

FPFWC Christian Development



The Birth of the Church

April 2023

Spring Quarter

April 8, 2023

Lesson #2 – Disciples Believe the Resurrection

SCRIPTURE TEXT – Luke 24:13-27, 30-31

ICE BREAKER –

1. What do you think prevents people from believing in Jesus?
2. What can you do in the future to prevent yourself from failing to recognize God's voice?

Key Verse: “Their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight”. —Luke 24:31

LESSON BACKGROUND

Today's Scripture follows after the women discovered the empty tomb (Luke 24:1–8; see lesson 5). Two apostles wanted to see the empty tomb for themselves (24:12; compare John 20:3–10).

Many first-century Jews believed in the bodily resurrection of the righteous dead. This doctrine is rooted in certain Old Testament prophetic texts (see Daniel 12:1–3, 13; etc.). Jewish texts from the period between the Old and New Testaments developed this doctrine further (see the nonbiblical 2 Maccabees 7:13–14; 12:43; etc.). Not all Jews, however, believed in the resurrection (see Acts 23:8). Jesus' followers, though skeptical of the empty tomb, would not have entirely denied the possibility.

LESSON COMMENTARY

The account of the appearance of the risen Jesus to the two on the road to Emmaus is unique to Luke's gospel.

24:13–14. The **two** discussing **all these things** are identified only as being **of them** (24:13a) that is, of the number of the disciples (not of the Eleven but of **the rest** 24:9c). They were on **that very day** (24:13b), that is, the day of the resurrection, traveling to Emmaus, a village **about seven miles [west] from Jerusalem** (24:13c). That distance might take them half a day to travel and afforded them several hours of conversation on the way. They were probably headed home (cf. Bock, *Luke*, 1907), talking about **all these things** that had occurred, (24:14; “these things” and related phrases are key terms in this account) concerning Jesus' passion and death.

24:15–17a. It is immediately apparent that the One who joined the two travelers was Jesus (24:15), but they **were prevented from recognizing Him** (24:16). The passive “were kept from recognizing” is a “divine passive, that is, *God kept them from recognizing Jesus*” (Stein, *Luke*, 610). His question amounted to, “What were you just talking about?” (24:17a).

24:17b–19a. The question posed by the One stopped them in their tracks (**they stood still**). So direct a question caused them to think of why “these things” had been the topic of their conversation—and that made them sad (**looking sad**) (24:17b). Cleopas—the only one of the two to be named—answered with a mild edge of incredulity—**Are You the only one ... unaware of the things**, the recent events in the city? (24:18). Incredulous, these men were amazed that He could have missed so shocking an event as Jesus’ death. The stranger pressed His question—**What things?** (24:19a).

24:19b–24. Luke took this occasion to rehearse the narrative one more time—giving a historical summary. He took care to include all the most relevant facts about Jesus—His identity: **Jesus the Nazarene** (24:19b); His calling: **a prophet** (24:19c); His work: **mighty in deed and word** (24:19d); His reputation: **in the sight of God and all the people** (24:19e); His rejection: **the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him** (24:20a); His death: **the sentence of death, and crucified Him** (24:20b); and their disappointment over what they thought was His mission (which it was): **He who was going to redeem Israel** (24:21a). In addition, they related the recent events: it was the third day since **these things** (24:21b), and they had received a report from the women about the empty tomb not containing Jesus’ body, and a visitation of angels **who said that He was alive** (24:22–23). Furthermore some of the leaders had checked out the tomb, but **Him they did not see** (24:24). This mere historical account was complete, but by itself it was not convincing.

24:25–27. Surprisingly, at this point, Jesus, still hidden to their eyes, rebuked them for their silly unbelief (**O foolish men ... slow of heart to believe**) (24:25a). They should have understood this “history” in the light of the “predictions” of the Scriptures (24:25b). He pointed out that all of **these things** (24:26) were **necessary**, and He thus patiently took them through the whole of the Scriptures (**Moses and with all the prophets**, 24:27a) and explained **the things** (the theology) about Him and His messianic mission that they should have understood. Had they understood messianic prophecy, it would have explained all “these things” to them. The key point Jesus made here was that the OT Scriptures foretold the coming of the Messiah, including two events: a suffering (the first coming) and an entering into glory (a second coming; cf. 21:27).

24:28–32. This discourse must have taken some time, for by its conclusion the party was at the village **where they were going** (24:28a). The two extended an invitation to the stranger, and it was readily accepted (24:28b–29). It was at this dinner, specifically when He prayed for and began to distribute the bread (24:30), that **their eyes were opened and they recognized Him** (24:31). **Were opened** is another divine passive, cf. 24:16; Stein, *Luke*, 613). The supernatural obscurity was replaced by supernatural illumination (perhaps a way for Luke to explain why some come to faith and others do not). The term **recognized** is the same term used in 1:4 with respect to “knowing (*epignos*) the certainty of the things” taught (Stein, *Luke*, 613).

The impact of this encounter on the two was profound—from “foolish” hearts of unbelief (cf. 24:25) to **burning hearts** of understanding and faith (24:32).

LESSON NUGGET – As Jesus taught, their hearts were burning. They could feel something special as He spoke. However, the disciples' fire had burnt out when Jesus died. As Jesus spoke to them from the Scriptures, the fire in their hearts was fanned into a flame, and they knew it was true. They couldn't wait to go out and tell the others. If the fire burns low in our lives, we need to sit at Jesus' feet and hear from His Word! Then, as our hearts begin to burn once again, as we get on fire for Him, we will go out to share the good news.

Sources: *Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, The Word For Today Bible, and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary*