

FROM OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION TO HIS ASCENSION

TEXT: LUKE 24:13-53

INTRODUCTION:

1. The beautiful story of the two disciples on the Emmaus road is found only in the Gospel of Luke (24:13-35). One of them was named Cleopas (24:18).
2. Emmaus was a village about eight miles from Jerusalem.
3. W.H. Griffith Thomas said the value of the story is evidential (proof of our Lord's resurrection), preparatory (our Lord was preparing His disciples for His absence; soon He would ascend into heaven – 24:51), and symbolic (“for when two talk together with Christ as their theme, He draws near”).
4. Our Lord chose to remain unrecognized. “But their eyes were holden (“restrained”) that they should not know him” (24:16).
5. “What manner of communications?” (24:17) means, “What is it that you are talking about?”
6. To them, Jesus of Nazareth “was a prophet mighty in deed” (24:19). But at this time, they did not acknowledge that He was the Messiah. Apparently, they were confused and distracted. They were in doubt about everything (24:20-24).
7. Our Lord rebuked them for their unbelief (24:25, 26).
8. “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets (the Old Testament), he expounded...” (24:27). Cf. verse 32 – “he opened to us the scriptures.”
9. “But they constrained him” (24:29). They urged our Lord to stay with them. They did not yet perceive that it was Jesus, but they wanted to continue to talk with Him.
10. Albert Barnes said, “Christians are delighted with communion with the Saviour. They seek it as the chief object of their desire, and they find their chief pleasure in fellowship with him. The two disciples felt it a privilege to entertain the stranger, as they supposed, who had so charmed them with his discourse.”
11. Verse 31 says, “Their eyes were opened...” (cf. verse 16). The obscurity was removed, and they realized their guest was the Messiah. Their doubts were gone, and they saw clearly that he was the Lord and that He had risen from the dead.
12. “And He vanished out of their sight” (24:31b). The two disciples returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven apostles together (24:32-35).
13. “And how he was known of them in breaking of bread” (24:35; cf. verse 30). Luke 22:19 says, “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it,

and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”

14. So, what we have here is: First, the Scriptures have been opened (24:27, 32); then the disciples’ eyes were opened (24:31); and then their lips were opened (24:34, 35). Later, “opened He their understanding” (24:45).
15. W.H. Griffith Thomas said, “Christ is always journeying with us, sympathizing with us, expounding the Scriptures to us, and revealing Himself to us” (*Outline Studies in Luke*).
16. There were forty days between the resurrection and the ascension.
17. My message tonight is entitled, “From our Lord’s Resurrection to His Ascension (24:6, 51). My outline is:
 1. CHRIST APPEARED
 2. CHRIST COMMISSIONED
 3. CHRIST ASCENDED

I. CHRIST APPEARED (24:36-40)

1. The disciples were alarmed and fearful. Our Lord said, “Peace be unto you” (24:36).
2. John 20:19 says, “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.”
3. In addition to being afraid of the Jews, the disciples “were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit” (24:37).
4. Jesus said to them, “Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts (doubts) arise in your hearts?”
5. “Behold my hands and my feet...” (24:39, 40). Our Lord proceeded to give them evidence that he was not a spirit or a ghost.
6. He showed them His wounds to prove to them that He was the same person that had been crucified. In John 20:27, our Lord said to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.”
7. Our Lord told them to handle Him and see Him. He ate with them, proving He was not a spirit (24:41-43). Albert Barnes said, “He appealed to their senses, and performed acts which a disembodied spirit could not do.”

8. “These are the words...” (24:44), that is, the words predicting His death and resurrection (cf. 9:22; 18:31-34).
9. “Opened He their understanding...” (24:45). Our Lord enabled them fully to comprehend the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies which foretold His death and resurrection.
10. The apostles had seen our Lord die, and now they saw Him risen. Now they no longer doubted that he was the Messiah.

II. OUR LORD COMMISSIONED (24:46-49)

1. The Great Commission is recorded in all four of the Gospels and in Acts 1:8.
2. Unfortunately, to many Christians it is “the great omission.” Among the important doctrinal truths taught in these verses are these:
 - The Old Testament Scriptures speak of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (24:44).
 - To understand Bible doctrine, you have to ask the Lord to open up your understanding (24:45).
 - The essential truths concerning the Lord Jesus Christ center on His atoning death and resurrection from the dead (24:46).
 - Repentance and remission of sins should be preached (24:47).
 - Repentance and remission of sins should be preached "in His name" (24:47). “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).
 - “Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name “among all nations” (24:47).
 - The power for this great work is imparted by the Holy Spirit (24:49; cf. Acts 1:8).
 - The ascension of our Lord into heaven (24:50, 51).
 - The disciples “worshipped Him” (24:52). That is why we are gathered here this Lord’s Day – we are "worshipping Him."
3. There are “Three Great Necessities” in our text:
 1. The necessity laid upon the Saviour – “To suffer, and to rise from the dead” (24:46).
 2. The necessity laid upon the sinner – to repent (24:47).

