

## Sermon Transcript from 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025 – The Time Between

Based on Luke 24:32-53

### Sermon TLDR

The sermon centres on the **resurrection of Jesus Christ**, emphasizing its foundational importance to Christian faith and contrasting it with other views of Jesus. The speaker encourages listeners to **believe in the truth of the resurrection** and trust in God's word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, especially in challenging times. The sermon also touches on themes of **church leadership**, the roles of men and women within the church, the significance of **marriage and family**, and the need for believers to **remain steadfast in their faith** and share the gospel as Jesus' return is imminent.

### Link to the Start of the Sermon (on YouTube)

<https://youtu.be/-4vCobKbTMg?t=2830>

### Sermon Transcript

Thank you for the warm welcome as usual. Jim is rightly told as to how much we've been associated. Our daughters were very very young when we got to know Jim and I still remember we were walking down once and we met Jim on the way and then he asked us to come to his place and he says I want to offer you something and I said what is it?

He said there's a special drink and we never forget that drink and it's called Sarsaparilla. Has anybody heard about Sarsaparilla? So, we remember Jim offering us that and since then it's been on our mind. Sarsaparilla.

Today you're going to be offered a new drink obviously. But it's the drink that God wants to share with us his drink which is the drink of living water so that we will never thirst again. And we thank God for everything.

Jim, we really love you and we appreciate your fellowship with us and for all the members here at Langley Free Church, those of you who know us and those of you who do not know us, we've been associated with Langley Free Church for a long time. We've been here at Britwell Baptist Church for now over 27 years. I've been coming and ministering here and it's always a joy and an opportunity whenever we come to minister to you to share the word of God and uh to be with the people of God here.

We are praying for you all and uh especially without a minister at the moment you're looking for one. We pray that God will bring someone who's going to shepherd the church well and for this church to continue to grow. Reverend Simon King was obviously our moderator of our church. when we first joined at Britwell Baptist Church and uh he was there for quite some time actually and Langley Free Church were able to free him up to come and be there to bless us while we were not having a pastor and in the course of time I got to know Reverend Simon King very very well he's been my mentor till today and he comes and helps me whenever I'm not there even at this time so we appreciate all the things that God has been doing at Langley Free Church and I pray that our churches will continue to grow and be blessed.

But more than everything else in these last days, we need the word. How many of you believe we need the word of God, not compromised, but spoken just as it is. Because the word of God.

The Bible says in Hebrews, is powerful, it's sharper than any two-edged sword that divides beyond the soul and the sun. And the reason why God word is sharper than any two-edged sword word is because it

corrects us. It takes away the things that are not needed in our life and so we need to pay attention to God's word as it is obviously it is always open to interpretation but let's not use human wisdom to interpret God's word but let's ask the Holy Spirit who has been given to us which Jesus said is our teacher and guide who is going to be there with you and bring to remembrance all that I have taught you and spoken to you.

So this morning I would be open to the spirit of God to lead me this morning. I'm not resting myself with slides and everything because the passage was given to me and Tony told me that you are all between now since Easter to resurrection Sunday and also probably to Pentecost you are talking about the risen saviour and that's the reason this passage today has been taken from the book of Luke chapter 24 which the last chapter in this book.

I am glad for the gospels.

Luke, as you know, was a physician who was commissioned by a person named Theophilus to go and research things and to write the things that were seen and had happened as a firsthand account of everything that had taken place and the things that Jesus had spoken by his conversation with people who were witnesses to Jesus during his time.

Everything that Jesus spoken spoke was recorded in the four gospels which is Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. And for us all to know what Jesus had spoken, it's important for us to read these gospels to get to know the truth. Each gospel has a different flavour to those truths.

Now the resurrection of Jesus Christ is spoken about in all the four gospels. Because without the resurrection there is nothing to Christianity. In fact in 1 Corinthians, Paul writes these words in chapter 15 verse 14, he says and *"if Christ was not raised then all our preaching is useless and your trust in God is useless and we apostles will all be lying about God for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave but that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead"*.

