An acceptable Excuse.

Jno. 20:19-29

Intro. A. You and I possess 2 inclinations - to good and to evil.
1. Two poles, between which we live
2. Never wholly one or the other, though we often speak of best, worst
3. Jekyll and Hyde an attempt to separate the two.

B. But our lives a mixture of both: mild party and proceeds to church; quarter in beggar's cup on way to Lions Club; drug party income tax return in mail on way to church; near wreck to miss puppy on way home to curse the wife; prayers at gaming table.

C. But even this mixture, when man appear at worst?
1. Filthy mouth, profaning sacred?
2. Act of violence?
3. Betrayed by scarlet woman?
4. Hock groceries for liquor?
5. Betray a sacred trust?
6. Drape evil in sackcloth & bless with prayer?

I Now I suggest another picture of man at worst.

A. When he Makes excuses.
1. Trying to explain why Jekyll is Hyde
2. Hanging between world of performance & story of expectation.
3. Violates own strength, wisdom, goodness.
4. Better a lie than excuse for lying.
5. Better cold or hot than excuse for neither.
6. Better to curse than whimper. No way to modulate voice to make whine acceptable
7. Triples like an air raid siren. Better to say he drowned than to say he still out there grubbing at trawl.
8. Student not at worst when failed but when excusing failure.

B. Note the sad pictures of Moses, Adam and Eve making excuses; those in Jesus' story

who did not attend Marriage Feast.

C. By a schedule of duty on Lord's desk, probably -
7:00 - 7:15 - Blue Mary's prayers; 7:15 - Midnight
Near Mary's Excuse.

D. Some do have imagination to use, new ones.
1. Elder in Ch in W Va. collects them.
2. "Walk gets to Lord's dog; "flea vaccinated;
"Mary got hiccoughs."

E. But those who really have excuses seem not willing to use them
1. Fan widow - But I only take penny.
2. Paul to Fel - But I was sick understand.
3. Jesus - But my family doesn't understand.
4. Zaccheus - But I was too short. Did you expect me to climb a tree?

II But Our Text offers an Acceptable Excuse.
A. Epic story of Thessa's absence.
B. Excuse? I believe Christ is dead. Why continue?
1. Why gather? Hang crepe? Wake is over?
Every sermon an epitaph, every song a funeral dirge. Ch. a tombstone, more to do than walk among tombs. Lid on dead end street. Pattern ends in navel; ladder ends with broken rung. Hate stronger than love, death than life. Winged birds have sky; finned fish the sea, but Eternity in hearts of men. If he who dreamed he lived died, what hope for he dreaming to die?
2. Mistaken, admit it. Picking pieces. Play "Waiting for Godot"
3. Life a tragic comedy. Tragic figures. Clowns ends with a tragic hopeless figures. Clowns trousers fall to knees. Sad comedy. Tale told by idiot.

C But, Christ is alive! Why excuses any more!
1. Night not forever on Calvary.
2. God expressed approval.
3 Every service a meeting; every Comm a guest at his table; prayer a conversation; a good deal personal.
4. Religion taken from vault of past tense. God today. alive & so am I. God is not over Every day, every event, every person. what potential!

Ch dead - acceptable excuse. Ch alive - There is no excuse.