3. The necessity laid upon the soulwinner – “And ye are *witnesses*...” (24:48; cf. Acts 1:8).
 1. “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached...” Repentance means to turn around. It means a change of mind, which leads to a change in direction.
 2. It includes sorrow for sin and the forsaking of it. It was necessary that repentance should be preached among all nations, for all men are sinners.
 3. The apostle Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, “God... commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).
 4. “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (24:47). The apostles began their soulwinning in Jerusalem, and then in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and then unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).
 5. If you are saved, then you are a “witness” (Luke 24:48). What is a “witness”? A witness is somebody who sincerely tells what he has seen and what he has heard. In Acts 4:20, Peter and John said, “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”
 6. Warren Wiersbe said, “As Christians, we are not judges or prosecuting attorneys sent to condemn the world. We are witnesses who point to Jesus Christ and tell lost sinners how to be saved.”
 7. In addition to the Gospel of Luke, Luke also wrote the book of Acts. The word “witness” is used one way or another 29 times in the book of Acts. The book of Acts is all about witnessing, planting churches, and sending out missionaries.
 8. This is the Great Commission. Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15, 16).
 9. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

10. "The promise of my Father" was that they would be empowered by the power of the indwelling Holy Ghost.
11. Many Christians are not witnessing. One of the reasons is that they do not appropriate the power of God that is available to them. Our Lord said that we would "be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49; cf. Acts 1:8).
12. This power was demonstrated on the day of Pentecost. And after Pentecost as well. Acts 4:33 says, "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."
13. We can only be effective witnesses by the power of the Holy Spirit. Witnessing is not something we do for the Lord. It is something He does through us.
14. The only qualification for being an effective witness is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Are you walking in the Spirit? Are you being led by the Holy Spirit?
15. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (24:49).

III. CHRIST ASCENDED (24:50-53)

1. "And He led them out as far as to Bethany" (24:50). Bethany is on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives, on the road to Jericho.
2. Martha and Mary, and their brother Lazarus, lived in Bethany, and our Saviour often stayed there. It was from Bethany that our Lord ascended up to heaven.
3. "And He lifted up His hands, and blessed them...while he blessed them" (24:50, 51). The *Scofield Study Bible* says, "The attitude of our Lord here characterizes this age. It is one of grace; an ascended Lord is blessing a believing people with spiritual blessings."
 1. Acts 1:9 says, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."
 2. Luke 24:51 says, "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

3. The Gospel of Luke ends with our Lord's disciples worshipping and continually praising God (24:52, 53).
4. "And they worshipped him" (24:52). Only God is to be worshipped. Therefore, Jesus is God. Jesus said, "For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10).
5. Albert Barnes says, "That they offered this worship to an absent Saviour. It was after he left them and had vanished out of their sight. It was therefore an act of religion, and was the first religious homage that was paid to Jesus after he had left the world. Second, if they worshipped an absent Saviour--a Saviour unseen by the bodily eye, it is right for us to do it. It was an example which we may and should follow. And third: If worship may be rendered to Jesus, he is divine."

CONCLUSION:

1. This is my last message from the Gospel of Luke.
2. The Holy Spirit is referred to in Luke 24:49 – "until ye be endued (clothed) with power from on high."
3. The first mention of the Holy Spirit in Luke is in Luke 1:15 where it says that John the Baptist "shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."
4. The angel Gabriel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).
5. John the Baptist's parents were filled with the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:41 says, "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost."
6. Luke 1:67 says that John's "father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost."
7. Luke tells how John the Baptist claimed to be the forerunner of one mightier than himself,

who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (3:16).

8. Luke 3:22 says, “And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove” upon Christ.
9. Luke 4:1 says, “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”
10. Luke 4:14 says, “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.”
11. In their synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus said (quoting Isaiah 61:1), “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...”
12. In Luke 11:13, our Lord said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”
13. This refers to the fullness and the power of the Holy Spirit – “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (24:49).
14. Referring to our Lord’s words in Luke 11:13, Charles Haddon Spurgeon said, “‘If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?’ You see, there is a distinct promise to the children of God, that their heavenly Father will give them the Holy Spirit if they ask for His power; and that promise is made to be exceedingly strong by the instances joined to it. But he says, ‘How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?’ He makes it a stronger case than that of an ordinary parent. The Lord must give us the Spirit when we ask Him, for He has herein bound Himself by no ordinary pledge. He has used a simile which would bring dishonour on His own name, and that of the very grossest kind, if He did not give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Oh, then, let us ask Him at once, with all of our hearts.”

15. “Oh, then, let us ask Him at once, with all of our hearts.”