

# (1986 Prairie Series) 3 - Mount of Transfiguration

by Major Ian Thomas

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*The Lord Jesus told the disciples to keep their mouths shut until they could understand the messianic mission and the need for the cross, which was only possible after the resurrection.*

**Duration:** 1:01:16

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 17:1, Matthew 17:9

**Topics:** "Prairie Series"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages preachers and teachers who may feel discouraged by the lack of impact their words have on their audience. He shares that even Jesus Christ faced a similar challenge, as he taught his disciples for three years without much penetration. The speaker then takes the audience to Matthew 16, where Jesus displays his sense of humor and instructs his disciples not to share the vision of his transfiguration until after his resurrection. The speaker emphasizes that the resurrection of Jesus is what ultimately transformed the lives of the disciples and apostles.

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## Transcript

Said Dr. Gamaliel, Theodos is dead, and all who followed Theodos scattered. Judas is dead, said Dr. Gamaliel, and all who followed Judas scattered. And said Dr. Gamaliel, if Jesus Christ is dead, all who follow him will scatter.

If he's dead, but if he's alive again, if this thing be not of men, but of God, you cannot fight against him, unless you can fight against God. And nearly 2,000 years later, we're here tonight, to tell Dr. Gamaliel that he was right. For Theodos is dead, Judas is dead, those who followed Theodos and those who followed Judas scattered, they too are dead.

But all over the world today, out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, there are those who know, that he whom they crucified, God raised from the dead, and Jesus, our Lord, is alive. And we share his resurrection. And so then in the early church, convinced to the truth of it, entering into the good of it, demonstrating the fact of it, preaching in the power of it, and living in the joy of it, they cease not to teach and to preach, that Jesus was the Christ.

So we introduced to the early church, those who as individual members in particular, had been added to the body corporate of our Lord Jesus, that second body the Father gave him on earth, in which he would continue to do, and continue to teach the things that he once had begun to do, and begun to teach. But you know, sometimes we tend to believe that the disciples, you know, had something going for them, that isn't going for you and for me right now, that they were men of another caliber. That you can't expect of us today what was expected then of them.

That untutored bunch of human beings, who evangelized the then known world in one generation, turned the world upside down, and changed the face of nations. But you know that isn't true. For as James himself speaking of Elijah, so we may know of these, that they too were of like frailty.

They were of our flesh and blood. But something happened. And it's into what happened, that I'd like with you to explore a little bit tonight, and discover why it was, that the message of the early church was, this Jesus whom they crucified, God has raised from the dead.

Chapter 1 of the book of the Acts, a witness to the resurrection, and chapter 2 and 3 and 4 and 5, this Jesus is alive again. I'm sure there must be many preachers, teachers, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, among us here tonight. Those who teach a Sunday school class, lead some evangelistic outreach or mission, your mum and dad maybe, around the breakfast table.

And you get discouraged sometimes, that so little of what you say seems to penetrate, those to whom you minister. Well if you on occasions are tempted to get discouraged, I've got good news for you, nobody ever had a duller Bible class, than Jesus Christ. They were absolutely solid.

Thick as they come. For three whole years he taught them, and nothing penetrated. Isn't that encouraging? Do you know that's kept me preaching, for over half a century.

As a matter of fact it's one of the reasons, why I accepted this very gracious invitation, to come and talk to you here at prayer. I thought to myself, they couldn't be worse than that lot. And I may be wrong.

So I thought we'd backtrack a little bit tonight, and discover what kind of men they were, before that happened. That transformed their lives. So turn with me to the 16th chapter of Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew 16. I saw the Lord Jesus had a marvelous sense of humor. Because if as our creator he hadn't had a sense of humor, in all probability he wouldn't have created us, with a sense of humor.

And in all probability had he not had a sense of humor, he wouldn't have created some of us. In the 13th verse here, this I believe is one of those occasions, when he had a little fun with his disciples, he said in so many words, what's the latest? Because then as now you see, everybody had their way out idea, as to who he was, and why he had come, and how he was going to do it. So when Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, 13th verse, Matthew 17.

He asked his disciples saying, who do men say that I the son of man? What's the latest? And they said well, there's a little group down the road, they think you're John the Baptist. Well you know what happened to John the Baptist? He had his head cut off, by that wicked evil King Herod, who was living in adultery with his brother Philip's wife. And those down the road you see, thought that John the Baptist, had had his head put back on, and he was back in town.

So they laughed about that. But there's another group said another, they live the other side of the city, and they think you're Elijah. And you know what happened to Elijah? He was caught up in a whirlwind, and escorted home by a chariot of fire.

And there were those the other side of the city, thought that Elijah had been in orbit, all down the centuries, he had landed, and was back in circulation. And so they chuckled about that, and somebody else said you'll never believe this, they think you're Jeremiah. As if you look that miserable.

And some, you know, think you're this prophet, and some think you're that prophet. Then said the Lord Jesus, in the 15th verse, But whom say ye that I am? To what conclusion have you come? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And that was a big thing for a Jew to say.

You're the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ of God, a prophet, priest and king, a greater prophet than Moses, a greater priest than Aaron, and a greater king than David. Christ, Christ, Son of the living God. And Peter was absolutely right.

And the Lord Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonah, flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee. My Father which is in heaven, if you've recognized my identity, it's by revelation, all truth ultimately, if it is to be wholesome, and healthy, and safe, is by revelation. Of God the Holy Spirit, the author of this book that testifies of God's dear Son, and who having authored it, is the one of whom said the Lord Jesus, He will be your teacher, he'll lead you into all truth, he'll delight supremely to take the things that are mine, and reveal them to you.

Never ever drawing attention to himself, but only always focusing your attention upon God's dear Son. Revelation. Peter was right.

He just had one problem. That although what he said was right, he didn't know what he was talking about. And that's a problem.

And it's a big problem from which we suffer today, because we are, most of us, tutored in the evangelical jargon of those who are sound, Bible-believing, conservative evangelicals. But you see, it's one thing to learn the language, and become skilled at putting it in the right place, and impressing everybody. But it's quite another thing to understand what you're saying.

And you see, Peter at this stage didn't have a clue. Not a clue. That's why maybe, perhaps to our surprise, because you might well have imagined, that just as soon as Peter had recognized the identity of the Lord Jesus, and mustered up enough courage to give public affirmation of the fact, to which, no doubt, the others added bare consent, that they were highly qualified to go out into the highways and the byways, and shout it from the housetops, that He, for whom all Israel had been waiting down the centuries, the seed of Abraham, the rose of Sharon, the Messiah has come.

I mean, that's what we do today, just so soon as somebody professes conversion, we get them on their feet, get them involved, get them on the bandwagon. Not the Lord Jesus. In the 20th verse, then charged He His disciples, sternly forbade them, that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.

Just as soon as they have discovered who He is, says the Lord Jesus, not a word, and placed them under a total prohibition, told them to keep their mouths shut. Why would the Lord Jesus call disciples to Himself, some of whom were named to be apostles, and then just as soon as they discovered who He is, place this

prohibition upon them, and forbid them to tell anybody, that He, Jesus, was the Christ. Well, the answer is very simple, you see, it's one thing to say that Jesus is the Christ, quite another thing to understand, what as the Christ did come to do, and how He was going to do it.

One thing to say that He was the Messiah, quite another thing to recognize, and understand the messianic mission. And at this stage, the disciples had no idea, whatever, what it was all about. No challenge to their sincerity, their loyalty for the Lord Jesus, their sentimental attachment, they had a deep affection for Him, they'd quit their homes, left their jobs, they'd hit the trail, and joined His party, and they were all enthusiastic about getting the movement off the ground.

But they hadn't a clue what it was all about. They were rather like the Jesus people a few years back, you know, naive in their sincerity and enthusiasm. If in their day the disciples had had stickers, they would have been plastered with them.

On the tail of every donkey there'd have been a little placard. Snort if you love Jesus. They would have been sincere then as they were a few years back.

You see, if you don't know what you're going to talk about, the best thing is don't talk, because if you don't know enough to talk sense, you'll talk nonsense. With the best will in the world, a tremendous amount of genuine affection for Jesus Christ. But it's not interesting.

You see, there's nothing that perpetuates ignorance more than unenlightened enthusiasm. And there's an enormous amount of enthusiasm being fanned today in our evangelical constituencies that is almost bankrupt of understanding of what God has to say in His word about His Son. So the Lord Jesus said, Keep your mouth shut until you can talk sense.