That is the foundational thing about Christianity now there are other religious gospels that are there and one of which is known to all of us is they claim Jesus to be a prophet a good teacher but never was crucified, but was taken up into heaven without being crucified because he's a good man, a good prophet. He did great miracles, but he is not God. Neither is he the son of God.

But the gospels clearly tells us that Jesus claimed to be the son of God.

Hallelujah. Jesus also told his disciples before his ascension, he said, "I'm going No way. I'm going to my father and I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to me or comes to the father except through me. And Philip asks him the question, Jesus, show us the father and we'll be satisfied. And does anybody remember the reply that Jesus gave? If you have seen me, you have seen the father. If you have have seen me, you have seen the father.

To be on the lighter side, we have also been studying the book of revelation. I love the scriptures are so beautiful. You know, sometimes we say, you know, let's just read the gospels. Let's read the New Testament. Do you think the Old Testament is relevant today to us? What do you think? Why is it relevant? Why is it relevant is the question that we may ask. Why is it relevant? Oh, Old Testament. Somebody says, oh, though that was Old Testament time.

Why do we even have to know what it is? You see, without the Old Testament, New Testament has no meaning because the New Testament is the fulfilment of everything that has been spoken [in the Old Testament] giving prophecies concerning the things have to happen.

And some of the prophecies concerning Jesus himself has already been fulfilled. We are 2,000 years past Jesus's coming, death, resurrection, and his ascension. And as we've been hearing this morning Jim also saying Jesus appeared and disappeared but he's going to appear again one more time to take his church to be with him in heaven. So we have been actually studying the book of revelation.

And there's an interesting passage and a husband tells his wife these words when uh when he was sitting with her and we all have conversations is.

And this is on the lighter side.

So, the husband tells his wife, he says, "Did you know that men are going to arrive in heaven 30 minutes before women?" Did you know that men are going to arrive in heaven 30 minutes before women? And the wife says, "Where did you hear that? Where did you hear that?" He says, "It's right in the Bible." Read Revelation 8:1. And this is what it says. "When the angel opened the seventh seal, there was Silence in heaven for half an hour.

You know men think differently than women. Women are joined up in everything. And sometimes you know when we talk about marriage you know guys think it is just simple you know lovely woman let's just get married everything is going to be hunky dory. But no, women are very complex. Women are complex and as far as men are concerned, we can do one thing correctly at one time. We focus on one thing. If you give us three children to take care of, we do not know how to do that. One child will handle. But three at the same time is very difficult.

My daughter, the elder one, has given birth to the fourth child and I still know both all of different age groups. One is eight, the other one is now five. This the third one is two years old. And now we've got a new grandchild which we're going to see next month when we go, God willing, she was just born just about 2 months and uh four children and I go and see her and we raised her up and you know when we go and spend time we think we got to do this we got to do that and the toys are thrown here we just start cleaning up and all those things you know her grandparents some grandparents are here.

I do not know how many of you know but how it is with children when they wake up they just squander everything here there and we trying to clean then then she said dad what are you trying to do just trying to clear up no just leave it just leave it there Right? Just leave it. When they go to sleep, we'll clear it up at that time because if you clear it up, they're going to mess it up within few minutes. And but God gives us grace for everything.

So, you know, as men, we do things one thing at a time and we do it well. And uh there's a favourite box that men have. I do not know whether the women know what that favourite box is. Anybody having that idea what that box is?

It's called the nothing box.

What's it called? the nothing box. So the wife said, "What are you doing today to her husband?" I told her nothing. Nothing. She said, "You did that yesterday." I told her, "I didn't finish."

A church notice said these words, "Do not leave your mobile, purses, wallets, handbags unattended". Others may think it's an answer to their prayers.

