



The Strict Particular Baptists in Rochdale where I come from didn't even allow women to speak in church. Here, in our reading today, God uses this woman Mary to share the good news. She TOLD them.

My gifting is as an evangelist, a bringer of good news, a herald of salvation through Christ.

Mary Magdalene told them - sharing the message is an immense privilege and the message is about LOVE.

It is how the church has grown from generation to generation - one person telling another about Jesus.

The response - they didn't believe it!!

Well someone rising from the dead is a BIT unusual and of course we are used to this story.

There are plenty of people who don't believe - the cynical are the worst, the most unhappy people I've met in life journey are cynical people - that's my experience.

But God can break in and heal the cynic, my late father had 1,000 reasons for not following Jesus but in the end - he found faith.

In this account the two on the road to Emmaus are highlighted as meeting with the risen Christ reporting the news and not being believed.

The scripture continues, 'later Jesus appeared to the eleven whilst they were eating' - wouldn't that put you off your food!! They must have been stunned.

There are some good words here LACK OF FAITH - STUBBORN REFUSAL.

Oh before we go outside and the risen Jesus wants us to share this message - in the church are also obstacles. Lord have mercy upon us when we've been in that place.

Can 'stubborn' and 'Methodist' occur in the same sentence? ... Never!

The commission was, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.'

Mark then goes on with other things but I have not time to explore that now.

This is the commission we are called to - I know the evangelist is engaged in winning the lost and reviving the Church.

My challenge is that I'm asking each Methodist church in Britain to aim to bring just one person to faith in the coming year, saying: "Let's take God seriously. I want to help us in the task of evangelism, to put mission on the agenda and give our churches an aim to win a person for Christ."

You matter - this prayer of St Paul about this unconditional love.

And it has you in the centre of it.

