

Scripture Reading: Luke 24:36-53

“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. 44 Then [Jesus] said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. 46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things. 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." 50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.”

"The Words of Jesus Are Fulfilled"

We come this week to our final message from the Gospel of Luke, but our journey is not yet over. Luke is going to continue his orderly account for his friend Theophilus in the Book of Acts!

- The two flow seamlessly together around the account of our Lord’s ascent to His Father’s throne, and it is Luke who gives us most of the details of this event

The ascension of Jesus will be our focus of our 1st message in the Book of Acts & so this morning we ponder final days of Jesus on this earth & what he shares with His disciples. As I mentioned briefly last week, Jesus is giving these gathered men & woman three important things that they as His Body will need to carry His Kingdom to ALL the world:

- Evidence: Instruction: Power
- All things that we still need today
- All things given to us week after week as we obey God’s commands to gather as the people of God for Covenant Renewal Worship!

-- Last week we considered the evidence that has been given for the resurrection of Jesus and the power that it brings to His Church.

-- This week we will consider how Jesus instructed His followers

-- And in a few weeks we will see Jesus sending the Holy Spirit!

Let me just quickly say a word about some unnecessary divisions that we often see in the church as people respond to what has been given...

- Some focus on the fact that we are called to believe the evidence that is given and to share this evidence with an unbelieving world, as we should.
- Some rightly insist that no one can believe the evidence unless their heart is regenerated so we must confront their wicked presuppositions as we present the Good News, which we should!
- Others say away with all these academic discussions, let the Spirit of God be poured out and thus we see a focus on people being slain in the Spirit or speaking in tongues!

Well I am here to tell you that if you read the Bible, you will find a call to believe the evidence, a call to right thinking and lots about miracles!

We must remember this balance and be ready always to give an answer for our faith whether it is evidence, presuppositions or miraculous living!

So this morning we are going to quickly review the final days of Jesus on the earth...

- What He did and how He once again turned His followers back to the Scriptures, giving them the right understanding of all that was happening and what their calling would be in the Kingdom.

Once again I have included in the order of worship, the parallel accounts given by the four Gospel writers so we can see the details of how Jesus, as the resurrected Savior, spent his days before His ascension. It is good to occasionally review these events as presented in the Gospel accounts, because they cover forty days and sometimes we run things together... Like thinking that Jesus gave the Great Commission on the Mount of Olives before His ascension.

- We are not told everything that Jesus did for these forty days, but here is what we do know:

-- Jesus met with the disciples in the evening of the first Easter with accounts given by Mark, Luke and John.

-- John alone tells us of the meeting that Jesus has with the same disciples a week later with the addition of Thomas who missed the first week.

-- John also tells of the breakfast meeting at the Sea of Tiberius

-- Matthew gives the details of the great commission

-- And both Mark and Luke make mention of the ascension with Luke providing the most detail

Once again our skeptics have a field day with these portions of the Gospel accounts claiming they have found MORE unsolvable contradictions in the Scriptures:

In Matthew's account, Jesus instructed the women to tell the disciples that "He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold I have told you." Mark has Jesus giving the same instruction to the women.

Now here in Luke we read in verse 49 "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

- Contradiction they cry: The Bible is FULL of contradictions!

Well it is if you make up your mind that it does and don't consider how the various accounts work together!

Jesus had given His disciples many instructions, including ALL the details of how He was to suffer, die, be buried and rise from the dead... They had not listened very well and all Jesus was telling the women was to remind them of some of these instructions, including the fact that Jesus was going to return to Galilee after His resurrection!

- It was an important trip indeed because Matthew tells us this is where Jesus gave the Great Commission: “Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them...”

And it was there that He proclaimed those words we repeat often here at Church of the King... Words which we practiced this morning with our newest covenant child!

