

He is risen!

The title of this morning's sermon is, *"Raised to Life for Our Justification."*

Please open your Bibles to Luke 24 and stand with me for the reading of God's Word. We are going to read verses 13 through 35.

Luke 24:13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. 16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. 22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, 29 but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" 33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

You may be seated. Let's pray.

Before we get into these verses in **Luke 24** I want to back up and help you see the mistake these two made, because it is a common mistake we can make.

Just so the mistake can be obvious, I'm going to give you a lesson that spells it out...

Lesson One: Don't miss the spiritual, because you're focused on the physical.

Unfortunately, man has the tendency to see the physical instead of the spiritual and this is why there was so much confusion and frustration associated with Christ's First Coming:

- People were focused on what they wanted Christ to do physically
- But Christ came primarily for spiritual reasons

Let me share a few examples with you from Scripture to show you how often this happens...

Think about when the prophet Samuel went to anoint the second king of Israel. God sent him to the house of Jesse, who had eight sons. Eliab was the oldest and David was the youngest.

Listen to what happened...

1 Samuel 16:6 When [Jesse's sons] came, [Samuel] looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him!"

Jesse's oldest son, Eliab, stood before Samuel and he must've been strong and physically impressive, which caused Samuel to think he was the next king of Israel.

More than likely Samuel thought this because he previously anointed Saul, who was a physically impressive man:

- **1 Samuel 9:2** [Kish] had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. *There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel* (twice it mentions how handsome he was). **From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.**
- **1 Samuel 10:23** When [Saul] stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. **24** And Samuel said to all the people (now listen to this...), "Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen, that *there is no one like him among all the people?*" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!"

If Samuel – and the people of Israel – would've looked at Saul spiritually, instead of just physically, they would've seen he was actually very small.

And unfortunately, Samuel was only looking at things physically when Eliab stood before him...and God rebuked him for it...

1 Samuel 16:7 The LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *THE LORD DOES NOT SEE AS MAN SEES; FOR MAN LOOKS AT THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE, BUT THE LORD LOOKS AT THE HEART.*"

Basically, this means God doesn't look at things like man looks at things, because man looks at things physically, but God looks at things spiritually.

Samuel was one of the greatest men in the Old Testament. If this could happen to him, it could happen to anyone.

Here's the background for the next example...

The Syrians hated Elisha the prophet, because every time they tried to attack Israel, Elisha would tell Israel what the Syrians were going to do. It was so bad the King of Syria thought there was a traitor in their midst.

He asked his men who the traitor was and they said, "*It's not us, it's the prophet Elisha. He keeps telling the King of Israel what we're going to do.*"

The king of Syria was so angry he sent his army to capture Elisha. When the Army showed up, Elisha's servant, Gehazi, was terrified...

2 Kings 6:15 When [Gehazi] arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

Now here's what's interesting. They looked terribly outnumbered, but listen to what Elisha said...

2 Kings 6:16 "Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them." **17** And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open [Gehazi's] eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened [his], and he saw. And behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Why did the servant think they were outnumbered?

Because he was looking at things physically instead of spiritually.

This is the mistake people made when Christ came.

Turn to **John 3** so I can show you the next example. The context is Nicodemus came to question Jesus...

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

At this point, is Nicodemus looking at things spiritually or physically?

He is looking at things physically, which is why he completely misunderstands what Jesus is saying...

John 3:4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

Now Jesus makes it very clear He’s speaking spiritually and not physically...notice Jesus’ emphasis on the Spirit versus the flesh...

John 3:5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

He’s talking about being born again, not physically but spiritually.

All of us are born physically alive, but spiritually dead...dead in our trespasses and sins. We must be born again by God’s Holy Spirit coming into our lives and giving us spiritual life.

Turn one chapter to the right. Jesus is speaking to the woman at the well...

John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” 11 The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?

Jesus is talking about spiritual water, but she thinks He’s talking about physical water.

Skip to verse 13...

John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water (referring to the water in the well) will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life (something physical water could never provide).” 15 The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.”

She’s still looking at things physically. She’s thrilled at the idea of not having to walk to the well to keep drawing water.

But to her credit she did end up understanding things spiritually. Look at **verse 28**...

John 4:28 The woman then LEFT HER WATERPOT, went her way into the city, and said to the men, 29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

She left her bucket behind, which shows her transition from focusing on the physical to focusing on the spiritual. She even went and told many people about Christ and they came to faith.

