



**Five moments on the Cross**

**Five moments with the Risen  
Lord Jesus**

*From Luke and Acts*



## **Introduction**

“Sirs, we wish to see Jesus.” This was the request of some Greeks in the days before Jesus’ death (John 12:21). Whatever their reasons for wanting to see Jesus, He responds by pointing them to His coming death whereby He would be glorified (v.23) and bring life to many (v.24).

Later, after Jesus had returned to God the Father, the Apostle Peter wrote to Christians, “Though you have not seen [Jesus Christ], you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls (1 Peter 1:8-9).” Like those Christians, we live on the other side of the cross and although we do not see Jesus in person, we love, believe and rejoice in Him.

This booklet is divided into two parts. Part one contains five moments in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ when He was dying on the cross. Part two contains five moments with the risen Lord Jesus. All are taken from Luke’s Gospel and the book of Acts.

## **What did Christ’s death achieve?**

Death is the great leveler that can make life seem meaningless. It can cut short life at any moment. Death is impossible to escape- “the wise dies just like the fool! (Ecclesiastes 2:14-17).” Yet, the death of Christ on the cross was both unique and meaningful. His death achieved something that could only be achieved by God. In His dying moments, the Lord Jesus cried out the opening line of Psalm 22: “My God, my God why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). At the cross, God the Father forsook God the Son. This is the only moment in eternity past or future that this has or will happen. Later, the Apostle Paul tells us something of what was happening at that time: “For our sake he made him to be

sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).” God’s purity is such that He cannot look on sin, meaning He had to forsake His Son.

We either bear our sin ourselves or Christ bears it for us. At the cross, God the Son willingly bore the sin of those who trust in Him upon Himself. This meant He would be forsaken by His Father, yet we are the ones who profit from this. It is our record of sin that is nailed to the cross! (Colossians 2:14)”

### **What did Christ’s resurrection achieve?**

Just as Christ’s death was unique and meaningful, so too Christ’s resurrection is unique and meaningful. His resurrection from the dead meant that sin and death are defeated. Paul writes;

“Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

(1 Corinthians 15:54)

Christ’s resurrection fulfilled what God had promised in His Word. The early Christians realized this when they read Psalm 16:10 (see Acts 2:27 and 13:35). Peter says it was impossible for death to hold Jesus down, as the Scriptures had foretold;

“For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,  
or let your Holy One see corruption.”

(Acts 2:27)

The resurrection proves that Jesus’ claims about Himself are true (John 2:18-22). It is also the proof that God is just and will one day judge the entire world (Acts 17:30-31).

Yet, the resurrection also gives us a glimpse of heaven. In the same way that the first cherries of spring

are eagerly awaited for as the firstfruits of the season, so too Christ's resurrection body is a foretaste of what will happen to all believers. Paul says, "... in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the *firstfruits* of those who have fallen asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20)." Christ's resurrection from the dead assures Christians that we have the promises of heaven ahead of us.

*All passages are from the English Standard Version (ESV)*



## Moment 1- Luke 23:27-31

27 And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. 28 But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ 30 Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ 31 For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

As Jesus was lead to “the Skull,” a man named Simon of Cyrene carried His cross. They were followed by some “women who were mourning and lamenting” for Jesus. Amongst them were surely those who were closest to Him, including His mother, Mary, as well as “mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene (John 19:25).”

The mood was one of despair and sorrow. Yet, astoundingly, Jesus tells them to look beyond what is happening to Him and to weep for themselves and their children (v.29). Jesus knew what was coming in the future. He is speaking of the day when Jerusalem was destroyed over 35 years later. In the year AD 66, a war broke out between the Roman army and the Jewish people. In the end, Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70. Josephus, a Jewish historian of the time, records: “Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done,) Caesar gave

orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple... (The Wars of the Jews 7.1.1)” Although it could be exaggerated, Josephus also says that over 1 million people perished (6.9.3). The temple which was the centre of worship of the true and living God and the place where sin was atoned for was destroyed at this time and it has never been rebuilt (see Matthew 21:5-9 and 20-24).

When Jesus speaks of them wanting the hills to fall in on them, He is quoting the LORD’s punishment on Israel in Hosea 10:8. The point is that if terrible things awaited the innocent Jesus, the “green wood,” how much worse would it be for those who are guilty, such as the nation of Israel? As fire consumes dry timber more easily than green timber, so too God would allow the Roman army to judge and destroy Jerusalem, including the temple. This time would be so terrible that women would wish that they had never borne children to see such awful days.

