

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Leader pages on pp. 120-123

THE POINT:
JESUS ROSE AGAIN
TO GIVE US VICTORY
OVER DEATH.

LUKE 24:1-8, 38-43

¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared.

² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

³ They went in but did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

⁴ While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men stood by them in dazzling clothes.

⁵ So the women were terrified and bowed down to the ground. "Why are you looking for the living among the dead?" asked the men.

^{6a} **"He is not here, but he has risen!**
.....

^{6b} Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee,

⁷ saying, 'It is necessary that the Son of Man be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third day?'

⁸ And they remembered his words.
.....

³⁸ "Why are you troubled?" he asked them. "And why do doubts arise in your hearts?

³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself! Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have."

⁴⁰ Having said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

⁴¹ But while they still were amazed and in disbelief because of their joy, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"

⁴² So they gave him a piece of a broiled fish,

⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence.

MEMORY VERSE

+
+
+

KEYWORDS

They came to the tomb (v. 1)—They refers to the women Luke had mentioned two verses earlier (Luke 23:55).

The Son of Man (v. 7)—Son of Man was Jesus’s favorite title for Himself and was used over eighty times in the Gospels.

He showed them his hands and feet (v. 40)—Jesus continued to convince them by showing them His hands and feet. They saw the nail marks from His crucifixion. John added that Jesus showed His disciples His side, pierced by a Roman soldier’s spear (John 19:34; 20:20).

WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION?

Lewis Latimer could not predict the future, though it might have seemed like he could from his work. Latimer, a member of Thomas Edison's research team, improved the light bulb with the invention of the carbon filament in 1882. He went on to become the head draftsman (someone who draws pictures of machines, buildings, or inventions) for General Electric.

Additionally, he went on to design a bathroom for railroad cars, a disinfecting and cooling device, a hat and coat rack, the locking umbrella and a device for supporting books. He also worked with Alexander Graham Bell as draftsman for the telephone. Despite all his knowledge and foresight, he was human and not infallible. He, like many of the inventors he worked with during his time, could not understand how humans would use their advancements in technology.⁴

But what about Jesus? He was fully human, but also fully divine, and completely infallible. Jesus never gave a false prophecy. Even His most seemingly impossible prophecy, His own resurrection, came true. Indeed, everything relied on Jesus being right—and He was!

The Empty Place // Luke 24:1-6a

Jesus was dead. His followers had scattered, presumably believing that the same torture and death would come to them. With the exception of John, the disciples did not go to the crucifixion. As the afternoon into the evening, the Sabbath day was about to begin, and Jesus's body was laid into a tomb.

Soon the women who had supported His ministry came to anoint Christ's body. The women must have been astonished when they found the tomb was open, especially given that Roman guards had been stationed there. Though they were surprised, the angels that met them there were not. In fact, their statement to the women is one of pure logic: ***"Why are you looking for the living among the dead?"***

The women could have offered any number of explanations. Yet the simplest, albeit most unbelievable, explanation was the true one: Jesus was, and is, alive. He had risen, and He remains risen even now. The empty tomb still points us to the resurrection of Jesus, but we often fail to live in light of that reality. Consider some of the things that happen when we forget that He is risen:



THE POINT: JESUS ROSE AGAIN TO GIVE US VICTORY OVER DEATH.

1. **We live for the moment.** When we operate exclusively in the realm of “now” we miss the value of seeing the big picture. We have to act NOW. We have to decide NOW. We have to take advantage NOW. Our behavior may become rash and extreme—no time to think; no time to consider; no time to breathe. Only time to act. This is what happens when we forget Jesus is alive. We completely lose our perspective on time, circumstances, and priorities. That’s because if Jesus is not risen, then NOW is all there really is.

If this moment is all there is, we find ourselves living constantly for the pleasure of a given moment. Paul was right when he wrote: “If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (1 Cor. 15:32).

2. **We cease to rest.** We drift toward living in a sense of desperation when we forget Jesus is alive; and cease to be able to find any kind of real rest. It’s important for us to remember, though, that rest is not ultimately physical. It is not only the ceasing of activity; real rest is about a state of the soul. It’s about knowing that there is nothing left to prove because Jesus has finished His work: “Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take up my yoke and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, then His work was not, and is not, truly finished. As a result, we find ourselves with nowhere to go for relief and no one upon whom to cast our burdens. A dead Savior cannot carry burdens or comfort His people as they seek to live out His mission – but He has risen!

3. **We feel forgotten.** Finally, when we forget that Jesus is alive, we feel forgotten. Let’s think about this for a moment: If Jesus has been raised from the dead, once and for all time, what is He spending His raised and eternal life doing? The Bible gives us this answer: “Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, since he always lives to intercede for them” (Heb. 7:25).