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Soon after this the disciples tried to give Jesus food, but look what happened in **verse 31**...

John 4:31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” 32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” 33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?”

They thought Jesus was talking about physical food, but he was talking spiritually...

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

Jesus meant doing His Father’s will sustained Him as much as physical food.

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Turn to **John 6**.

You’ll notice in verses 1 through 15 Jesus fed the 5,000. They told everyone, so large crowds followed Him.

And why were they following Him?

- They wanted more food.
- They were focused on the physical.

Jesus wants them hungry spiritually. Look **John 6:27**...

John 6:27 Do not labor for the food which perishes (or physical food), but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you.

He wanted them to want spiritual food, and He identifies Himself as that food. Look at **verse 35**...

John 6:35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and He who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

Just like Jesus wasn’t telling the woman at the well that she would never thirst again physically, he wasn’t telling these people they would never hunger and thirst again physically.

But he was saying if they pursued Him they’ll never hunger or thirst again spiritually.

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When the people could tell they weren’t getting more physical food, guess how they responded?

Look at **verse 66**...

John 6:66 From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him.

And this brings us to Lesson Two...

Lesson Two: If you’re focused on the physical you won’t want what Jesus offers.

John 6:67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”

You get the idea this is who Jesus had left. He went from thousands to 12.

Now whenever Peter opened his mouth, one of two things happened:

1. He either struck out
2. Or He hit a home run.

In **verse 68** he hit a home run...

John 6:68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

Peter focused on the spiritual:

- He understood what Jesus was offering.
- He understood Jesus's ministry.
- And that's why He stuck around...He even stuck around when Jesus told him he would be martyred.

And Peter reveals something important for us that I want to stress on this Easter Sunday...

If you only want what Jesus offers physically:

- Perhaps you think he's going to heal every sickness
- Perhaps you think he is going to make you rich
- Perhaps you think he is going to fix every relationship

Then you probably are going to stick around...until:

- You get sick
- You don't become rich
- You still have relationship problems

Then you end up leaving Christ, because He didn't do what you wanted...physically.

But if you are like Peter and you look at things spiritually, then you say, "*Where else would I go? Jesus has the words of eternal life.*"

Now to really tie this into Easter Sunday, let's look at the very first Easter Sunday and the misunderstanding these two people had. Turn back to **Luke 24**.

Luke 24:13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

Since it was seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus, they would have had plenty of time to talk. Jesus's crucifixion was one of the most dramatic – and to many in His day – unexpected events in history. Since this conversation was taking place three days after the cross, understandably they were occupied with this subject.

Luke 24:15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. 16 But THEIR EYES WERE KEPT FROM RECOGNIZING HIM.

This is an interesting example of what we are talking about. Could they see him?

It depends what you mean:

- They could see him physically – they knew there was a man walking with them
- But they couldn't see him spiritually – they didn't know he was the resurrected Messiah

Luke 24:17 And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. **18** Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

They’re talking about Jesus being crucified, so there’s actually nobody who had a better understanding of what happened than him.

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John 19:25 says Cleopas was married to a woman named Mary, so she is probably the other person walking with them.

Some other biblical and traditional evidence suggests Cleopas was Joseph’s brother, which means these were probably Jesus’s earthly aunt and uncle.

Luke 24:19 And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, **20** and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

I have always been amused by this conversation. I don’t want to be irreverent, but it almost seems like Jesus was playing with them. To me this looks like something I would say and Katie would elbow me and tell me to stop.

We’ve probably all wondered if God has a sense of humor. If God is the Creator it seems hard to believe that His creation could have a better sense of humor than Him. If man is playful and created in God’s image, wouldn’t that support God having a playful side?

And if Jesus had a playful side, because he was God in the flesh, I don’t know that there are any places in all of Scripture that reveal that better than this account.

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Even if Jesus was amused at this moment, they weren’t, because they had high hopes for the Messiah, and they feel like he let them down...

Luke 24:21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.

They mentioned the third day, because there was anticipation that was when He would be resurrected.

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I want you to notice that they said they thought Jesus would **redeem Israel**

This is crazy!

He was crucified. He’d done everything He needed to do to redeem Israel, but they thought He hadn’t.

They were looking at things physically and not spiritually. They expected a physical redemption instead of a spiritual redemption.