Well, whatever you know we think about at the end of the day, God is in charge of our lives. And life may seem complex. And I can tell you marriage can be a bed of roses, but it also can be a bed of thorns if you don't do it the right way. And so men exercise need to exercise great patience. when it comes to things and when we learn quickly how to uh how to work together in marriage and try to understand each other um life becomes much more simpler.

Jesus came to solve a big problem for us. So he has left problems for us to deal with than our own. He said these words before his ascension in this world what he said you will have tribulations but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.

Now some of you may be sitting here and saying you know you know we got lots of problems to handle. We got so many things to do but God has given us wisdom and his wisdom is in his word and when we

treat our wives well uh we find blessings coming our way. There's a particular scripture that tells you and I may be talking to you about certain things that are just coming as I speak to you.

Probably God wants to speak to you in some areas even though we are talking about his ascension and his return. But there's a scripture in 1 Peter chapter 3 which is particularly to husbands and it says these words in the same way husbands you must honour your wives. Treat her with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. If you don't treat her as you should, your prayer will not be heard.

I think that's a very very important thing. I've been dealing with some marital problems as well and I've been helping men to understand certain things. Women come and talk to me. The husband comes separately and talks to me. The wife comes and talks to me separately. They have their own views. But men sometimes get so rigid about the way they think that they know how to sort out things.

But I tell you, 37 years of marriage has taught me we need to listen to our wives. If we want to live at peace at home and peace is very very important because as much as God has given our wives to us, they have given us as a co-partner for us to be able to work together. And we are not the same. I can tell you that much. We are different. Two different individuals raised up from two different places coming together to live life together. Making a commitment before God and people in marriage. And that's why marriage is so very important.

Many people want to live together but without commitment. But God wants us to involve him in everything that we do. Bible says the three-fold cord cannot be easily broken. And I tell you, you know, life's problems will be easier with God if we have God on our side.

Because Jesus said in John 15, without me, you can do nothing.

I've come to the realization I got to rely on God daily. Daily I got to rely on God and um we are thankful to God for having raised up two girls who were with us and now got married and they both moved away to America and uh we are obviously here but we are satisfied where we are and the reason we are satisfied is because we know that God is with me and with my wife and we are quite happy, happy together. We are happy together because we have chosen to listen to each other and to love each other and to care for each other and we are also happy for our daughters who are far away from us. Both of them are in the states in the in the US thousands of miles away and uh when we have the COVID period we happened to go there just before COVID struck and they closed the place the airlines had shut down and people said oh why are you going why are you going you may get stuck there and I said stuck where we are going to our daughter's place and we are not stuck. We are going to our family. If we get stuck, we are still unstuck.

Are you following what I'm saying?

God is with us wherever we are in whatever situation we are in. And he wants to guide us and lead us into all truth. You see, this morning's passage is talking about the disciples who were faced with a challenge. A challenge whether Jesus was really the Messiah that he said he was. They had spent three years with him and now suddenly they find themselves in a situation where he's dead. He's gone.

But Jesus reminded them about so many things, but it never struck in their mind that Jesus told them that he's going to rise again on the third day. So, the title this morning I want to speak to you do is do you believe?

Because constantly in scriptures we read about believing. Now our belief is not based upon things that we have imagined but it is based upon evidence that is there in scriptures for us to put faith in.

Now when we read scripture it should rise it should raise faith within us. In fact, the Bible says in Hebrews 11:6, "It is impossible to please God without faith. It is impossible. If you do not have faith in God, in his word, you cannot please him."

So faith is essential. And constantly Jesus is talking to these people and saying, "You have been with me. You have seen me. I have done things to you to prove to you that I am really the son of God. And one of the important things he did before his crucifixion was the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Do you all remember that story?"

How many days was Lazarus in the grave?

Four days he was put in the grave. In fact, when he went back, Jesus knew what was happening. Martha comes and says, "Jesus If you were only here, our brother would not have died." Is that true? And then he says to Martha and Mary, he says these words in John chapter 11. He says to them; "I am the resurrection and the life." I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, what do they do? Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish. Do you believe this, Martha? Do you believe what I'm saying to you today?

