

## **THE LAST AND MOST GLORIOUS BEATITUDE OF JESUS BEFORE HIS ASCENSION.**

1. Scripture Reading: John 20:19 - 31
2. Lesson: John 20:29

*Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Beatitudes of our Lord Jesus Christ at the beginning of his sermon on the mountain are well known to all Christians.

But there are more beatitudes of our Master in Scriptures.

- "And blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over Me." (Matthews 11:6)
- And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (Matthews 16:17)

*Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near (Rev.1:3).*

However, we do not always give the same attention to what can be called the Last and most glorious Beatitude of our Lord!

The importance of this beatitude becomes clear when we pay attention to the first and last verses of chapter 20.

- *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.*
- *Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.*

From these Scriptures we can conclude three possibilities:

1. Not see and not belief.
2. See and belief.
3. Not see and yet belief.

### **NOT SEE AND NOT BELIEF**

To this day there are faithless Thomasses.

In our Post Modern world mankind only accepts "what can be proved."

Only that which can be scientifically explained.  
Today's motto is "Science and Technique".

People are looking for proofs.

- They rather believe the “scientific facts” of a theory than the narrative of creation in the three first chapters of Genesis in the Bible.
- the virgin conception of our Saviour and Redeemer is medically spoken impossible and fiction.
- Cloning and in vitro conception is in fact scientifically possible and already put into practice by scientists. Yet this is only possible where DNA and genetic matter are available!
- The resurrection of Jesus must be spiritualised to be believed, because physiologically and biologically there is no way that one can rise from death.

It is also not only the resurrection of Christ that is disputable.

The same applies to the resurrection of the dead in the last day that we constantly confess in article 11 of the Apostolic Confession.

For Mary Magdalene, John and Peter as well as the other eight seeing and hearing evidence of Jesus’ resurrection were enough.

Thomas though, wanted to *see and feel*. Then he would believe.

### SEE AND BELIEVE

In contrast to this there was a crowd of people that saw . . . and **BELIEVED!**

Amongst them Mary Magdalene, John and Peter were the first.

They arrived at the empty grave.

They saw the linen in which the dead body of the Son of God was wrapped, laying there — untouched by human hand.

The cloth in which his head was wrapped, laying asunder — neatly folded.

They saw the empty grave and immediately believed that He had risen from death.

When she heard her name called by whom she thought was the gardener: “Mary!” she knew, she believed, and fell at his feet: “Raboeni!”

Also the other disciples in the absence of Thomas. “Peace be with you!” They saw Him, received the Holy Spirit and believed!

They believed the testimony of the travellers to Emmaus — Kleopas and his friend.

They accepted the command of their Lord and Master put forward in his prayer as their High Priest (John 17:17 - 19)

*17 Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. 18 “As Thou didst send Me into the world I also have sent them into the world. 19 “And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.*

They saw and believed, because they said to Thomas: “WE HAVE **SEEN THE LORD!**” Seven days later the lord again appeared to them while Thomas was also present.

He declined the invitation of the Lord to assure himself of the wounds in his body — he saw and . . . he believed!

### NOT SEE AND YET BELIEVE

There is one thing certain — there is faith and there is faith.

The best proof of this statement is found in the parable of the Lord about the seed that fell in different places.

Either they that hear the Word of God, do not believe — alongside the road;  
or some believe  
Until temptations overcome them — rocky places.  
Until the trials en tribulations overcame them — amongst the thorns.

There can be no permanent faith in Jesus unless it is a faith in Him as the risen Lord.

The same witness by St Paul is found in Romans Chapter 8:33, 34

*33Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.*

And St Peter bears witness too in his first Epistle 1:5 and 7 – 9:

*reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.  
6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.*

This beatitude was at some occasion called by a Theologian “The everlasting treasure of the church of later years!”

Look and see with an eye of faith.

### CONCLUSION

Do you believe? Do you believe because the Holy Spirit has given you a spiritual eye to see the “invisible”? or do you believe “every wind of doctrine” — the fraud of humankind and the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.

Do you believe like a small child — unconditionally and innocently.

Believe though you do not see!