What a glorious thought, that Jesus—once dead and now alive forever more—is right now interceding for us. No matter what happens in this life, no matter what job we lose, no matter what relationship ends, no matter how many people turn their back on us, we are not forgotten. Jesus has taken up our case because He is risen.

WHY ARE THE WORDS “HE IS RISEN” GOOD NEWS FOR US?



DIGGING DEEPER READING THE RESURRECTION

Our current culture is fixated on various forms of visual media. Some Christians even wish they could have been born during the time of Jesus so they could have witnessed His life and resurrection. While encountering the historical person of Jesus came with its own blessing (Luke 2:25-38), we are blessed to have access to Jesus through Scripture. The story of the rich man and Lazarus is unique to the Gospel of Luke (Luke 16:19-31). One of the reasons that Luke has included this story is to prepare us for living after the resurrection. As the story concludes, Abraham explains that seeing someone return from the dead (i.e., seeing Jesus’s resurrection) is worthless if one does not listen to what is written in Moses and the Prophets (i.e., Scripture). In other words, seeing Jesus’s resurrection would not necessarily help us understand Him better; reading Scripture does.

Compare the blessing of reading about the resurrection to having experienced it. Keep Luke 24:13-35 in mind while you do this.

Fulfilled Prediction // Luke 24:6b-8

The angels continued with their logical proclamation to the women: “Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee, saying, ‘It is necessary that the Son of Man be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third day?’”

To the angels, it was nearly nonsensical that the women did not understand. After all, He told them that this very thing would happen. Jesus not only predicted His death: He foretold His resurrection, and the fact that He did reminds us of at least three key things regarding Jesus:

- **His knowledge.** From an outsider’s point of view, it might have seemed as though the crucifixion caught Jesus by surprise. It was only a few short days before when He was welcomed to Jerusalem in a manner befitting a king, but then the very crowds who heralded His arrival demanded His execution. But even then, Jesus was in total control. It was not the nails that held Him to the cross; it was His own devotion to the will of the Father.
- **His intentionality.** Jesus’s foretelling of His resurrection also shows us His intentionality. Throughout His ministry, Jesus repeatedly told those who desired to share about His miraculous signs that His time had not yet come. Likewise, He waited to go to Jerusalem until just the right time. Indeed, the entire earthly ministry of Jesus, though it might have seemed to be haphazard and wandering, was intentional by design.
- **His faithfulness.** Put simply, Jesus’s “faithfulness” means He keeps His word. He always, without exception, says what He means and means what He says. It was not hyperbole or metaphor when Jesus predicted His own death and resurrection. Because He is faithful, His Word can be trusted and relied upon. Jesus is an anchor for our souls.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT JESUS FORETOLD HIS RESURRECTION?



Living Proof // Luke 24:38-43

It had been an exhausting roller coaster of emotions. There was the terror and shock of seeing Jesus crucified. Then there were the rumors they had heard about the resurrection. And now here the disciples were, together again. Together with their doubts. Together with their shame. Together with their fears. But then, there He was. Jesus. Standing in their midst, proclaiming a message of peace.

“Peace to you,” He had said. The disciples themselves saw Jesus after His resurrection. They not only saw Him, they heard Him, touched Him, and ate with Him. This was no ghost or hallucination, but the actual, physical, resurrected Christ. This fact is good news for us today, particularly if we find ourselves doubting the resurrection of Jesus. It’s good news for the doubter for at least two reasons:

- **Jesus’s resurrection is verified.** It seems that with every passing hour on that first Easter morning, the number of people who actually saw Jesus grew — and grew — and grew. Jesus was not hiding from anyone. In fact, Paul would later tell us that Jesus “appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. Then he appeared to over five hundred brothers and sisters at one time; most of them are still alive, but some have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:5-6). Paul noted that many of these people were still alive in his writing precisely because the resurrection of

THE POINT: JESUS ROSE AGAIN TO GIVE US VICTORY OVER DEATH.

Jesus could be verified. In a sense, Paul was saying, "Don't believe me? Just ask one of the hundreds of other people who saw Him!"

- **Jesus welcomes the doubter.** A second reason why the fact that the disciples saw Jesus after His resurrection is good news is found in the way Jesus responded to those who doubt. He appeared there in a room full of people who had their worlds turned upside down, a group of people unsure of their future, and certainly unsure if what they heard was real. But Jesus did not brow beat them for their lack of faith; He was not angry at their doubt; He did not insult them for their temporary disbelief and fear; instead, Jesus welcomed them.