The Sea of Tiberius, or as it is often called the Sea of Galilee, is obviously not in the City of Jerusalem, so after the first two meetings with His followers, they did follow His instructions and returned to Galilee. At some point they all returned to Jerusalem which would not have been unusual with the approach of the Day of Pentecost.

- It was at that time that “{Jesus} led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.”

I believe that what we are going to focus on this morning from Luke’s Gospel took place in various ways throughout these forty days...

- “And [Jesus] opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”
- A lesson that the Disciples had to learn and a lesson that we must continue to learn today!

Jesus now reminds them of what he often taught them: “all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”

Jesus may have reminded the disciples how he answered the trick question the Sadducees had asked about the resurrection...

Matthew 22:29 “Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.”

- Choosing between knowledge and experience is a false dichotomy that must be rejected by those who name the name of Jesus!
- We are to know BOTH the Scriptures and the power of God!

Jesus may have reminded the disciples how He answered those who came to arrest him in the Garden:

Mark 14:48 “Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”

And I am sure that many times Jesus reviewed the encounter with the religious leaders of the day who had rejected the chief cornerstone:

John 5: 37 “And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. 38 But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.

39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.”

The religious leaders had rejected ALL that Jesus was now giving His followers...

- **They had seen the power of God in the miracles that Jesus did**
- **They had heard the teaching of Jesus where He showed them over and over again from the Scriptures that He was the Messiah**
- **They had seen many prophecies fulfilled as evidence that Jesus was the Messiah: They were even given eyewitnesses who came to them with the news of the resurrection!**

Jesus confronted even these hard-hearted leaders with evidence, knowledge, and power . This is why we must learn to keep the balance I mentioned earlier and not play one of these against the other!

- **With that said, I would suggest that the Church in America needs to have Jesus ‘open our understanding that we might comprehend the Scriptures!’”**

Today we see a LOT of time spent on the evidence or proofs and on power with the whole Charismatic movement. We are in danger of being where the Pharisees and Sadducees were at:

- **Knowing their history inside and out and talking about the power of God to save His people from the Romans armies, but NOT knowing Jesus!**

It is not that these religious leaders had no knowledge, nor that the American church has no knowledge...

- **It is rather that they failed to see that the Scriptures, only and always, teach us about JESUS.**
- **It is something we are in danger of repeating today!**

This is what Jesus taught His disciples during His final days with them and what He wants to teach us today!

Jesus began with the two walking to Emmaus: Luke 24: 25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

Now He has almost all of His followers gathered in the evening and He again tells them that:

“ALL things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”

We will not have time this morning to look at all the examples we could find, but rest assured this is something we will see over and over again in the Book of Acts.

We must learn to see Jesus EVERYWHERE in the Scriptures!

- **We must learn to see Jesus in creation and in the judgment of Noah’s flood.**
- **We must learn to see Jesus in the call of Abraham & the deliverance of God’s people from Egypt.**
- **We must see Jesus in the Law and all of its regulations**
- **We must learn to see Jesus in the Judges, Kings and Prophets of Israel.**
- **We must learn to see Jesus in the Tabernacle and Temple, as well as ALL the sacrifices of the Old Testament.**
- **We must learn to see Jesus in the stories of Job and Ester, in the wisdom of the Psalms & Proverbs**

IF we do not learn these lessons well, then all that we can learn from the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament will be of NO more help to us than it was for the religious leaders of that day to have Jesus Himself walking and teaching among them!

- **They did NOT see Jesus in the Old Testament so they could not see Jesus when He was right in front of them!**

Sadly, too many American Christians today see the Old Testament as kind of scary and almost indefensible?

- **God looks mean back there and what if someone asked me to explain that verse about not mixing cotton and wool!**

This is why we see Bible distribution campaigns that just pass out the New Testament or the Gospel of John... Now don't get me wrong, these are good things that can bear much fruit for the Kingdom... A single verse of God's Word has the power to save souls!

