

REACHING OUT FOR CHRIST

PROBLEM - FAITHLESSNESS, PERPLEXITY
THE CONFUSION OF CHANGE

6 MARY & THOMAS

"Touch me not... Reach hither and thrust thy hand into my side"
 Jn 20:11-29

Result - A life-long conviction
Christ as - The Risen Lord
"My Lord and my God"

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"Touch me not... Reach hither and thrust thy hand into my side" Jn 20:11-2

The importance of change

We cannot become what we need to be,
 by remaining where we are....



5 stages in the process...

- 1 Suffering**
 Change begins with an awareness of discomfort or dissatisfaction with our lives, and our way of coping with ourselves or our relationships.
- 2 Understanding**
 Change is initiated when we develop an understanding and acceptance of the dissatisfaction and discomfort.
- 3 Choosing**
 The 3rd stage in the process is "I will try something different."
- 4 Acting**
 Taking action is the 4th stage; "I am doing something differently."
- 5 Maintaining**
 All change requires maintenance. The outcome is successful when we dedicate ourselves to maintaining the growth we have achieved.

HOW DOES CHANGE OCCUR?

“People can change: **but they seldom, if ever, change by themselves.** This fact underscores the crucial supportive and the challenging role of counsellors. **Change is the product of relationships with others.** That humans cannot save themselves is central to Christianity. But while change comes through relationships, it always begins inside the person. We cannot help people **without being let into their lives.**”

David E. Carlson, ‘Counselling and Self-esteem,’ page 70.

Emotional Shock

“All of us, in our own small way, have experienced the **transforming power of a great emotional shock.** It searches the soul, it opens up the mind to its foundations, it rearranges all the courses of nature and sets things going in an entirely different direction. It is hard, but it is wholesome. **It shakes out the dross from the mind, and makes men bigger and better.**”

“From this time forward, these are all different men. It is as if they have passed through a violent metamorphosis, and henceforth are an entirely new type of creature... Henceforth, they stand fearlessly before rulers. Henceforth they go fearlessly to prison and to death.”

Emotional Shock

The double shock of death and resurrection appears to have been the Divine means for effecting this transformation – this sudden growth from children to men. Let us learn the lesson well, that we may yield ourselves completely to the Divine Hand, **and in the fierce crucible of sorrow find the glories of spirit birth.**

G. Growcott “Be ye transformed” pg 317

Emotional Shock

"TALKS" RARELY CAUSE CHANGE!

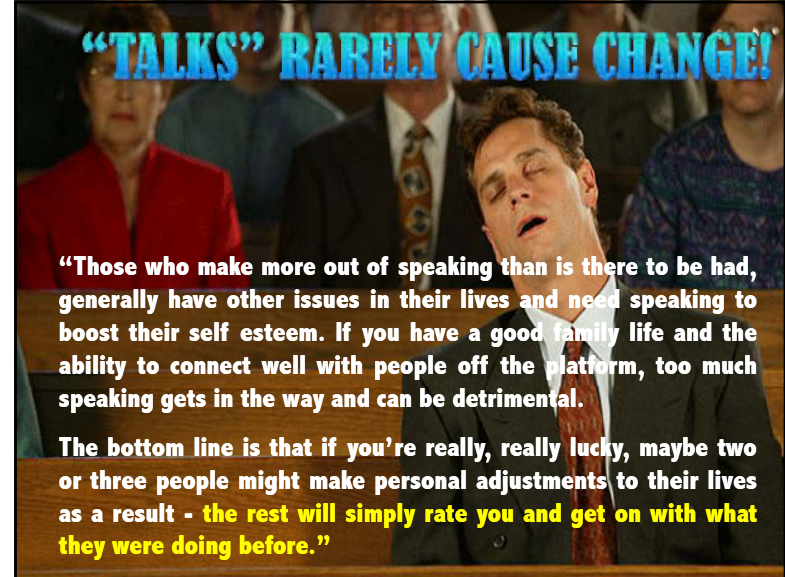
"The sad thing is that people think the holy grail of ecclesial reward and fulfilment is jumping on a platform and telling people how to live their lives. **Someone really ought to tell them that given the perfect talk and the perfect response - the afterglow does not last much beyond Monday morning and then life goes on!**"



"TALKS" RARELY CAUSE CHANGE!

"Those who make more out of speaking than is there to be had, generally have other issues in their lives and need speaking to boost their self esteem. If you have a good family life and the ability to connect well with people off the platform, too much speaking gets in the way and can be detrimental.

The bottom line is that if you're really, really lucky, maybe two or three people might make personal adjustments to their lives as a result - **the rest will simply rate you and get on with what they were doing before.**"



John 20 - The basis of Change

v1-10 John Believes

LOGIC

v11-18 Mary Is Convinced

VOICE

v19-23 The Apostles Assured

SIGHT

v24-29 Thomas Persuaded

TOUCH

v30-31 Ourselves

SCRIPTURES

"He saw and believed" v8

"Mary... she turned herself and saith unto him Rabboni" v16

"Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord" v20

"My Lord and my God" v28

"These things are written that you might believe" v31



A GENTLE CORRECTION BY CHRIST

13 Because they have taken away **MY** Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to **MY** Father: but go to **MY** brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto **MY** Father, and your Father; and to **MY** God, and **your God**.