They thought Jesus would physically deliver them from Rome like Moses physically delivered Israel from Egypt, but:

- Instead of physical redemption from Rome, it was spiritual redemption from the world
- Instead of physical redemption from Caesar, the ruler of Rome, it was spiritual redemption from the devil, the ruler of the world
- Instead of physical redemption from slavery to Rome, it was spiritual redemption from slavery to sin.

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We don’t have time to read all the verses. Skip down to **verse 31**...

Luke 24:31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” 33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”

Jesus walks with them, but He keeps them from recognizing Him. We know he wanted to reveal himself to them, because he did later.

So I don't know why he hid himself from them, but I can say this...

This is a great picture of what happened in my life and what happens in many other people's lives.

I feel like the Lord was walking with me. He walked with these two for 7 miles before they recognized him, and he walked with me for 20 years before I recognized him.

I would ask you, “Has the Lord been walking with you, but you haven't recognized Him yet?”

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Notice when they recognized Him, they said, “**The Lord has risen indeed.**”

What does the resurrection mean?

This brings us to lesson three...

Lesson three: Christ was raised to life for our justification.

If you write in your Bible, you can circle the words **the Lord has risen indeed** and write **Romans 4:25...**

Romans 4:25 [Jesus] was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Let's split this verse in half. The first half says...

Jesus was delivered up because of our offenses

This looks back to Good Friday when Jesus died for our sins.

God is just, which means every sin that has ever been committed must be punished. If even one sin escaped God's judgment, then God could be mostly just, but he wouldn't be perfectly just.

So the truth is every one of our sins will be punished, and they will be punished one of two ways...

One way people's sins are punished is by sending them to the lake of fire, which we know as hell. There is no greater demonstration of God's justice than all unbelievers throughout human history experiencing this judgment for eternity. Just the thought of it is terrifying!

God is just...but He is also merciful and loving, so He has provided another way for our sins to be punished that doesn't involve us being the recipients of His wrath.

He was willing to send His Son to hang on a cross and receive the punishment that our sins deserve.

How could one man receive the eternal punishment due many people?

Because Jesus is fully God, He is an infinite Being able to receive an infinite amount of punishment during those hours that He was crucified.

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If you repent of your sins and put your faith in Christ as your Savior, then He takes the punishment your sins deserve and you receive His righteousness.

If you reject Christ then you are choosing to receive the punishment for your sins yourself.

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Now listen to what Peter said when he described Jesus's resurrection...

Acts 2:24 God raised [Jesus] up, loosing the pangs of death, because IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO BE HELD BY IT.

Why would Peter say it was not possible for Jesus to be held by death, or in other words, for Jesus to remain dead?

Romans 6:23 says the wages of sin is death.

If we sin, we must die, and we stay dead. Death owns us. It is the just punishment for our sins.

But because Jesus never sinned, he didn't deserve to die, so He couldn't stay dead. And we celebrate His resurrection today.

Like we sing...

Up from the grave he arose; with a mighty triumph o'er his foes; he arose a victor from the dark domain, and he lives forever, with his saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

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The resurrection is so serious that without it, our faith means nothing:

- **1 Corinthians 15:14 If Christ is not risen then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.**
- **1 Corinthians 15:17 If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.**

Without Christ's resurrection there's no salvation for believers.

Why is this the case?

Listen to the second half of the verse...

Romans 4:25a [Jesus] was delivered up for our trespasses

And the second half...

Romans 4:25b and raised for our justification.

Now the verse moves from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. This is what we're celebrating today: Jesus being **raised for our justification**.

If you've gone to church here very long hopefully you know the answer to this question...

What does it mean to be justified and I'm looking for two words?

Declared righteous!

But what does this have to do with Jesus's resurrection?

If Jesus stayed dead, then that would mean he was a sinner who wasn't able to save us.

But the resurrection reveals Jesus was our perfect, sinless substitute who could die in our place and take the punishment we deserve.

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If you've never repented of your sins and put your faith in Christ, then you're still dead in your trespasses and sins, and when you die God will punish you for your sins with eternity in hell.

If you have repented of your sins and put your faith in Christ, then just like Jesus died for you, He was also raised for you. His death became your death, and His resurrection will be your resurrection.

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I will be up front after service, and if you have any questions about anything I've shared, or I can pray for you in any way I would consider it a privilege to speak with you.

Let's pray.