Jesus issued the doubters an invitation. What a wonderfully comforting response! It is tempting today to be angry at ourselves when doubts arise in our hearts; to convince ourselves that we should be past such things. But the welcoming spirit of Jesus still extends that invitation. "Come and see," He still says. And all those who accept the invitation will find their lives changed forever, for no one encounters the risen Christ and is left the same.

HOW DOES JESUS REVEAL HIMSELF TO US TODAY?

DID YOU KNOW?

Several things in life simply do not mix. One example of two liquids that do not mix is oil and water. Similarly, death and life do not mix. This is important for understanding the angels' response in Luke 24:5. If Jesus had been dead, then using methods of investigating the dead would have been useful. However, since Jesus is alive, those methods will only lead to false conclusions. In fact, the logic of the angels is consistent with Isaiah 8:19-23. For those who seek to understand the dead through mediums or palm readers, they will only be led toward darkness. When we proclaim that Jesus is the source of all life, we should always explain that the gospel allows us to live life correctly, even if there are still mysteries about the afterlife.

Biblical Truth: Christians should rely on God's teaching and testimony because this leads to life more abundantly.

Have you encountered individuals who only want to understand the next world and neglect to ponder how Jesus relates to this life?

LIVE IT

Do you have resurrection power?

This question probes the mind to consider a lofty experience. For many Christians, there is a strong attraction to worship experiences where we feel filled with the Holy Spirit. However, the resurrecting power of Jesus is more than this. The resurrection of Jesus changes everything. It has the power to change any and all of our lives. When we believe in Jesus's resurrection, no area of our lives remains untouched, because, in Him, we can have victory over death.

+ + +

- **A Reminder.** Write the simple declaration—"He is risen"—on a note card. Place it on your mirror so that you can be reminded every day of the reality of Jesus's resurrection.
- **A Summary.** Memorize 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 as a great summary of the story of Jesus.
- **A Reflection.** In a journal, write the words "Because Jesus is alive . . ." at the top of several pages. Use each page to reflect on an area of your life and consider how the resurrection changes it.

DAILY READINGS

1. REMEMBER TRUTH // LUKE 24:1-8

Over time, you learn to understand and make sense of the world. You grow to distinguish between what is real and what is false. Your senses become your guide and dictate what you believe. You rarely question your senses because you see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and think, touch, and feel with your hands, mind, and heart. However, Proverbs 3:5 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." The physical reality of a dead body in the tomb caused the women lean into their emotions and abandon spiritual truth. All that Jesus said was forgotten until the two angels reminded them of Jesus's words. When situations seem dead, we must trust the truth of God's word.

The revelation of God's word is the actual reality, not our circumstance.

2. RESURRECTION REALITY // LUKE 24:38-40

"Is it real or Memorex?" This was the audio recording tape brand slogan. It claimed to be of such high quality that the listener could not tell the difference between the original and recorded sounds. Have you ever experienced a moment when what you witnessed defied reality, in that what you saw did not match what you believed? The miraculous workings of God will cause a reality check. Resurrection is one such phenomenon that defies and redefines reality. Jesus, after His resurrection, appeared and stood in the room where His disciples were gathering and talking.

The reality of the power of the resurrection, was at work then, and is still at work now.

3. TURNING POINT OF BELIEF // ROMANS 10:9-10

One meaning of a "turning point" is when some event, activity, situation, or condition begins to change or reverse course. Do you remember the "turning point" that caused you to surrender all and believe? We all have different "turning points." Sometimes it takes a little more convincing to

force change, but belief is at the core. The heavy lift was done through Jesus's death, burial and resurrection. All we are required to do is confess and believe. It is by believing that we are able to access the wonder working power of Jesus's defeat of the grave. The turning point from death to life, is belief.

Because Jesus rose, we have victory over death. We are only asked to believe.

4. MISSION READY// MATTHEW 28:18-20

No one wants to take on any assignment half equipped to accomplish it. No one should want to give someone a half-defined assignment, expecting it to be entirely completed. No, we should reference a page from the words of Jesus written in Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus begins by letting His disciples know He can commission them. He takes His mission to them to the next level, now to all nations. He tells His disciples to baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He tells His disciples to teach them to observe what He had commanded them and gave the assurance He would always be with them until the end of time. The mission has not changed for us, nor has the promise.

We have a part to play in sharing the gospel. He has called us, therefore, we are equipped.

5. POWER FOR THE MISSION // ACTS 1:4-8

The trucks were all loaded and ready to go. The only hold-up is the arrival of gasoline for the vehicles. The trucks cannot go anywhere without being fully "gassed up." Such is the case for the disciples of Jesus when it comes to continuing His mission. Jesus ordered them to wait for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, and not to leave Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit would give them power for the mission to be His witnesses, fulfilling the mission in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

The Holy Spirit that gives us the fuel to carry out the mission of Christ.