The Women In the Garden

A woman saw and succumbed to the Serpent

Heard a voice in the garden - FEAR

Adam called his wife "Eve", for through her was the future promise of "Life"

Birth and life would only result in a declining existence of pain and sorrow

The gardener laboured but could not remove the thorns & thistles

She was driven out of the garden weeping, with restricted access to "The way to tree of life"

A woman saw the amazing victory over the serpent's sting

Heard a voice in the garden - FAVOUR

Christ called her "Mary" despite her "bitterness" she witnessed the reality of a "better life"

She witnessed the reversal of this in the rebirth of Christ to a life of everlasting joy and gladness

This "gardener" will ultimately remove all thorns and every cause of sorrow

She ran from garden in joy having touched and seen he who is "The way, the truth, the life"

"Rabboni"

Rabbounai or Rabboni, was an Aramaic form of a title almost entirely applied to the president of the Sanhedrin, if such was a descendant of Hillel. **It was even more respectful than Rabbi, and signified "My Great Master."** It is found in Mk 10:51 ("Lord") in the best texts. **It was addressed to Christ by blind Bartemaueus and in Jn 20:16 by Mary Magdalene (only occurrences).** Vines



v17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to **my Father: but go to my brethren,** and say unto them, I ascend unto **my Father, and your Father,** and to **my God, and your God.**

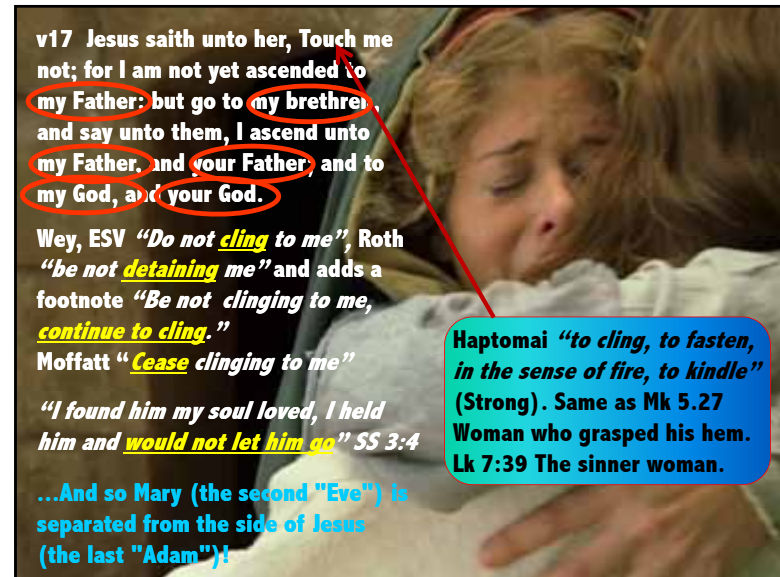
Wey, ESV "**Do not cling to me**", Roth "**be not detaining me**" and adds a footnote "**Be not clinging to me, continue to cling.**"