The destruction of the Temple was God’s judgment on the nation of Israel and a foretaste of the final judgment to come for all people (see Revelation 6:15-17). Even on His way to His death, Jesus warns of the seriousness of God’s judgment upon sin- and it is He alone who saves us from this coming wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

What would it be like in the terrible days when Jerusalem would be destroyed?

Why are we to grieve over sin and God’s judgment?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Hosea 10



## Moment 2- Luke 23:35-38

35 And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” 38 There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

The sight of Jesus dying on the cross had become a spectacle. In particular, it caused people to mock when they thought about how He had saved others, but now He seemed helpless to save Himself. Jesus had restored the sight of blind men (Luke 18:43), healed lepers (Luke 17:14) and most astoundingly He had raised the dead to life (Luke 7:15 and 8:55). But now He seemed to be a helpless fraud. How quickly had the disciples joy as He entered Jerusalem (Luke 19:37), been replaced by spiteful ridicule from the crowd?

The mocking came from two groups of people. Firstly, the Jewish leaders mocked Him. They were offended that He claimed to be God’s sent Messiah, his Chosen One (Luke 22:66-71). Surely, if He was the Messiah and the Son of God then He would be able to come down from the cross?

The second group to mock Him was the Roman soldiers. Their guilt is not as strong as the Jewish leaders who should have known better. Nonetheless, the soldiers offered Him sour wine, probably a “cheap wine,” as a way of further humiliating Him (see Psalm 69:21). They taunt Jesus and the Jewish people by scornful calling on Him to save Himself if He is the “King of the Jews” and placing a sign over His head.



In C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, when the White Witch sees Aslan the lion willingly coming towards her and her wicked army to be slaughtered, she cries out, "The fool! The fool has come." They bind the lion, shave him and jeer at him as though they were brave. It is a similar scene with Jesus.

Little did the Jewish leaders and the Roman soldiers know the design of God behind all that was happening. Could Christ Jesus have come down from the cross? Yes! Then why didn't He come down? This was the Father's plan and Jesus drank the bitter cup to the end. This was the way that sin would be atoned for and God the Father and Son would be glorified- at the Cross! (John 12:23; 17:1-5) This was the way that God has shown His love for us (1 John 4:10) and it assures us of His ongoing goodness towards us. Paul says, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32)"

When Satan tempted Jesus, he said, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down" from the top of the temple (Matthew 4:5-6). How is Jesus tempted in a similar way at His crucifixion?

What is the irony of the Jewish leaders taunt, "let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!"?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Psalm 69:16-36



## Moment 3- Luke 23:39-43

39 One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” 42 And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” 43 And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

An appalling sense of injustice strikes you as you read about the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Christ Jesus in the Gospels. Even the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, three times declares that he found Jesus innocent of the charges that were brought against Him (Luke 23:4; 14-15 and 22).

Later that Passover day, Jesus was crucified between two criminals. Yet, our confidence is that this is not merely history unfolding in a random way. It was the fulfillment of what God had said through the prophet Isaiah:

“he poured out his soul to death  
and was numbered with the transgressors  
(Isaiah 53:12 and Luke 22:37).”

The response of the two criminals to Jesus is the focus here. They clearly understood that Jesus had claimed to be the Christ or God’s Anointed One. Yet, one of the criminals hardens his heart to Jesus even as his life was ebbing away. He is only metres away from Christ and on the threshold of death, yet he lifts his fist in the face of God the Son and rails

against Him. His tone is bitterly sarcastic, ““Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” All he seems to be interested in is avoiding death.

In contrast the other criminal was prepared for death. He recognizes two things: one, that he is guilty and deserving of death; two, that Jesus is innocent. Yet, his observations of the situation don't end there. He then makes a bold request of Jesus that shows he has a true faith. He says, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” His request that Jesus would remember him is a request for salvation. The very thing that Christ Jesus was achieving at that moment on the cross was the way by which his request would be answered. True faith humbly comes to Christ Jesus with a softened heart, knowing that we are guilty, but knowing that He is the way to the Kingdom of God.

Earlier Jesus had said, “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out (John 6:37).” Here, He graciously receives this dying criminal into His paradise where he will await the final and glorious resurrection from the dead (Revelation 21:1-4). This is a promise that goes to us as well.

How are the two criminals the same as each other? How are they different?

What awaits all believers at the hour of death?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Isaiah 53:10-12



## Moment 4- Luke 23:44-45

44 It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

At the very moment when the sun should have been at its peak, it's light failed. From noon (sixth hour) until 3pm (ninth hour) the whole land was covered in darkness. The darkness of the sky was an ominous sign of lament and God's judgment upon His Son- and upon those who crucified Him. Darkness is often a symbol of judgment (see Amos 8:10 and Joel 3:15).

