

Message #126

Luke 24:36-43

How would you like to be the President of the United States? Forget your ego in this. Forget what you think you could do; keep in mind what your life will be like:

- 1) Everywhere you go, you will meet people who think they can do your job better than you.
- 2) Every time you give a speech, no matter how much you have prepared or how valid your argumentation and evidence, you will be criticized and demeaned the moment it's over.
- 3) Everything you do will be carefully scrutinized. Every move you make and every thing you say will be will be challenged and hated by someone.
- 4) Everywhere you go you will have to be carefully guarded because many will want you dead.
- 5) Every day you will be forced to make very difficult decisions and no matter what the decision you know half of the people will hate it and hate you.

What a great job. Would you want that job?

Well there was a job much worse than that and that was the job that Jesus Christ had to do. Of all of the assignments one could have, Jesus Christ had the most depressing and most dangerous of all. His assignment got Him killed. In fact, His assignment was to let Himself get killed.

When Christ was here on earth you would expect the lost, unbelieving world to make things as miserable for Him as possible. **But you would not expect the same kind of treatment from your own disciples.**

His disciples had been with Christ, traveled with Christ, seen Christ and listened to Christ. They should have been the most loyal, faithful, trustworthy, dependable, reliable soldiers on the face of this earth. But when Jesus Christ came back from the dead, after His resurrection that is not what He found. He found a bunch of troubled, miserable disciples who did not even know what to believe when He is with them in Person.

We must wonder why in the world Christ bothered with these disciples. Why did He even bother putting up with this nonsense? Why didn't He just go back up into heaven and let these unbelieving disciples wallow in their ignorance and pity? What we see here is this:

JESUS CHRIST PUT UP WITH THE UNBELIEF OF HIS OWN DISCIPLES BECAUSE HE KNEW EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD GET STRAIGHTENED OUT IN THEIR FAITH AND BECOME DYNAMIC WITNESSES FOR HIM AND ACCOMPLISH POWERFUL THINGS FOR HIM.

This text gives us a glimpse as to how bizarre these disciples had become. Christ had to spend time proving He was not a spirit or a ghost to His own disciples. This is unreal. Jesus Christ has to spend time proving to His own close disciples that He is real.

Now there are three main actions that occur here:

ACTION #1 – Jesus Christ reappears to His disciples. **24:36**

At this point in time Jesus has already appeared to Mary (John 10:11-18); Simon Peter (Luke 24:34); and the two disciples who were on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31). **So when Jesus shows up here, He has already appeared to at least four people who are in the room.** They have already seen Him. The two from Emmaus had gone back to Jerusalem and they were there.

There are two parts to the reappearance of Jesus Christ:

Part #1 - Jesus reappears with a miracle. **24:36a**

Christ's entrance into the middle of this room was a major miracle. The doors were shut tight because these disciples were afraid (John 20:19, 26). The only way for the average human to get into this room would be to knock on the door and have someone open the door and let you in or bash the door until it opens.

Jesus just shows up in the room and “stood in their midst.” What that means is that He passes through the door and passes through them and stands in the middle. He did the same kind of thing years before in Nazareth (Luke 4:30).

This is an amazing miracle. Just the fact that He appears in the room in the midst of these disciples demonstrates great supernatural power.

Now there are many people who say, “If I could just see some powerful miracle, I would believe.” Well look at this. These were people who actually physically knew Jesus Christ and, when He did appear, they did not believe. Frankly neither would any person today.

Part #2 - Jesus reappears with a grace message. **24:36b**

When Jesus appeared, the first thing He said, according to both Luke and John (20:19) was “peace to you” (eirhnh umin).

Now these are very critical words for these disciples to hear. When you think about this, it is an amazing grace message. He is telling this group that He is at peace with them:

- 1) Nearly all of them had abandoned Him - Mark 14:50
- 2) One from this group had denied Him - Mark 14:66-72
- 3) These disciples refused to believe He was alive - Mark 16:11, 13
- 4) These disciples were hard-hearted to the truth of God - Mark 16:14
- 5) These disciples were cowards, locked in a room because they were so afraid - John 20:19
- 6) These disciples were ignorant of God's word they had been taught - Luke 24:44

Frankly, these disciples were a disastrous mess. The message Jesus could have brought to them would have been one of rebuke and one of punishment, not one of peace. But as confused and as idiotic as these disciples were, He brought them a gracious message of peace.

What this shows us is that even when you have made a mess of things and botched it, we may still be at peace with God.