And you might think that sounds pretty tough to say that of these earnest, sincere disciples of our Lord Jesus. But you look at the next verse, 21. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed.

But He said, Don't panic, because I'll be raised again the third day. Does anything of that surprise you? Or shock you? Well, you say, No. That's the solid foundation upon which I have built my faith.

That our Lord Jesus, God incarnate, the Word made flesh, conceived of the Holy Spirit, clothed with our flesh and blood, living in the sinlessness in which was seen the perfection of deity. Though He knew no sin was made sin for us, on a rugged Roman gallows He died, that we might be forgiven. But triumphantly on that third morning He was raised again from the dead, delivered for our offenses, raised again for our justification.

We know all that. It's old hat. We've known it from our mother's knee.

But just as the Lord Jesus gave them a panoramic view of His messianic mission, what He was going to do, go to Jerusalem and there be done to death by wicked men, but God would raise Him from the dead immediately, verse 22, Peter took Him, gently led Him on one side to give Him a quiet word of counsel. Wasn't that nice of Him? Began to rebuke Him saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord, this shall not be unto you. This cannot, must not, will not happen and we're going to make absolutely certain that it doesn't.

And Peter stood between Christ and His cross. He didn't want the cross because he didn't recognize any need for the cross. And as we may well discover later, didn't believe in the resurrection.

So many words said Peter to the Lord Jesus, all this stuff and nonsense about going to the city of Jerusalem and you being done to death and this far-fetched idea that you're going to be raised again from the dead, said Peter to the Lord Jesus, forget it. Little wonder the Lord Jesus told him to keep his mouth shut. I mean, would you have invited Peter here for this spring missionary conference? As one who denied the need for the cross and repudiated the idea of Christ's resurrection from the dead? Was he a Christian? Can you be a Christian and say no to the cross and refuse to believe that this Jesus whom they crucified, God, raised from the dead? What do you say? No.

So was Peter at that stage in the New Testament sense a real Christian? Well, of course he wasn't. You can't be redeemed and reconciled to a holy God other than on the basis of that atoning sacrifice that he tried to prevent. Nor, as Peter later was to discover, can you be born again apart from his resurrection.

So Peter at that stage, for all his enthusiasm, dedication, personal affection and love for Jesus Christ had nothing to say of any value to the world in which he lived. So the Lord Jesus said, keep your mouth shut. He turned and said to Peter, verse 23, Get thee behind me, Satan.

He knew that the devil was capitalizing upon Peter's enthusiasm. He was capitalizing upon Peter's love and affection for Jesus Christ. Persuading him that it was his responsibility to stop the Lord Jesus Christ in his tracks and misguidedly save him from the unhappy consequences of his own stubbornness.

That's the devil. And the man, you see, whose lips at one moment had been the mouthpiece of the Father God in heaven, the next moment was the mouthpiece of the devil himself. In a subtle seduction to which today the evangelical constituencies is being exposed as never, ever before.

Satan, capitalizing upon the enthusiasm, sentimentality, affection and soulish response of countless, hundreds of thousands of those who otherwise would be named as true Bible-believing Christians. He'll capitalize on anything if it's the price of his survival. Said the Lord Jesus to Peter, you are offensive.

Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Your theology is of the earth, earthy. Sad, isn't it, that when the Lord Jesus asked those who were his disciples what men had to say about him, they could quote every Tom, Dick and Harry.

One says this, the other says something else, and this one has this idea. The only thing they didn't know was what God had to say about his dear son. Sad thing, there are countless true Christians today who can quote countless people and their ideas, their opinions and what they have to say, but remain abysmally ignorant of what God has to say.

Many of them textually aware, but they remain spiritually unenlightened. Look at the 17th chapter, verse 1. Chapter 17, verse 1, After six days Jesus taketh Peter, James and John his brother, bringeth them up into a high mountain apart. And there he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, his raiment was white as light.

Well, we know this to be the mount of transfiguration. And we've surrounded it with an aura of glory. Somebody mentioned to me today, soon we'll have to go down to the valley.

In other words, we're on the mountaintop. And normally when folks speak of that, they cannot but remember the mount of transfiguration. Because you see, we've blown it up to represent some peak experience in the lives of Peter, James and John.

But of course if you look objectively at God's word, not read into it what you think it ought to say, but let it tell you what it says. It was an abysmal flop. That's why verse 9 of the 17th of Matthew, as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them saying, tell the vision to no man.

Not a word. No matter what you may have seen, no matter what you may have heard up there on the mountain, not a word to anybody. You might well have imagined that such an exotic, soul-stirring experience as that, psychedelic, the Lord Jesus transfigured, Moses, Elijah, that their faith would be marvelously undergirded, much encouraged to go out, reinforced in their faith, to tell the world Jesus said, not a word.

Not a word. As they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them saying, tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead. Because the Lord Jesus knew perfectly well that nothing could or would make sense until the resurrection.

The resurrection. That's what transformed the lives of the disciples of our Lord Jesus, and the lives of the apostles. That's what precipitated them into action.

Men and women who not only cleansed in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, but becoming the recipients in the person of his Holy Spirit of his resurrection life, went out to let all godless in the world in which they lived. Not until the Son of Man was risen from the dead. Little wonder the message of the early church was this Jesus whom they crucify.

A death they didn't want. God has raised from the dead a resurrection which till then they refused to believe. Let's examine that a little more closely out of the ninth chapter of Luke's gospel that takes a magnifying glass and gives us it in a little more detail.

Luke in chapter 9. In the 28th verse it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings that the Lord Jesus took Peter, John, James went up into a mountain to pray and as he prayed the fashion of his countenance was altered, his raiment was white and glistening and behold there talked with him two men Moses and Elijah and they appeared in glory and they spake of his decease. That was the topic of their conversation. His death.

And notice the expression that's used there which he should accomplish. Not drifting to disaster. Not the untimely end of a noble idealist.

Not the martyrdom of one who was too progressive for his day and age. And came to a tragic end. The death that he would accomplish.

An accomplishment is something that somebody sets out to do and achieves success. You see the national flag flying proudly from the masthead on the top of Mount Everest and a little group of men have faced every kind of privation to set out to conquer that mountain. And everybody watches on the television newscast and sees their accomplishment.

And you see the Lord Jesus with Moses and Elijah talked about that death that he was going to accomplish at Jerusalem. That accomplishment of death that allowed the Lord Jesus to cry in triumph it is

finished. Tetelestai.

Mission accomplished. The debt is paid. Father now boldness of access into the holiest of all for any little boy, girl, man or woman who will plead my shed blood whom you will welcome, accepted in the beloved.

The accomplishment of death. Just to turn on a page to the 22nd chapter we'll be back there a moment in the 9th chapter but in the 22nd chapter of Luke. He took bread, verse 19, at that last supper gave thanks and break it and gave unto them saying this is my body that is given for you.

This do in remembrance of me likewise also the cup of supper saying the cup is this new testament in my blood which is shed for you. No coincidence of course that the Lord Jesus was crucified at Passover. First Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 7 Christ our Passover sacrificed for us as we've mentioned in the early sessions the Lord Jesus.

The one portrayed so magnificently then by the unblemished lamb a bone of whose body was not to be broken. Painted upon the door post and the lintel that in the day of God's judgment his judgment might pass over. No coincidence that all those centuries later the Lord Jesus should have been crucified just then dead on schedule.

Behold continued the Lord Jesus, verse 21 the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the son of man go with as it was determined but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed. They were astonished.

In the other gospels the record tells us they turned the one to the other and said one of us is it I? He can't mean one of us. You know nobody guessed that it was Judas Iscariot. You know as a kid looking at the pictures that had been painted of the Last Supper I reckon that you could pick Judas Iscariot out a mile off.

I mean with the great big hooked nose and beady eyes you could almost see his tail lashing under the table. But Judas Iscariot wasn't like that at all. Three solid years he was with them named with the others to be an apostle.

I would have imagined Peter would have nudged John and said well I know who that is. Didn't like his face from the first day he joined us. James might have turned to Thomas and said can't think why he chose him in the first place.