Strangely, Luke includes the detail about the curtain in the temple being torn in two. Jesus' crucifixion was not near the temple. He was at least several hundred metres away, outside of the city walls. Why include this strange incident involving the temple curtain?

The temple in Jerusalem was the very centre of worship to God. In its bounds people would come and hear God's Word spoken and offer animal sacrifices. At the very centre of the temple was the Most Holy place ("the Holy of Holies"). No one was allow to enter here, except the High Priest and even he was only allowed to enter on one day of the year- the Day of Atonement when he offered a sacrifice for his sins and the sins of the people (Leviticus 16).

At the time of Jesus, the Holy of Holies was separated from the rest of the temple by a large curtain. It was 18m high (6 stories high) and 9m wide. It was made from fine Babylonian cloth of blue, scarlet and purple. The Jewish Mishnah says it was a hand width thick. What was its purpose? It separated us from God's presence: "Your eyes are too pure to look on evil;

you cannot tolerate wrong (Habakkuk 1:3).” Although it was beautiful, as a physical barrier it was a constant reminder that we are sinful and therefore cannot come near to God. The gates of heaven are barred to us. But now at the time of Jesus’ death this vast, elaborate curtain separating God and humanity is torn in two.

Christ himself, by His death has opened the way for us to have access to God. Jesus’ once for all, perfect sacrifice for sin means that, “we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith... (Hebrews 10:19-22)”

When the temple curtain was torn in two, redeemed people were allowed to enter God’s presence. What confidence can you or I have in coming before God either in prayer or when we die? We must place our faith in the ripping of the curtain that signifies the ultimate opening up of the way to God through the death of Christ Jesus.

How has Christ’s death opened the way to God?

In Hebrews 10:19-22, what encouragement are we given, because this is true?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Exodus 26:31-35



## Moment 5- Luke 23:46-49

46 Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last. 47 Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, “Certainly this man was innocent!” 48 And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. 49 And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Six times Christ Jesus had spoken from the cross (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34 and 43; John 19:26-27, 28 and 30). This is now the final time. There is no doubt that in these words there is a depth of meaning far beyond what we can fathom. We who are finite cannot understand the depths of an infinite God. Here, God the Son tastes death, in all its horror and cruelty, yet with an obedient trust in His Father. Christ Jesus committed His own human spirit into the hands of His Father, fulfilling the words of Psalm 31:5,

Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

Let every believer own these words with the assurance that we belong to Christ Jesus who defeated death.

Luke says that it was with this that “he breathed his last.” The Lord of Life, through whom and for whom all things were created (Colossians 1:15-16), is dead. With the spectacle finished the crowds returned home “beating their breasts.” This was a sign of mourning, yet there seems to be regret,

even guilt and contrition here. God's perfect justice was both satisfied in that Jesus bore the punishment for His people, yet God's justice was also trampled by the injustice of what happened to Christ Jesus, His Son.

The response of the centurion to this was remarkable. He was a man with some authority and he had witnessed the events leading up to this point. He declares that Jesus is innocent and he even praises God. Something has been stirred within him. He has seen something in Christ Jesus and he realizes that this is a righteous man. His conscience won't allow him to settle and he gives the final judgment over the events that have happened- this man was innocent. The words of an old Christian hymn help to capture what was happening;

*Your sinless soul's oppression  
was all for sinners' gain;  
mine, mine was the transgression,  
but Yours the deadly pain:  
I bow my head, my Saviour,  
for I deserve Your place;  
O grant to me Your favour,  
and heal me by Your grace.*

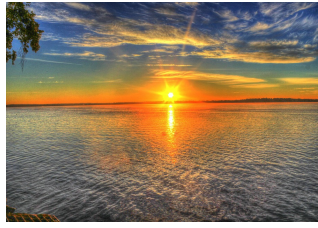
(Paul Gerhardt)

What is the difference between the reaction of the crowds and the reaction of the centurion?

What is the great significance of this moment for Christ's Jesus relationship to His Father?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Psalm 31



## Risen Moment 1- Luke 24:25-32

25 And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, 29 but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

Having seen five moments with Christ Jesus on the cross, think now on five moments with the risen Lord Jesus. The day that Christ Jesus rose from the dead He met with two unsuspecting travellers walking to Emmaus. Their mood was one of disappointment and bewilderment as they left Jerusalem that Sunday. One of the travellers was a man named Cleopas (Luke 24:18). His companion is unnamed. They set out on the 7-mile long walk, yet it becomes one of the most astonishing journeys of all time, for they walk with a man who has risen from the dead.