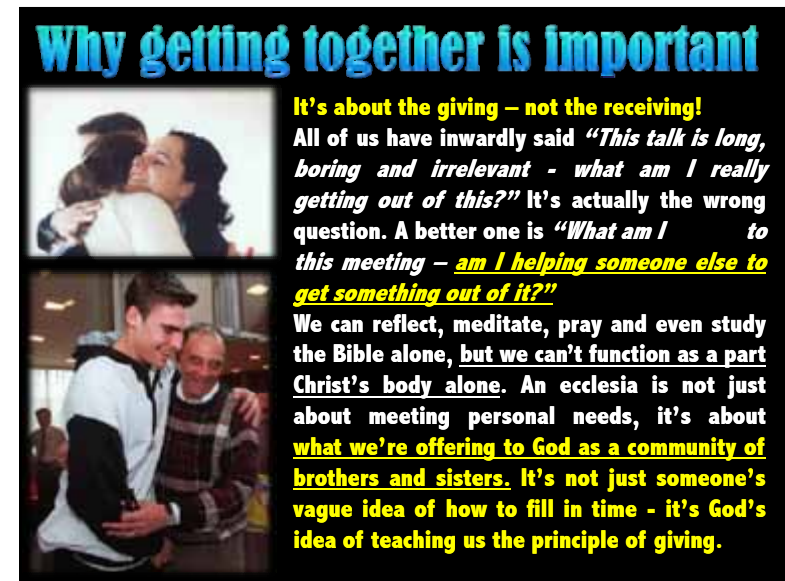
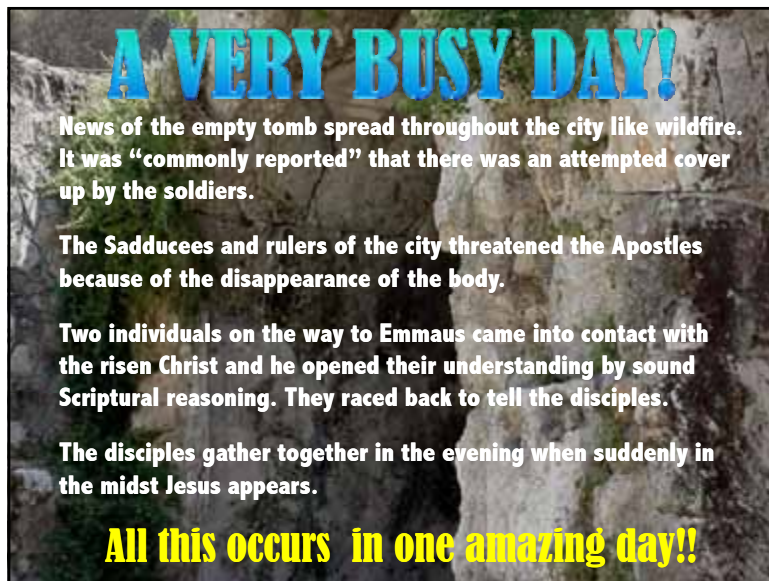
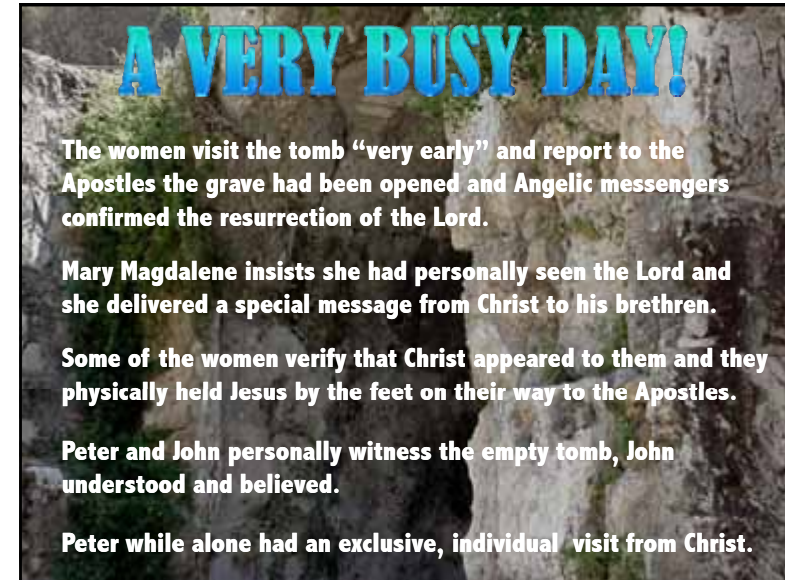
Moffatt "**Cease clinging to me**"

"**I found him my soul loved, I held him and would not let him go**" SS 3:4

...And so Mary (the second "Eve") is separated from the side of Jesus (the last "Adam")!

Haptomai "**to cling, to fasten, in the sense of fire, to kindle**" (Strong). Same as Mk 5.27 Woman who grasped his hem. Lk 7:39 The sinner woman.





“Thomas was not with them” v24

We must not only *“always abound in the work of the Lord”* – we must WANT to do so, we must be lovingly and gratefully ANXIOUS to do so. God insists upon not just our strength, but – far more importantly – all our heart and soul.

If a brother or sister truly gets the spirit of Christ, truly is Christ's, it will not be necessary to exhort them to *“always abound in the work of the Lord”*. It will not be necessary to exhort them to attend and support all the classes and meetings of the ecclesia.

If they have the spirit of Christ, if they truly are Christ's – in heart and not just in name they JUST COULD NOT stay away, if it were humanly possible to get there. Their whole heart and soul and mind would be with the brethren and sisters – those few whom God has given us as companions in the glorious pathway to the kingdom.

“Thomas was not with them” v24

A brother with the spirit of Christ would not dream of missing a meeting he could possibly attend, or of not supporting to the fullness of his means, yea and beyond his means, every activity of the Truth and work of the Lord.

Do we regard our real life and joy as the time we are able to give to God's work, keeping all other activity to a minimum so that we can give the fullness of our heart and strength in thankful service to God?

Or do we live like the rest of the world – busy days, lazy evenings, pleasure-seeking weekends, minds full of worldly things – wrapped up in houses, gardens, cars, boats, sports, food, raiment, personal adornment, and the pitifully childish decking out of these vile, perishing bodies – interested in the world's activities – excited about sports or stupefied by television. Be ye Transformed. GW Growcott pg 27



John's encouragement to us

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