But they all said is it I? When they needed somebody to carry the money back and act as treasurer they voted unanimously for Judas Iscariot and he was the only thief amongst them. Did this take the Lord Jesus by surprise? Well no because you can read the whole story in the eleventh chapter of the book of Zechariah written five centuries before it happened in God's history book that's written in advance. Because you see there's a historicity so far as God is concerned about the future as there is a historicity so far as we're concerned about the past.

We look into the past and call it history God looks into the future and calls it history because he's timeless, he's the eternal I am he inhabits eternity. The only difference from God's point of view between the future and the past is that in human experience it just hasn't happened yet. That's all.

That's why we don't believe that Jesus came as he did conceived of the Holy Ghost and born at Bethlehem because the Bible says he did. Nor that he lived that sinless life because the Bible says he did nor that he went to the cross because the Bible said he did nor even that he rose again from the dead

because the Bible said he did or ascended from the Mount of Olives back to be with his father and glorified forever because the Bible said he did nor even that he would come in the person of his other self the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost to share his life with his redeemed people because the Bible said he did. We've got better grounds for believing it.

We don't believe all those things because the Bible said he did we believe them because the Bible said he would. I've come to do your will, O God all that has been written of me in the volume of the book. That's the Old Testament.

The only Bible that the Lord Jesus ever held in his hand. The only Bible for years that was available to the early church. You and I have a bonus, it's called the New Testament and the New Testament simply says the Lord Jesus did what the Bible said he would.

You see that's why you're only on safe ground when your Lord Jesus, the living word is the substance of the shadow given to us in the written word. There's no dichotomy between Christ as the living word and the scriptures as the written word because both are gospel and you cannot detach the one from the other. Well, these were some of the things that the Lord Jesus was discussing with Moses and Elijah.

Must have been a fantastic Bible conference. Way back through the Old Testament scriptures discussing those things that foreshadowed that death that he was going to accomplish. Where he would be born, the kind of life that he had lived.

That he, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief according to the prophecy and gospel of Isaiah 53 wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities the cost of our peace with God laid on him by his stripes we're healed. Psalm 22, my God my God, why hast thou forsaken me, the Lord Jesus from the cross not the despairing cry of a man who snapped at the last moment, broke under the strain, never. Quoting the first verse of the 22nd Psalm that he might alert his disciples as to what was going on in so many words he says, why don't you look it up in Psalm 22 then you'll see what's happening but they didn't look it up, so they ran away.

They pierced my hands and my feet, they look and stare upon me my tongue cleaves to my jaws in the blistering heat of the midday sun and amazingly enough, Psalm 22 they gamble for my clothes as Roman soldiers later were to cast lots for his vestment, incredible, written in the year 1087 BC more than a millennium before the Lord Jesus was ever born and these were the things that they were discussing in the Mount of Transfiguration I say, supposing it had been truly possible to invite the Lord Jesus in person to come and address you this missions conference and he accepted the invitation and he said I'm going to bring Moses and Elijah to conduct missionary seminars do you think this place would be big enough? the airport at Calvary in Edmonton wouldn't begin to accommodate all the plans

they'd be stacking 747s in bundles of 10 everybody would be here if you could make it known all over the world that Jesus Christ in person supported by Moses in person, Elijah in person no kidding, they're going to be there would you have wanted to be here? everybody would be here all the news media would take this place just to take care of them I'd be there and you might well have imagined that Peter, James and John up there in the presence of a glorified Lord Jesus and of Moses and Elijah would have been sitting on the edge of their rock just gazing at the speakers fearful lest that they should drop one last word which you'd be wrong they were fast asleep can you imagine that? verse 31, Luke chapter 9 they appeared in glory, they spoke of his decease which he should accomplish at