As they discuss the events of the past few days, including Jesus’ betrayal, arrest and trial, leading to His crucifixion, the temple curtain being torn, the darkness, His



burial and then from only hours earlier the women's report of the empty tomb, the risen Lord Jesus joins them on the road. But they "were kept from recognizing him."

They call Jesus a prophet and unwittingly they tell Him of their hope that God through Jesus would deliver the nation into a new age of freedom. It then says that Christ Jesus, "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets" interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Imagine Christ Jesus opening to them Psalm 2 ("The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed..."), Isaiah 53 ("But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities...") and a host of other Old Testament Scriptures that spoke of who He is. Imagine Him showing them that the Old Testament with its symbols and its pictures of salvation, actually look forward to what was accomplished by Him in His life, death and resurrection from the dead. Imagine Him explaining how He was the better high priest (Hebrews 8:1-6). He is the key to understanding the Old Testament.

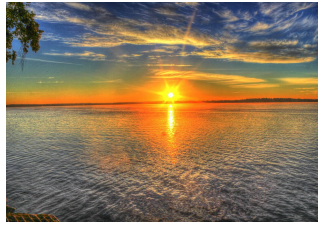
Finally, when their eyes are opened and they realize it was the risen Lord Jesus that they had spoken with, they say, "Did not our hearts burn within us... (v.32)" Paul tells us that, "all the promises of God find their Yes in [Jesus Christ]. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory (2 Corinthians 1:20)."

What does Jesus want these disciples to know?

What was the response of these disciples when they realized that they had been speaking with Jesus?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Psalm 2



## Risen Moment 2- Luke 24:36-43

36 As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!” 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. 38 And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate before them.

Reports that Jesus had risen had reached the disciples. They must have recalled Him saying that this would happen after three days (see Luke 18:33). They were discussing these things when Jesus Himself met with them! He greets them with the typical Hebrew expression, “Peace to you!” But now that greeting carries far greater meaning. God’s peace was upon them in a new way, because of Christ’s resurrection.

This was now the fifth time Jesus was seen on the day that He rose (Mary Magdalene in John 20:11-18; a larger group of women in Matthew 28:9; by Peter in Luke 24:34 and by the two travellers on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:13-35). The disciples are immediately terrified. They had seen Christ Jesus die (Luke 23:49) and they are now terrified to see Him alive. God did not leave Jesus in the grave!

Jesus’ gentle rebuke of them was intended to reassure them that it was truly Him who was risen, albeit this was a

resurrected body. His body was in some ways similar to His old body, but now it was perfected and glorified.

To calm their fears and assure them, Jesus gives them two proofs. Firstly, He says to them, “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” They touched the scarred hands and feet, which only a few days earlier the soldier’s hammer had pierced with nails. Secondly, Christ Jesus eats a piece of broiled fish in front of them. This was no ghost or spirit. Christ Jesus was truly alive, never to die again.

The Apostle Peter was amongst those who saw and touched Jesus on that day. Yet, later he wrote to other Christians across the world: “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, <sup>9</sup> obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

We leave the disciples at this moment still disbelieving for joy and marvelling at meeting the risen Lord Jesus and with proof that He was alive.

How was Jesus’ resurrection body similar to our bodies and how is it now different (see also John 20:19-20 and 1 Corinthians 15:42-50)?

How does the Lord help the disciples in their unbelief?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Psalm 16



## Risen Moment 3- Luke 24:45-49

45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

The days after Jesus’ resurrection and before His ascension were precious days. He had many things to teach His disciples and just as He had opened the eyes of the two travellers on the road to Emmaus, similarly He opened the minds of His disciples to understand the Scriptures that spoke of Him. The Law of Moses with its promises to Abraham and commandments about sacrifices is fulfilled by Him. The Prophets that spoke of an everlasting Davidic kingdom is fulfilled by Him. So too, the Psalms which spoke of a coming Messiah is fulfilled by the divine Son of God.

The message of the gospel is summarised in these short verses. Christ’s suffering unto death and rising from the dead after three days is proclaimed. The response that is commanded is repentance. This means to change our mind toward God. True Christian faith always involves repentance. We cannot know God and be forgiven with a proud heart. It involves humbly saying that God was right.

Yet, this message about Christ Jesus was not just for the disciples and the Jewish people. Now “all nations” are to hear. The gospel of Christ Jesus is not bound by ethnicity, culture,

borders or language. The gospel of grace begins in Jerusalem, but extends to the ends of the earth. It is a daunting task that only the power of the Holy Spirit (“the promise of my Father”) can accomplish (see John 14:15-17).