In Luke chapter 24 we read there are some verses earlier because this starts with this passage that we read is a bit later on. But the story starts in chapter 4 with the resurrection account of Jesus. The women go to the to the grave to the tomb with spices prepared. They found the stone is rolled away. They go in and find that the body of Jesus is not there. And they are puzzled because they don't find the body there.

But they find two men appear to them clothed in dazzling cloths. Who are there at the grave at this time? Who is there? Just the women. Not the men, not the disciples, just the women. Where are the men? They were hiding. They were scared. They didn't recognize that Jesus is going to rise up. They did not believe including these women who were going with the spices. What did they go to do?

Does anybody know to embalm the body because they didn't get chance to do it and they're saying we're going to do it and while they're going they're thinking these things who is going to roll the stone away. We need men to do that job but we don't have these men. We need the stone to be rolled away. And when they go there they find the stone is rolled away. Wow. Hallelujah. The stone is rolled away. We can go and embalm the body now. And they go and they find the tomb is empty. Hallelujah. Why is this tomb empty?

They see these two men appeared in dazzling clothes. And the women were terrified and bowed on before them. And the men asked them, "Why are you looking in a tomb for someone who is alive? He isn't here. He has risen from the dead."

Do you remember what he told you back in Galilee? That the son of man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and he would rise again the third day.

The question to me and to you and to all of us the scripture is telling is do you believe that this incident did take place as the angel spoke? The question is you may have doubts, but we need to come to a point of believing that this is the truth that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day.

Yesterday we were at a breakfast meeting and some it's a men's breakfast meeting and we usually have people here from Langley Free Church also who join us. It's the Stoke men's group and we had a general actually who came a major general from the British army who had served for quite a long time and he was relating certain things and he talked about his visit to Israel as part of the operations that they were doing and he was raised as a Christian but he said in our home, Jesus was never even mentioned.

Being raised as a Christian and the name Jesus not being mentioned, what type of a Christianity is that?

But God has a way to reach everyone. He's a military general, but he was not a general then. He was just about 30 years of age, exactly at the time when Jesus started the ministry. And he was there in Jerusalem. And he says that one of his officers took him to the garden tomb and he went and showed him, and he was there as a guide in guiding him through the garden tomb and he showed he says here this is how this place is. It looks like a skull and here is a grave and we believe that Jesus was buried in this particular grave. But there's an interesting thing about this grave. This grave is empty.

This grave is empty. Every other grave on this earth is full. But there is one grave that is empty. And that grave is the grave where Jesus was buried.

The question is do you believe this, or this is just a mythology? Is this just story made up by the disciples, was it true? And the question for you and for me is, do you believe this truth?

Because this is going to determine your future and your destiny and your eternity. Because Jesus said, "If you believe what I'm telling you to Martha and Mary, that I am the resurrection and the life. If you believe in me, even though you die, you will live again. The women at the grave after they saw this spectacle, the the angels told them, "He is risen."

What did they do?

And the women that were there at the grave in verse 10 of the same chapter says, "The women who went to the tomb were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and several others." It's all the women. Sometimes we have difficulty in saying should women be in ministry.

Oh yes, women need to be in ministry if men are not there because God will still do his work. But if men take charge, women will follow. But in this particular case, the women are leading because the men are hiding.

In these days that we are in and I think so talking about the church, they say if women bring their children to the church, the chances of the children remaining in the church is less than 70%. But if men bring their family to the church, the family will remain in the church when the children grow up.

There is a great responsibility connected with how men act in the church and take responsibility for what God's calling is. God is going to ask men when we reach heaven, even though they're going to reach 30 minutes before, as we said earlier, because they have lots of questions to answer before the women come.