Jerusalem and Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep why did they go to sleep? well it was so terribly boring I mean if you don't want the cross and see no sense in it and don't believe in the resurrection everything you see that the Lord Jesus with Moses and Elijah were discussing would have gone way over their heads so they did what most people do under those circumstances bravely try to stay awake for the first few moments and then nestle as comfortably as you may in the corner of the pew and have a quiet doze hoping that you'll wake up before the benediction and preferably after the offering they were fast asleep it doesn't indicate even that they tried to stay awake you know I like to shake hands personally with folks and get to know them a little more intimately

than you can from the vantage point of a platform it's more difficult in a place like this, there are so many X's and so many people but you know over the more than half a century in which it's been my privilege just to share Christ with countless people all over the world in some 60 different countries I've shaken hands with tens of thousands of people I mean what I don't know about hands is hardly worth knowing, I'm a connoisseur I mean there are fat ones, thin ones, wet ones, dry ones bony ones, arthritic ones, warty ones every kind of hand, I know the lot, I collect them sometimes you get something in your hand and you're not quite sure what it is it's wet and slimy and doesn't have any bones so far as you can detect, it's like a wet fish and you don't know what to do with it I don't

know whether to throw it out of the window, stick it in my pocket or hand it back ever had a hand like that? and usually behind or above a hand like that there's a sweet evangelical smile that says thank you for your lovely message and then they say this, but I like the simple gospel and what they mean by that is I like somebody to tell me what I already know and explain what I already understand because then I don't have to think you see because sometimes I sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits and when I go to church or a missionary conference, I sit well they went to sleep it says, listen to this, verse 32 when they were awake they saw his glory they didn't even know the Lord Jesus was transfigured until they woke up and they saw the two men that stood with him they didn't even

know Moses and Elijah were on the program I don't know why they woke up or what woke them up maybe Moses dropped his hymn book but they woke up and it's very embarrassing when you wake up and you ought not to be asleep but here's a tip if you do go to sleep and doze when you should be awake the moment you wake up make absolutely certain everybody knows that you're awake that you're totally alert in other words draw attention to yourself and the best way to do that is make a contribution say something but be very careful because when you wake up sometimes you forget where you are and in the prayer meeting you might say grace you know thinking you're still having breakfast and you know that's what happened to Peter he woke up, felt somewhat embarrassed and it says it came to pass, verse 33

as they departed from him Peter said to the Lord Jesus master it's good for us to be him man what a conference, I wouldn't have missed this for anything this was out of this world that's where he was he says asleep?

I wasn't asleep, I was meditating I was praying for the preacher you know you can snore sometimes when you're praying and then he said this, can you imagine this let us make thee three tabernacles one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah what utter nonsense he said a little tent for you Lord Jesus a little tent for Moses and a little tent for Elijah he wanted to turn the whole thing into a sort of trailer park and perpetuate perpetuate the experience why did he say it? tells you at the end of verse 33 not knowing what he said say what's the best thing to do if you don't know what you're going to say keep your mouth shut that's why the Lord Jesus you see Matthew 16, Matthew 17 place them under that total prohibition look at

it just quickly back in the 17th chapter there of Matthew

behold there appeared unto them verse 3 Moses and Elijah talking with the Lord Jesus then answered Peter and said to Jesus Lord it's good for us to be here if thou wilt let us make here three tabernacles one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah and while he spake behold a bright cloud overshadowed them and behold a voice out of the cloud which said this is my beloved son and whatever anybody else may think or say in him I am well pleased hear ye him don't listen to Peter he's got nothing to say worth saying hear ye him well something happened to Peter quite obviously something must have happened to Peter because we've read that being released though beaten by their accusers daily in the temple and from house to house they ceased not to teach and preach that Jesus was the Christ the very

thing the Lord Jesus forbade them to do in Matthew 16 and Matthew 17 how is it that they could do in Acts chapter 5 what they were forbidden to do in Matthew 16 how did they get out of Matthew 16 into Acts chapter 5 resurrection in these last few moments and they've got to be a very few moments turn to the first the second of Peter's two epistles and you'd hardly credit that this is the same man but I trust that with that backdrop you'll understand more deeply the significance of what he has to say 16th verse, first chapter of the second epistle of Peter for we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ we were eyewitnesses of his majesty for he received from God the Father honour and glory when there came such a

voice to him from the excellent glory this, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased and said he, verse 18 this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount but what Peter goes on to say in so many words is this though that was psychedelic, exotic, soul stirring it remained then utterly unmeaningful but now we have a more sure word of prophecy where unto you do well that you take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts knowing this first that no prophecy of the scriptures of any private interpretation nobody has a corner on the market the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost what Peter is saying is this exciting

