

Message #125

Luke 24:11-35

On multiple occasions, Jesus Christ told His disciples and others that He would be dead and gone for three days and then would come back to life. Not one person believed Him. After all He had done, after all He had taught and after all the miracles He had performed, He came back to life the third day and found a bunch of confused, ignorant, depressed family members who had no idea what was happening. **No one expected Christ's resurrection.** Even those who had been very close to Jesus Christ lost all hope and sank into deep despair.

It must be frustrating to God to watch His people fall into deep ruts of depression. His people need to learn they can trust Him and believe in Him.

What we see here is this:

GOD'S PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW THE WORD OF GOD AND BELIEVE THE WORD AND PROMISES OF GOD BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT KEEPS THEM FROM DEPRESSION AND FOOLISH THINKING.

What we have in this section is a series of reactions to resurrection truth. These are the true, initial reactions to the reality that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. **These reactions are not the reactions of the lost world. These are the reactions of those closest to Jesus Christ.**

In this passage there are three reactions we want to see:

REACTION #1 – The reaction of the Apostles. **24:11**

We would logically think that news of Christ's resurrection would have been glorious to these Apostles. If any group should have rejoiced that Jesus was risen from the dead, it should have been the handpicked Apostles of Jesus Christ. But they didn't believe it.

This is mind-boggling for two reasons:

- 1) Jesus told them on multiple occasions that He would be killed and rise again (Luke 9:22; 18:31-34).
- 2) Jesus had raised at least 3 people from the dead and they saw it:
 - A. Jesus raised the widow's dead son on way to bury him (Luke 7:11-17).
 - B. Jesus raised Jairus' dead daughter in front of Peter, James and John (Luke 8:49-56).
 - C. Jesus raised a dead Lazarus for all to see (John 11:38-44).

When the women returned from the tomb and told the Apostles everything that happened and that Jesus had risen from the dead, the Apostles responded in two ways:

Response #1 - They thought the women had mental problems. **24:11a**

The word "nonsense" is one that means these Apostles thought these women had silly and nonsensical minds (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 268). They literally thought these women were insane and out of their minds.

Response #2 - They did not believe them. **24:11b**

The word “not believe” is the word atheist. When it came to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, at this point the Apostles were atheists. The imperfect tense of the verb means they continually refused to believe that Christ had risen from the dead and they persisted in their unbelief. Even after the women told them all they saw, they would not believe them.

I read a story about a person who needed a brain transplant. The doctor told the person that brains were very expensive. The patient said well how expensive are the brains. The doctor said a male brain will cost \$500,000 and a female brain will cost \$200,000. Well the patient said why is the male brain so much more expensive than the female brain? The doctor said because the female brain is used and we have to mark it down and cannot offer it as new.

It was the women who were sound of mind here and the men weren't.

REACTION #2 – The reaction of Peter. **24:12**

When Peter listened to the women, he got up and ran to the tomb. In fact, we know from John 20:2-4, that Peter and John both were running and John outran Peter.

What this appears to be here is a disciple who is beginning to sense the truth. However, when he got to the tomb and examined it, “he marveled” and then turned around and went back to his home, where the others were.

That word “marvel” means that Peter did think this was quite an unusual thing. He did wonder about this, but at this point he did not believe (*Ibid.*, p. 203). Apparently this was the moment when John believed (John 20:8), but not Peter.

So Peter had actually been to the tomb and seen the empty tomb and still did not believe Jesus had risen from the dead.

REACTION #3 – The reaction of the two disciples. **24:13-25**

Mark mentions this episode, but it is Luke who writes this in great detail. There were two disciples of Jesus Christ who were closely affiliated with the Apostles who were walking home. There are a series of observations we may make about them:

Observation #1 - The destination of the disciples. **24:13**

These two disciples were walking to their home in Emmaus “that very day.” That day was the very day of the resurrection. They had been to the empty tomb (24:24) and were walking home. Emmaus was located NW of Jerusalem. Some text read that it was about 60 stadia which was about 600 feet, which means that it was about a seven mile walk.

Just a couple of years ago, archeologists believe they have discovered where this city was located and it was almost exactly seven miles from Jerusalem.

Observation #2 - The conversation between the disciples. **24:14-15a**

As the disciples were travelling, they were discussing all of the events that had occurred. They were obviously talking about the trials, crucifixion and reports of a resurrection.

They were discussing all of the things that had happened concerning Jesus Christ. They did not at this point believe Jesus had risen from the dead. They didn't know what to believe. But they were talking things over.

Observation #3 - The visitation of Jesus to the disciples. **24:15b**

While the disciples were walking, they were discussing the things that had happened to Jesus Christ. At that very moment Jesus Himself approached them and began traveling with them. This was not unusual. Strangers often walked along together. In a seven mile walk at 20 minutes per mile, it would be about a 2-2 ½ hour walk. That is a lot of time for a lot of conversation.

