice he blessed them he spoken to them they communed with him and yet here they are so full of unbelief that they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen he said and if you know anything of your own heart you will say lord i'm no different to these disciples and yet do you feel thankful

[30 : 33] that this is recorded you see the lord didn't cut them off he didn't say i'm i'm not going to have any more to do with you he had mercy on them he knew you see the mercy is that the lord knows he knows our hearts he knows how weak and faint we are he knows that we have no ability we have no power we can do nothing whatsoever regarding our never dying souls it can come alone through him well on the one hand then we have ventured with this the fears that they knew the unbelief that they knew that oh may the lord help me now to convey this to you that their saviour had given his life upon calvary for them he had come into gethsemane he had sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground he had been in an agony the pangs of his body were great but greater the pangs of his mind oh friends whatever wherever we may get to in our life however far off we may be and our sins which torment us our sins which testify against us and yet our salvation in

Jesus Christ is sure how firm a foundation ye saints of the lord has he laid for your faith in his excellent word what more can he say than to you he has said you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled you see we tend to lose sight of this our salvation is in Jesus he came into Gethsemane and there oh that sacred garden that garden that Joseph heart was so led to I do just want to read to you and it's this view him in that olive press squeezed and wrung till whelmed in blood view thy maker's deep distress hear the sighs and groans of

God then reflect what sin must be gazing on Gethsemane and from there he was apprehended all man his beloved disciples among them forsook him and fled he trod the wine press alone and of the people there was none with him oh that we might consider may we be favoured we need the holy spirit in this consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds you've not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin oh to have a glimpse of the sufferings of our saviour to be favoured this lord's day morning to see him in the olive press squeezed and wrung till whelmed in blood oh that it might bring us to say with another hymn writer his way was much rougher and darker than mine did

Christ my lord suffer and shall I repine friends what are our sufferings compared to his what are our sufferings compared to his there's no comparison you see our saviour came to calvary and there they nailed him to a cross of wood they pierced his hands and his feet and the soldier pierced his side is true but we have pierced him through and through what thinking of Christ is the test to try both our state and our scheme we cannot be right in the rest unless we think rightly of him oh friends what is Jesus Christ to you and me what is he to us this is the important thing

I hope that God's word may encourage us that although we too know what it is to be terrified at times and affrighted and as we too will know what it is to be filled with unbelief and sometimes as it were held down by it and yet may we be given a glimpse by faith of the sacred words as uttered by Jesus on Calvary it is finished it is finished salvation's work is done our salvation does not rest upon our frames or our feelings it does not rest upon our works it does not rest upon us in any shape or form but our salvation rests upon

[36 : 53] Jesus that is where our salvation rests on the rock of ages founded what can shake thy sure repose with salvation's walls surrounded thou may smile at all thy foes well I'm going to leave it afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meet and upraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen and oh friends if we know anything of our hearts we would have been just the same I know I would I would have been just the same as they but what I felt particularly is this that it does not detract from the foundation the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal the

Lord knoweth them that are his and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity Amen may we be helped to conclude with him 227 from whence this fear and unbelief as thou O Father put to grieve thy spotless son for me and will the righteous judge of man condemn me for that debt of sin which Lord was charged on thee in 227 death whose

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May it be so. Pardon all that thy pure eyes have seen amiss. We would thank thee again for journeying mercies to thy house and pray that everyone may return home in safety and in peace. And Lord whatever thy will regarding the evening service may our hearts be prepared for thy will in it all.

Thou has brought one and another to thy house once more. And Lord we think too of young men and young people at this time of the year.

[45 : 11] Especially as they leave home. Lord thou knowest their need. And thou knowest the need of their parents. Lord be with us.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God with the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.