as were the many experiences that we witnessed when the Lord Jesus was with us on earth we saw him heal the sick we saw him make the blind see and the lame walk we saw him raise Lazarus from the dead we were with him in the mount we had overwhelming experiences that were exotic and exciting but we never understood why God sent his son until he risen from the dead opened our understanding that we might understand the scriptures and then when finally he opened our understanding we saw that the written word found its glorious fulfillment in our Lord Jesus as the living word they dubbed our tale and when we saw him to be the substance of the shadow then finally both the Bible and Jesus made sense we have a more sure word of prophecy Peter in so many words is saying this truth doctrine never

ever comes from experience but truth must always be that from which experience derives experience to be healthy, wholesome, safe must come from that revealed mind of God breathed of the Holy Spirit as holy men of God were moved, impelled by God the Holy Ghost to give us that faith now once delivered Peter's got a new Bible that makes sense and he recognizes that these are those scriptures that testify of him that coming to him we might have life that life that derived from his atoning death and his triumphant resurrection so Peter learned two things in the first of his two epistles and the first chapter, just flick back the page for a moment verse 18, for as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold nor things that silver and gold can buy

from your vain conversation behavior received simply by tradition from your fathers but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot this is Peter Peter who when he was confronted by the Lord Jesus with the messianic purpose that he should go to Jerusalem and there die at the hands of wicked men said, not so Lord and stood between him and that cross this is the same Peter that something must have happened who verily, verse 20, he goes on to say was foreordained before the foundation of the world manifest in these last times for you who by him now do believe in God that raised him from the dead a man who didn't want the cross who when the women came and said he's alive said, idle tales, we buried him something's happened to Peter he's discovered that

redemption, reconciliation to God between a guilty sinner and his holy maker demanded the precious shed blood of God's dear son not as the death of a martyr but as one who was verily foreordained before ever the world was who is the lamb slain before the foundation of the world he is the redemptive regenerative purpose of God that was fashioned in the heart of God before ever this tiny planet was thrown into space nor man created to walk on it redeemed redeemed that's the first thing that Peter discovered but not only that in the 23rd verse being born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God that lives and abides forever that word that was in the beginning with God and was God and by whom all things were made the creative deity without whom not anything was

made that was made and in whom alone is that life which is the light of man the living everlasting word and this is the word the latter part of the last verse, the 25th of that chapter which by the gospel is preached unto you you see Peter's discovered where it's at in the shed blood of an unblemished lamb God's dear son the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world that he by that redemptive act might precipitate that regenerative purpose that we being born again might become the recipients received from above of his resurrection life be added to the Lord he puts it this way I wonder if you've noticed this verse it's the third of the same first chapter by his boundless mercy we have been born again to an ever living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead born

anew into an inheritance which is beyond the reach of change and decay what does he say? redeemed through the precious shed blood of a lamb verily foreordained before ever the world was but born again by his resurrection from the dead Peter's learned that we need not only what he did because of what we've done we need who he is to take the place of what we are but to say I'm redeemed is not the same thing as saying I'm born again to say I'm born again is not the same thing as saying I am redeemed mind you they're simultaneous ever since Pentecost simultaneous in time you cannot be redeemed without being born again and nobody was ever born again who was not redeemed but because you cannot detach the one from the other you mustn't confuse the one for the other for in order that we might be

redeemed he had to die for us then but in order that we may be born again he's got to live in us now well if it's his death by which I am redeemed and it's his life within me by the gift to me of his Holy Spirit whereby I'm regenerated, born again how can they be the same thing? one demanded his death for me the other demands his life in me because he gave himself for me then only that he might give himself to me now and suddenly Peter discovers the dynamic of the Christian life the fist behind the punch that which he was first to receive on the day of Pentecost when in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ he with 119 others in that day that the church was born and the body presented to the son the risen Lord Jesus came to take up residence within his redeemed humanity and there was a new