The concern comes when we don't move past the milk as Jesus is now instructing His disciples to do... When we do give the new Christian a complete Bible he or she will find the 'words of Christ' printed in red! Now we may not ask it very often, but a logical question is, "if that is what Jesus said, then who said all the rest of what we find in the Bible?" We are certainly left with the impression that it is not as important!

So maybe the kids can help us out here...

- **We know that Jesus said those things that are in red right?**
- **These are things He said while walking the earth with His disciples**
- **BUT we also know that Jesus was not just a man right?**
- **He is the Son of God the 2nd Person of the Trinity... Jesus is God**
- **And who wrote the Bible?**

- **So actually if the 'words of Jesus' are supposed to be in Red, then the whole Bible should be red, right?**

Our desire and prayer for our lives must be that Jesus would do for us what He did for His followers during those forty days...

- **Open our understanding that we might comprehend the Scriptures: That we might see Jesus everywhere!**
- **This is not a once in a life-time awakening but something we trust Jesus to do through the Holy Spirit for all of our lives.**

It is a desire that we must instill in our young covenant children...

- **This morning we gave little Pauline a new name, a new name that brings life instead of death**
- **Her parents have covenanted to raise her in the fear and admonition of the Lord and we have agreed to be their helpers as God's people.**
- **As little Pauline grows we will show her the evidences that Jesus has left us to believe... That He was crucified, dead and buried and that on the third day He rose from the dead.**
- **She will be instructed to know the Scriptures and to know Jesus through them as her Savior who came to forgive her sins and make her a part of His Church**

- Lord willing she will grow to see God’s power in her life, His power in the life of her family and His power in the life of His Church as we all walk obediently with our God here at Church of the King.

Last week we reviewed the challenge given to parents in Deuteronomy chapter six to faithfully raise their covenant children: A challenge that Birken & Leah now face!

It is the same thing that the Apostle Paul calls us to in the Book of Colossians, where he says:

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”

- But in chapter two Paul quickly warns us that Satan and the world have other plans for us and for our little ones.

Jesus offers, evidence, instruction and power so we may know life:

- Our enemies will want to show little Pauline the false evidence of their world view, where they make evolution the standard by which ALL science must be judged.
- They will try to instruct her in the ways of men teaching her to believe in herself and that man can solve any problem without God
- They will tell her of miracles, like the Big Bang that produced all life or how criminals can be rehabilitated rather than punished all without Jesus!

In contrast, the Apostle Paul says in verse 6, “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

- This must be our prayer and our goal for ALL of our covenant children that God has blessed us with, as well as ourselves!
- We are NOT to allow Satan, the world, or even our own flesh to distract us from so great a salvation!
- AND Paul says we must be constantly on our guard for them and for ourselves...

8 “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”

- The Humanist Manifesto of the last century declared that man no longer needed God, but nothing could be further from the truth.
- It is Jesus who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings...

9 “For in Him [Jesus] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

- As members of the Body of Christ we are complete in Him!

11 “In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

After hearing all the instructions that Jesus gave from the Old Testament, Peter will declare on the Day of Pentecost that the promise of salvation is unto us and to our children and to all those who God will call...

The Great Salvation that Luke has begun to present in this Gospel...

- **Jesus has come to save His people from their sins,**
- **Jesus has placed His name upon us as members of His own body the Church,**
- **And Jesus will reign through His Church until all the nations have been made His footstool...**

Jesus told His disciples that day, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

With the evidence in hand, having been instructed by Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit, these disciples began to obey the Great Commission in Jerusalem

Luke will continue his orderly account in the Book of Acts where we will see the Kingdom taken to Judea, Samaria and to the end of the earth.

This conquest of the world by Jesus continues today, and it will be carried out by those who name the name of Jesus!

- **Those who have believed the evidence...**
- **Those who have been instructed by Jesus**
- **Those who are empowered by the Holy Spirit!**

Communion Meditation: Luke 24:29-32

"29 But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. 30 Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. 32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"