

Luke 24:33-43

33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"

35 And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.

43 And He took it and ate in their presence.

As we look at these verses together, I'll first be expositing what happened that fateful Sunday evening, and then hopefully giving you a few applications from the text.

One of the most painful transitions that people can go through in life is having to use the past tense when speaking of a friend or loved one. Sometimes, it takes people quite some time to stop saying "is" and start saying "was." Making that shift is very difficult.

But can you imagine how much more difficult it would be to make the shift in the opposite direction. To go from thinking and speaking about someone not as was, but is? Because as hard as thinking about someone in the past tense is, and as weird as it feels, it's in keeping with our experience. Tell somebody that someone has died, and they can accept it. But tell somebody

that someone has come back to life, and they are going to think you are nutty.

Now the disciples of Christ on the Emmaus road, had already begun speaking of Jesus in the past tense before he started walking with Him, because they knew he had died. They didn't even believe the testimony of the women, or of the empty tomb, or of Peter and John. It took a personal appearance of Christ to them to cause them to believe the good news that Jesus is risen indeed.

But as soon as that happened, as soon as Jesus broke that bread at the beginning of dinner and their eyes were opened, their whole world changed forever. They don't even finish dinner, they rose up that very hour determined to go to Jerusalem and tell the other disciples the good news. They don't even care that it's dark and the seven mile journey back will be dangerous. They can't wait till morning.

And you can just imagine the scene, they reach Jerusalem sometime between 9:00 PM and 12:00 that's 21:00 and 24:00, and they find the house that the Apostles and close disciples are staying at, and incidently notice that the apostles are no longer called *the twelve*, because of Judas' treachery and suicide they are now referred to as *the eleven*. And that is the case even though we know that Thomas wasn't there with them that night, so there were only 10 of the 11 apostles in the room.

The Apostles as well are up well past their normal bedtime, they would have had a few oil lamps going to illuminate the room, they are literally burning the midnight oil. The two disciples from Emmaus knock on the door, which John tells us was locked for fear of the Jews, and they probably expect to be the first to break the news that Jesus has definitely risen, but they are greeted with the surprising report that Jesus had appeared to Simon, that is Peter. And its only after that they get to tell their own experience of meeting Jesus.

And then all of sudden, Jesus is right there in the middle of the room with them, and even with the conversation that they are having, they are scared silly. Terrified. *It's a ghost!*

Now why is that? Well no doubt it didn't help that it was night and it was dark, and if you've ever had a blackout at night and had to use candles, you know how dimly lit a candle illuminated room really is. I never wonder that pastors in the 19th century all have thick spectacles in their pictures, reading by candle light will kill you eyesight very quickly.

But once again, its mostly that it is so contrary to expectation. Living, Breathing People do not pass through solid, locked, doors. They don't just "appear" and certainly the Jesus whom they had been walking around with for years had never done that before. When he had done something similarly impossible at night – walking on water their reaction had been exactly the same:

Matt. 14:25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

Now Jesus is sympathetic, he doesn't want them to be petrified, and he wants them to know that it really is Him standing there, and not a ghost so he says, "why are you troubled and doubting? Look at my hands and feet, the nail prints are still there, go ahead and touch me, so I'm solid. This is the same solid body that was crucified 3 days ago.

But they still don't believe, this time it's for Joy. You ever had that experience of something happening that seemed too good to be true? One of those "pinch me because I must be dreaming" experiences? That's what is going on now.

You know it's ironic to me that many skeptics think that the apostles imagined that Jesus was Risen *because* they wanted to believe that Jesus was alive because scripture tells us that the opposite was true. They clearly did *not* expect the resurrection. When they heard that it had occurred they refused to believe it, even when Jesus was standing in front of them it just seemed too good to be true, he has to pile on the evidence until it became irrefutable. That is why he calls for them to give him something to eat, because he knows that they will be able to figure out that only a real, solid

body can consume food. So its funny isn't it? *Throughout His ministry, Jesus had to do miracles to prove that what he was saying was true, now he has to do something perfectly ordinary to prove that the miracle has happened.*

Only by these actions, appealing to their senses can Jesus prove that the same body that died has now risen from the dead. Well it is the same body, but it is a body that has been marvelously transformed. It is a resurrection body, a glorified body. A body no longer subject to death or corruption or disease or weakness. It is a body suited for the life to come in the New Heavens and the New Earth. It is of the same nature that the bodies of believers will possess when they are raised at the return of Christ.

As we are told in *Phil 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*

Paul writes at length about how our bodies will be changed in 1 Cor. 15, and if you haven't read about that, well that's your Lord's day reading assignment – go home and read 1 Cor. Chapter 15.

Anyway, on to the applications, and I want to suggest three to you.

1) You know today people have a tendency to say *Jesus was* such and such, even Christians will occasionally goof and do that. But of course all of the things that Jesus did that night were to prove to the apostles that He really had risen, and that he could never again be spoken of in the past tense. So that we should always say JESUS IS...

But remember this, the resurrection wasn't an end in and of itself, Jesus rose from the dead to prove that he had done what He said he was going to do, and so when he greeted the Apostles with "Peace be with you" It wasn't merely a kind of *howzit going*. It is a confirmation that Jesus has won peace for His people through his death on the cross. And not the transitory kind of

peace that the world is so concerned with, a temporary cessation of strife between nations, but the eternal peace of Romans 5:1:

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Peace with God! No more are you rebels, no more are you enemies of God. No more fearing God as our judge, but knowing Him as our Father.

2) But, and this is the second application, that peace can only come through believing in the Risen Jesus Christ. And to believe in Him *you have to have met Him*. Now, I can preach the risen Christ and exhort every Sunday, and you can come and listen, and like the disciples, be curious about these things and discuss them, but also like the Apostles, you will never really believe if all you have is my word.

You remember the story of Thomas? He's sometimes called "doubting Thomas" because of something that happened after this appearance of Jesus to the Apostles. We can read about it in John 20:

John 20: 24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Thomas did not believe the testimony of the Apostles, until He saw Christ in the flesh. But after His ascension to the father, seeing Jesus in the flesh isn't

going to be possible until his return so how can you believe then? How can you meet the risen Jesus? And the answer to that is *by faith*. And that meeting is just as real, just as spectacular, just as miraculous, more so even than what happened on that night. As scripture says: Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

And how does that faith and belief come? Through the Lord's working in your heart, that is how you can have an assurance that you have met with Him, 'cause only he can do it. That faith is the sure sign of the presence of Christ, the real presence of Christ in a transformed heart:

Acts 16:14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

Final application: Perhaps even now you are hesitating, thinking no I cannot meet with Christ, I am a sinful man, a sinful woman. Those words, peace be to you, was spoken to backsliders and cowards. "Where is the sinner, however great his sins, who need be afraid of beginning to apply to such a savior as this?"

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