On the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after Christ’s death, we see the beginnings of all that Christ spoke about here. These were new and exciting days. The Holy Spirit came in power upon the Apostles so that they had the ability to proclaim to speak in the languages of all those gathered in Jerusalem. Each of them heard in their “own native language (Acts 2:8).” That day Peter spoke of Christ’s death and resurrection, saying, “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified (Acts 2:36).”

Today, we carry on the Apostles’ work, knowing also that we who believe are part of the fulfilment of Jesus’ words. We are among those from “all nations.” One day we will join a great multitude from every “tribe and language and people and nation (Revelation 5:9),” ransomed of God and we will worship Him together.

How is the gospel message summarized in these verses?

How would things be different from this time onwards?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Isaiah 49:1-7



## Risen Moment 4- Luke 24:50-53

**50** And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. **51** While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. **52** And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, **53** and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Bethany was a fitting place for Christ Jesus to meet His disciples for the final time before He ascended to His Father. Bethany, on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives was the home of Lazarus whom Jesus had raised from the dead (John 11:43-44) and near to the place where in agony He had prayed with great sweat drops like blood that “this cup” would be taken from Him (Luke 22:39-44). For forty days Jesus had “presented himself alive” to His disciples and spoke to them “about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).” Now, the time had come for Him to return to His Father in glory.

There are two blessings in these verses. The first blessing comes when Christ Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed His disciples. Imagine hearing His words of love for them! There is no doubting the feeling of Christ towards His disciples. How wonderful that the final act of the Lord Jesus on this earth was to bless those who were His disciples! The disciple’s response is to worship Him. God alone is to be worshipped, yet, here these first century Jewish men worship Christ Jesus as God the Son. At His birth Jesus was worshipped by wise men (Matthew 2:11) and at His ascension to His Father He is worshipped by His disciples. We are to worship Christ Jesus in the same way.

The second blessing comes when the disciples return to the temple and bless God. Surely the songs that were sung in the temple now carried greater meaning for these believers.

Psalm 84:10-11 says;

“a day in your courts is better  
than a thousand elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God  
than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield;  
the Lord bestows favor and honor.”

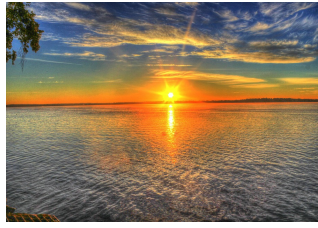
The disciples are filled with great joy for the things they have seen and the assurances that they have been given. They had so much to give thanks to God for. There is no doubt that the joy of this moment sustained them in difficult days that were ahead for them.

How do the disciples respond to Christ Jesus?

What does this reveal about who Jesus is?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Psalm 84



## Risen Moment 5- Acts 16:13-15

13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

The book of Acts, which was also written by Luke to Theophilus, continues the story from the time that Christ Jesus ascended to heaven. With Christ Jesus no longer with the apostles to lead them, what would things be like? Acts tells us that although Jesus was no longer with them/us physically, He is still with them/us spiritually continuing to work powerfully.

Throughout the book of Acts, the risen Lord Jesus chose Matthias to replace Judas (1:24), sent the Holy Spirit (2:33), added to the church those who were being saved (2:47), appeared and spoke to Saul (9:5), caused blindness (13:11), through the Holy Spirit blocked the way of Paul, Silas and Timothy (16:7) and stood by Paul to strengthen him (23:11).

In Acts 16, Paul and his companions have arrived in the city of Philippi on the Macedonian coast. This is part of Paul’s second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22). Paul’s custom was to go to the synagogue first (Acts 17:2), however in Philippi there does not appear to have been a synagogue, and so instead they meet a group of women gathered for prayer by



the river. These women were likely Gentile God-fearers. It was at this prayer meeting that Paul and his companions spoke about Christ Jesus and we are told of a woman named Lydia who was a “worshipper of God.” She worshiped God according to the knowledge that she had, but there was more that she needed to know.

It is now that we see the Lord continue to move as He, “opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.” It was not the personality or persuasiveness of Paul and his companions that brought her to faith in Christ Jesus, but the Lord’s power to soften her heart to the message. Salvation is all of grace and can only be credited to the Lord.

Then, having professed faith in Christ Jesus she is baptised with her household and she was eager to help Paul and his companions. Having them stay with her also gave her a great opportunity to “grow in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus (2 Peter 3:18)” as she spoke with them. For us, the great confidence we have is that the Lord who died and rose from the dead is still the One who moves in the lives of people throughout the world today. We pray that He will continue to open hearts to His gospel.

In what ways did Lydia already know something about God?

How did the Lord work within her and what was her response?

Prayer points:

OT reading: Isaiah 35