Observation #4 - The incomprehension of the disciples. **24:16**

As they walked along, the disciples were not able to recognize Jesus Christ because God prevented them from seeing who He was. This is quite remarkable for He has the nail prints in His hands and feet and yet He doesn't let them see who He is. This would also cause us to conclude that the nail prints were not swollen or red or infected so that they would draw attention to them.

This is a critical Biblical truth. The ability to see and comprehend truth from the Bible is a grant and gift from God. Do not ever take that for granted. God can blind eyes from seeing truth and He can open eyes to see truth. Growing in grace and knowledge is a gift from God.

Observation #5 - The depression of the disciples. **24:17**

Jesus decided to enter the conversation and He asked them what they were discussing and they stopped and looked sad. So as Trent Butler observed, their initial response to the question did not come from their mouths, but their faces (*Ibid.*, p. 416).

Jesus' question brought them to a complete stop. The question Jesus asked them caused them to become very sad. The word means they became very depressed and gloomy. This proves they did not believe Jesus had risen from the dead even though they had actually seen the empty tomb.

Observation #6 - The communication between the disciples and Jesus. **24:18-24**

One of the disciples whose name was Cleopas, who apparently was married to a very faithful wife named Mary (John 19:25), seems to have been somewhat irritated by the question. He said in **verse 18** you must be the only person in this area who is ignorant and unaware of what has happened. The reality is Jesus is the only Person who knows exactly what happened not only physically, but theologically.

In **verse 19**, Jesus decided to go along with them and said what are the things to which you are referring.

They said we are talking about things that happened to:

- 1) Jesus the Nazarene. **24:19a**
- 2) He was a mighty prophet in deeds and word in the sight of God and all the people. **24:19b**
- 3) He was delivered to the chief priests and rulers who killed Him by crucifixion. **24:20**
They clearly put the blame on the Jewish religious leaders.
- 4) We had hoped that He would be the One who would redeem Israel. **24:21a**
- 5) He has been dead for three days. **24:21b**
- 6) Some women went to the tomb this morning and the body was gone. **24:22-23a**
- 7) The women told us that they had seen angels who told them Jesus was alive. **24:23b**
- 8) Some of the women went with us back to the tomb but did not see Him. **24:24**

Their belief at this point was they had seen the tomb empty, but there was no proof or evidence of a risen Jesus.

Observation #7 - The correction of Jesus to the disciples. **24:25-27**

Jesus responded to these men by saying, “you are foolish in your mind and unbelieving in your heart.” A fool in Scripture is one who does not believe and apply God’s written word.

Jesus tells the truth and does not flatter them. **Jesus says not only do you have a mental problem in the way you think, but you have a heart problem in the way you believe.**

Jesus Christ classifies people who are not quick to believe His word as foolish and unbelieving.

What Jesus did to straighten out their defective mind and unbelieving heart was to expound the word of God. Beginning with Moses and going through all the prophets, He explained all things that pertained to Him in all of Scripture (**v. 27**).

As near as I can determine, one of Jesus’ favorite books of Moses, because He quoted it more than any other, is Deuteronomy. So He probably brought out many things from that book.

The word “explain” means to carefully expound and interpret. It carries with it the idea of putting things in language they can understand (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 115).

What an exposition this would be. You have the Living Word expounding the written word. **What Jesus demonstrates here is that the solution to fickle faith and unbelieving hearts is a careful exposition of Scripture.**

Observation #8 - The invitation of the disciples to Jesus. **24:28-30**

As they were getting near Emmaus, Jesus pretended that He was going on further. Emmaus sits up on a hill and Jesus pretended to just keep walking on the road and not heading up the hill.

So the disciples urged Him to stay with them. Their reasoning was it is getting near night and the day is almost gone. Alfred Plummer believes that had not these disciples asked Him to stay, He would have gone elsewhere. But they had a desire to know more of the Scriptures.

Jesus sat down at the table with them and took the bread and blessed it and immediately, their eyes were open and they could see Jesus.

Observation #9 - The revelation of Jesus to the disciples. **24:31**

God opened their eyes and minds so they could see who He was. God must do this work for people to come to terms with Jesus Christ. This is not manipulated by humans.

Observation #10 - The realization of the disciples. **24:32**

As soon as Jesus vanished they said when the word of God was accurately taught, our hearts were burning.

When the word of God is accurately taught, it gets the heart burning again. This is what generates a rekindling of spirituality.

This is why wise people will go to a church where the word of God is carefully taught. It is the word of God that fans the flame of one's spirituality.

Observation #11 - The immediate relocation of the disciples. **24:33**

These two disciples immediately get up and get going back to Jerusalem. They got up and walked another seven miles back. Now it is dark and yet they go. Another two plus hours back. But they marched right back to Jerusalem to where the eleven were.

Observation #12 - The declaration to the Apostles. **24:34-35**

They went back and said the Lord has really risen and they told them what had happened.

What was it that brought stability and faith? Jesus giving them an exposition of the word of God.