Peter born from above whose humanity available to the Lord Jesus was now to clothe his divine activity as one of those through whom as we are now today the Lord Jesus would continue to teach and continue to

do the things that he began to do and began to teach what a marvelous thing it is to be a Christian not just to know that your sins are forgiven because his precious blood was shed God's incarnate son but that we have been quickened raised from the dead has been restored to us that life that was lost in Adam added to the Lord so that he might give himself to us share his life with us and live that life through us I wonder if you're living in the good of your salvation not clinging to an old rugged cross and dreaming of somebody who then gave his life for you and then with

eschatological nostalgia waiting for the day when he'll come and get you out of this mess that isn't the gospel the message of the early church was that this Jesus whom they crucified by whose precious blood we are reconciled to a holy God and without whose death we would be lost and damned he, God raised from the dead that he might dwell within us and share his life with us and live that life through us and so all that he is we've got we can't have more and we need never enjoy less for to me to live is Christ I'm a Christian I'm a Christian you see there are so many who only know the one who died for them but don't live in the power of the one who rose again to live within them that was the controversy that Paul had with the Galatians as he records it for us in the third chapter he says,

oh foolish Galatians whose bewitched you you began a brand new light by the gift to you of God the Holy Spirit through whom the risen Lord Jesus takes up residence within your humanity and yet in spite of that you ignore his presence and try to be made perfect in the flesh embarking with no little sincerity trying to be made perfect upon that which is an exercise in futility because there's only one person capable of living the Christian life and that is the one who gave himself for you as your incarnate creator that risen from the dead he might give himself to you as your living Lord can you imagine going down the road and you see a lady with her head under the hood obviously in trouble and out of the kindness of your heart you stop and say madam, can I help and she says, this thing

won't go so kindly you get into the front seat you switch on and as you half imagine there's no gas in the tank so you say, madam, would you take your head from under the hood I'll tell you exactly why this thing won't go it doesn't have what it takes and put the hood down and I've got a rope in my trunk I'll tow you to the nearest gas station and you do for there came a day when the sinless son of God made sin for us at Calvary paid a debt he did not owe because we owed that debt we could not pay but why have you paid that debt she did not owe that debt she could not pay well to fill her tank and give her what it takes to get home while she's profuse in her thanks you bid farewell, you climb into your car you're just about to drive off when as a last gesture of goodwill you wheel down

the window and stick your head out to wave goodbye and you discover that that lady is pushing the car home with a full tank so what would you say to her I know what I'd say I would say, excuse me madam I'd like to get my amplified New Testament and out of the first verse of the third chapter of the epistle to the Galatians I'd say, oh you poor, silly, thoughtless, unreflecting and senseless woman now that's the amplified New Testament first verse, third of Galatians amplified, not exaggerated just putting into clear English language the solid substance of what was given in the original you poor, silly, thoughtless, unreflecting, senseless Galatians can you be that dumb are you so foolish and so senseless and so silly having begun your new life spiritually with the Holy Spirit are you now

reaching perfection by dependence on the flesh pushing a car with a full tank remember what Peter discovered that the Lord Jesus went to Calvary that there he might pay that debt he did not owe because we owed that debt we could not pay but he did it that he being risen from the dead might come and reinvade our humanity and fill the tank and give us by virtue of who he is, living where he does God, the

creator within man, the creature, what it takes to get home fantastic so how about getting on board switch on put your foot in the gas and go for a ride and discover that no matter that no matter what the situation that may arise under any circumstance of threat or promise, opportunity or responsibility there's somebody who has reconciled you to God taken up residence within your humanity

who as your creator redeemer is never ever less than big enough then you can say I don't deserve it but I'm a Christian for to me to live is Christ now let's pray we thank you Lord Jesus for your incredible patience with those who were your disciples then we find it easy today to laugh at them and yet in so doing we condemn ourselves for we have two thousand years of history to vindicate the truth in which all down the centuries you've demonstrated that you are indeed the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world that you are that risen Lord who so gladly shares your deity with our frail humanity we the human vehicles of your divine activity given the incredible privilege of being members of that body on earth in which you still go out to seek and save that which is lost forgive

us loving savior that so often we've tried to do for you what only you can do through us living a life for you that only you can live in us we've pushed the car with a full tank and some of us are weary and tired grant that we may learn the exhilaration of sharing your life on earth on the way to heaven become gloriously expendable in your glad service so that in our presence others may demonstrably come to know that you're alive again and that you live in us some little boy or girl with our hand feel your touch a frightened woman lonely through our lips hear you speak some frightened man crushed by his circumstance running away from life may look into our face and see you smile thank you dear lord and in your own dear and precious name amen you've been listening to a sermon by Major Ian

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