We have a role to play. Jesus chose 12 disciples to start with and they were all men. Now men can do certain things that women can do but there are lots of things women do which men can't do. Is that right?

So we need each other. In fact when God created everything Jesus He says on the sixth day he created man and at the end of it he said everything is good. In fact, when he finally created man he said it was very good. But one thing when he started giving all these animals to Adam and said name them. He said Adam named everything but he said there was something that was missing. And he says it is not good for a man to be alone because God knew man cannot continue. without his partner. And he needs a partner who's going to be a helpmate. And so, he didn't take a bone from his foot, but he took a bone from his ribs and created woman to for him and brought Eve to Adam. And he says, "She's the flesh of my flesh and the bones of my bones." And God says, "You will be one."

There is power when God brings couples together with God's blessing resting upon it. And I'm glad that things are being clarified when there is confusion over sex. God says he created male and female. There is no confusion on that. And there should be no confusion to the church. Especially if the church is not able to speak what the truth is, where the society goes is determined by what the church does and speaks.

Because the good news is with the church. As much as it may be painful for people to listen to it, it's like going to the hospital and the doctor says, "I don't want to tell you the truth, but there is some problem that you have which I don't want to treat. It may be like a cancer that may be there but the doctor says if you want to know the truth, I need to conduct a surgery on you and I will need to use a knife on that because that cancer is going to kill you. We need to be willing and open to hear the truth.

This is not about us speaking. This is not about me saying things. This is what the word of God says. And if we can stick to the word of God, it is going to help you. It's going to be life to your bones. It's going to be

life to your family. It's going to be a great blessing. And on that day, we are going to be rejoicing with God because we have followed the truth. We are teaching the children the truth. We are teaching our generations the truth and we are influencing the generations around us which is getting confused more and more.

God told the people of Israel, you shall be the head and not the tail. It sometimes sees that the tail is wagging the dog and not the dog wagging its tail. The church needs to lead, and I pray that God will raise of army of leaders who would be willing to step into places of leadership and speak the truth in love.

This is not being personally judgmental against anyone because at the end of the day we are not the judges. Jesus is and he's going to judge everything that is right and wrong.

In the book of Isaiah chapter 5, these were the words that were spoken by prophet Isaiah long time ago because these are the days that we are living in. And I pray that we will not be misguided and the only way we'll be misguided is when we don't hold on to the scriptures or we try to dilute it to please people.

Paul writes very clearly, I'm not here to please you. I'm here to please God.

In Isaiah 5:20, these words are written. It says, destruction is certain for those who say that evil is good. Good is evil. The dark is light and light is dark. That bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter. Destruction is certain for those who think they are wise and consider themselves to be clever.

Book of Revelation there are seven churches that message was given by John and he had the revelation of this risen Saviour. In Revelation chapter 1, John sees this vision. He says, "I was exiled in this island of Patmos for preaching the word of God and speaking about Jesus." Because he spoke the truth. He was put into an island called Patmos. And persecution is going to come to the church because Jesus warned it. He says, "I was on the Lord's day and I heard a loud voice behind me and a voice like a trumpet blast. It said, write down what you see and send it to the seven churches." Church in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Totira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Leodysia. And he says, "When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I see seven golden lampstands. And standing in the middle of the lampstands was a son of man. He was wearing a robe, a long robe with a gold sash across his chest. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were bright like flames of fire. His feet were as blonde, as bright as bronze refined in a furnace and his voice thundered like mighty ocean waves. He held seven stars in his right hand and a sharp two-edged sword came out of his mouth and his face was as bright as the sun in all its brilliance.

This is the risen Lord that we are talking about. This is Jesus who is risen from the dead who had left that tomb that was empty.

And when they came and told the disciples the story about what had happened in John Luke 24 it says in verse 11 but the story they came back and told the apostles what had happened but the story sounded like nonsense so they didn't believe it. The story sounded like nonsense to these disciples who were with Jesus for three full years and had heard him speak that he is going to rise up from the dead.