It is a good thing that works are not the issue for salvation. For if that would have been the issue, these disciples would have never made it. No one in the room would be saved. But to bring it possible for there to be peace between God and sinful man was the very reason why Jesus was born (Luke 2:14). It is His shed blood that gives us peace with God (Eph. 2:13-17).

ACTION #2 – Jesus’ disciples respond to Christ’s appearance. **24:37**

Wouldn’t you logically think that when these disciples saw Jesus Christ, who is telling them they are at peace with Him, they would start praising Him?

That is not how they responded. They responded six ways:

(Response #1) - They were startled. **24:37a** - great emotional fear, totally terrified.

(Response #2) - They were frightened. **24:37b** - so afraid they want to run.

(Response #3) - They were mystical. **24:37c** - instead of rational thinking they think this is some ghost or spirit.

(Response #4) - They were troubled. **24:38a** - minds were mentally disturbed and perplexed.

(Response #5) - They were doubting. **24:38b** - filled with doubts they were inwardly questioning this.

(Response #6) - They were unbelieving. **24:41a** - the word means they had no faith at all

They have Jesus Christ standing with them talking to them and this was their response.

These were the responses of the team chosen by Jesus Christ to represent Him. They had lived with Christ and listened to Christ and were commissioned by Jesus Christ and were supposedly devoted to Jesus Christ and this is how they responded.

Jesus had told them on multiple occasions that He would be killed and would rise again from the dead. But when He actually did do that, instead of them rejoicing, they think He is a ghost.

ACTION #3 – Jesus Christ reacts to His disciples. **24:38-43**

Jesus Christ had fulfilled everything He said He would. Nobody believes Him. Probably most of us would have said, “What’s the use; let’s just get out of here.”

Jesus reacts two ways:

Reaction #1 - He questions their thinking. **24:38**

Basically He says, what is wrong with you guys. Why are you troubled in your brains and doubt in your hearts? Jesus sees exactly what is happening in their minds and hearts.

Reaction #2 - He disproves their thinking. **24:39-43**

This is just pathetic. Jesus Christ has to prove He is alive. He is standing in the middle of these guys talking to them and He has to prove to them He is not some Spirit being. He actually challenges their physical senses:

(Challenge #1) - He challenges their sense of sight. **24:39a**

He tells His disciples to “see” His hands and feet. That is precisely where the nails had been driven. Christ is saying look here at My hands and feet and see the puncture wounds. I am the same Person who was hung on that cross.

The sight of the scars in the hands and feet of Jesus Christ will be a wonderful friend for those who have trusted Him. But the sight of the scars in the hands and feet of Jesus Christ will be a damning enemy for those who have rejected Him.

Those scars bring great joy to one who has believed on Jesus Christ because they prove we are at peace with God.

(Challenge #2) - He challenges their sense of touch. **24:39b-40**

Jesus invites these disciples to touch His hands and feet. He had flesh and bones. No spirit being has that. Our new bodies will be comprised something like our old bodies, but they will not be subject to the limitations.

The Apostle John never forgot this moment. In fact, some 60 years later he opened up a letter with the same verb “touch” (I John 1:1).

Now wouldn't you think that this would be enough evidence? But notice their responses in **verse 41** - lack of faith; lack of joy and totally amazed.

They have Jesus Christ standing Personally before them in the flesh, showing them His scars and they still don't believe Him and they still are not rejoicing.

(Challenge #3) - He challenges their reason. **24:41-43**

The final evidence that Jesus presents to these guys to prove He is not a ghost is to request something to eat.

No spirit being would ask for something to eat. He was given a piece of broiled fish and He took it and ate it. Much to the chagrin of vegetarians, Jesus Christ ate meat that had been caught by fishing in the sea.

I once read an article written by some student in Seminary who was writing against hunting and eating meat. I thought you should read this text. Jesus not only supports fishing, He eats the fish.

Now I don't think Jesus is specifically hungry here. He is just trying to show these disciples that it is really Him. He has to prove it is Him to His own disciples.

After all He went through, this is another slap in His face. But in amazing grace, He puts up with them and sits down and eats with them and fellowships with them.

That same amazing grace is available to us. Perhaps you are like these disciples. You are hard-hearted and hard-headed. You lack faith. You are troubled by all kinds of things.

Know this; you may have fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. Jesus will fellowship with you if you will turn your life over to Him. No matter how unbelieving you may have been, He will forgive you and fellowship with you if you will believe in Him.