Yet they did not believe.

Two disciples were walking back after having heard this. They were on this discussion and perhaps this portion was covered when whenever somebody spoke to you, but it was about the two disciples who are on the way to Emmaus. Jesus comes they can't recognize him. He starts walking with them faces all discouraged. and asking them, "What are you talking about? What are you talking about?" Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened during these last few days." And Jesus asked them, "What things? What things?" Do you think Jesus didn't know what had happened? It had happened to him.

But they're saying the things that happened to Jesus, the man from Lazarus, they said he was a prophet who did wonderful miracles. He was a mighty teacher, highly regarded by both God and all people. Our

leading priests and other religious leaders arrested him and handed him over to be condemned to death and they crucified him. We had thought he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel. All this happened just three days ago. And then some women from our group of his followers were at the tomb this early morning and they came back with an amazing report. It's an amazing report but yet we don't want to believe it's an amazing report.

What was the amazing report?

They said his body was missing and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive. Some of our men ran to see and sure enough Jesus' body was gone just as the woman said. Sure enough it was amazing, but we are still discouraged. We are going back to our own business.

Jesus said, "You are such foolish people. You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted by the prophets that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering the time of glory?"

And then Jesus quoted passages from the writings of Moses and all prophets explaining what all the scriptures said about himself. Is anybody hearing what I'm saying this morning? May the spirit of God help us to understand and believe this truth today. Don't leave this place doubting just like everyone else had doubted. Jesus appears. These two disciples come back. We talk about the breaking of the bread. They broke the Jesus was walking along with them and they didn't recognize him and then he pretended as he's going to go ahead.

They said, "Come in. Come in and have dinner with us." And Jesus walks in and as soon as he breaks the bread, what happens? Their eyes opened.

My wife was sharing actually a portion saying that reminding that the deception of the enemy in the garden of Eden. What did God tell Adam and Eve? You shall eat of all the trees of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And as soon as they disobeyed God's command and they ate the fruit, what does the Bible says? Their eyes were opened open to caught to all evil and sinfulness. They became gods in their own eyes. But when people get revelation about Jesus's eyes again open, but they open to know the truth that Jesus is the son of God.

I pray this morning that your hearts will be open to this truth that you will not leave this place doubting. But I can tell you doubt may arise when troubles come in. This world is filled with problems. There are troubles that we will face whether it is death of a family member whether it's a sickness of someone whether it's a loss of job whether it may be a problem that is there but I don't want you to doubt about what Jesus has said because Jesus did warn us about these problems that we will face.

But he said be of good cheer I have overcome the world keep your eyes upon Jesus chapter 12 verse 2 says looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion you start with Jesus you will end with Jesus. You continue to walk with Jesus. He will see you through every situation that you may be facing today. However big the mountain and the challenge that you may be facing, I do not know what your struggles may be today.

But I want you to put your faith in Jesus.

Don't focus upon the problem. Peter walked on water. When Jesus asked him to come, as long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, he was walking straight on water. But he took his eyes off Jesus. And what happened? He began to sink.

If you take your eyes off Jesus and walk in your situations of the problems in the that you are facing in life, I can tell you will drown with the problems. I am praying that apathy from our churches will go, that we will wake up, that we are living in these last days.

The book of Hebrews chapter 10 says these words, Verse 23. Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have. For God can be trusted to keep this promise. Think of ways to encourage one another with outbursts of love and good deeds. And this is the verse that I want to bring to you. And do not and let us not neglect our meeting together as some people do but encourage and warn each other. Especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near.

How many of you believe Jesus is coming back?

We are closer than ever of Jesus's return. And so, we need to wake up from our slumber. We cannot continue to sleep. We need to be like the five virgins who are ready with their lamps trimmed because the bridegroom will come at any time. Don't be like the five foolish virgins who were also waiting but their lamps were not trimmed. And we know the story. When the bridegroom came, they had to go looking for oil because there was no oil in their lamps.

What is the oil?

The oil signifies the anointing. The anointing of the Holy Spirit. You and I need the Holy Spirit in our lives and to rely on the spirit of God. If you have the spirit of God in you, which is there to encourage you, to teach you, and to lead you, you and guide you on all truth. You will not be misguided by the world system.

Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth." If the salt has lost its [flavour], what good is it but to be trampled under the feet of men?

I pray that the church will arise and speak the word of God boldly.

In this time, we will have challenges. Some of us may have to go to prison for speaking the word of God. But are we willing to do so or are we not, or are we content with living our lives as it is one of the disciples.

I'm going to close with that was not there when Jesus appeared to them in [verse] 24 we read that Jesus appears to them and speaks to them but in John chapter 20 also records similar thing that evening first day of the week John 20:19 he says the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly Jesus was standing among them. Peace be with you, he said. And he spoke. He held out his hands for them to see and to show them his side. They were filled with joy.

But they when they saw the Lord, he spoke to them again and said, "Peace be with you. As the father has sent me, so I send you." And then he breathed upon them to receive the Holy Spirit. And he said these words, "If you forgive another's sins, they are forgiven. But if you refuse to forgive them, they are unforgiven."

Forgiveness is a very very important part. We need to learn to do so. One of the disciples Thomas wasn't there when Jesus came and we and they told him we have seen the Lord. But he replied, I won't believe unless I see the nail pins wound in his hands. I won't believe. He says I won't believe. I need to do something more. I need to see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound of his side.

And the Bible says 8 days later, the disciples were together again. And this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked. But suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. And he said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Put your hand with the wounds in my side. Don't be faithless any longer, but believe. Don't be faithless any longer, but believe."

Thomas exclaimed "my Lord and my God". And then Jesus told him, Thomas, you believe because you have seen me, but blessed are those who haven't seen me and yet believe anyway.

[Reuben closes in a prayer]

Father, we thank you once again for this morning.

Thank you, Father, for the word of God that gives us clarity, that shows us the way because the light is shining. Your word teaches us that you are a God of consuming fire, that you are light. In you, there is no darkness at all. And if you are, we walk in the light of your word, we will never stumble.

And I pray, Father, that the church will not be misguided or directed into directions that are not given by you and instructions that are not given by you. And I pray that we as your people who have been given the opportunity to speak the word, will speak with boldness and have the courage which comes by the Holy Spirit.

And you told your disciples [to] wait in Jerusalem till the Holy Spirit has come upon you before you go out and carry out my commandment because I want you to receive the power. And in 1 John, Acts 1:8, he said, you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses, not only in Jerusalem or in Judea or in Samaria, but across the ends of the earth.

And I pray this word will continue, Father, to move. I just pray, Father, for the nation of Britain. We pray for our country. We pray, Father, for our nation. We pray, Father, for salvation. We pray for transformed lives. We pray, Father, for the church to be alive. We pray, Father, for the word to be spoken, Father, with clarity, not with confusion.

Father. And I pray your blessing especially for Langley Free Church this morning, Father, that this church will continue to function till you return, Father. That there will be no lack of any good thing. That you will bring in a minister, Father, who is filled with your spirit, who will speak the world with boldness and with truth and with clarity. That we'll no longer, Father, be confused.

And by your grace and mercy, Father, we'll be guided by your spirit to the very end. And we don't want your spirit to depart. As the Psalmist said, in Psalm 51, create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a ripe spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of your salvation. The bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sins is ever before me. For against thee, and thee only have I sinned and have done this evil in thy sight, that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Thou anointest my head with oil. My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

I pray your blessing, Father, for your people that they will have the courage and boldness to be led by your spirit and not by their own human understanding.

I pray every blessing, Father, to continue for the leaders of this church as they're guided by your spirit, Father, to choose a person who will have the fire of God in him.

In Jesus name we pray.

Amen.