

Luke 24:1-49 // The Lord Has Risen!

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[0 : 00] Luke chapter 24, beginning at verse 1. On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they! had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they! entered they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright, the women bowed down with their faces to the ground. But the men said to them, why do you look for the living among the dead?

He is not here, he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee. The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified, and on the third day be raised again. Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Now that same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them. But they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, what are you discussing together as you walk along? They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days? What things, he asked, about Jesus of Nazareth, they replied. He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him.

But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel, and what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning, but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said.

But they did not see Jesus. He said to them, how foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

[3 : 09] And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself. This is the word of the Lord. Our second reading picks back up from Luke chapter 24, verses 28 to 49, which can be found on page 1061 of the Church Bibles.

Luke chapter 24, beginning at verse 28. Luke chapter 24, beginning at verse 28. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going further. But they urged him strongly, stay with us, for it is nearly evening. The day is almost over. So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he disappeared from their sight they asked each other were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us they got up and returned at once to jerusalem there they found the eleven and those with them assembled together and saying it is true lord has risen and has appeared to simon then the two told what had happened on the way and how jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread while they were still talking about this jesus himself stood among them and said to them peace be with you they were startled and frightened thinking they saw a ghost he said to them why are you troubled and why do doubts rise in your mind look at my hands and my feet it is i myself touch me and see a ghost does not have

flesh and bones as you see i have when he had said this he showed them his hands and feet and while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement he asked them do you have anything here to eat they gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it and ate it in their presence he said to them this is what i told you while i was still with you everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of moises the prophets and the psalms then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures he told them this is what is written the messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations beginning at jerusalem you are witnesses of these things i am going to send you what my father has promised but stay in the city until you have been closed with power from on high this is the word of the lord thank you so much tomorrow for reading and um happy easter if i've not said that to you in person if we've not met before i'm martin ayres the lead pastor here it's my privilege to take us through uh what we've just had read um and um i've got um this uh some copies as well we've got them around at the front and back of church of a great little book is easter unbelievable by rebecca mclaughlin as well as our hope explored course that we flagged up if you're someone here just looking in and trying to piece things together i'd love you to take a copy of that um away with you it's a great thing uh to read and follow up with um but let's uh pray we had um at the 9 30 service um a massive street parade went past no one could hear a thing so i particularly feel conscious that it's good to pray and uh pray that the lord will help us as we turn to his word let's bow our heads almighty god and loving heavenly father we thank you for bringing us together on this special day for the words we've already been able to sing in resounding praise and for the truth recorded for us and handed to us in your word the bible and so we ask now that your holy spirit will be our teacher and our guide and be merciful to us so that your word will be clear and helpful to us and you will grant us heads and hearts and eyes that are open to what you are saying for we ask this in jesus name amen well sometimes people will ask a christian have you ever seen god and one of the

answers that a christian can give to that question is i was born too late for that if i'd been living in galilee or jerusalem 2000 years ago i could have seen him we could have seen him the living god as the eternal son took flesh and stepped into our world but if it's such a long time ago how can we trust the claims of jesus and his followers with any real confidence today uh well this um last chapter of this is the last chapter of luke's gospel and then his first chapter he told us why he wrote it this book about jesus he said that he wrote it so that we the readers may have certainty certainty and people today say we live in a an age where there's no certainty we live in a post-truth society an age of skepticism where there's fake news and misinformation and deep fake images and we don't know what's real we see it in music my kids got into this new band december 10 simon cowell's new band and i started listening to their songs on spotify turned out the songs i was listening to weren't real some ai generated version of december 10 had put out an album and i'd been listening to that instead but when i looked at it it had as many followers as the real band so how can we know it's bewildering well luke speaks to us down the ages with words that have certainty for us and it's not just certainty it's transformational certainty so if you turn back with me to luke 24 on page 1061 we don't trust any of the preachers here in our church you have to look at the bible and check what they're saying so if you do that with me now in luke chapter 24 he gives us three scenes now that's very interesting because we know there were lots of resurrection appearances of jesus and luke picks three out for us and they all have the same pattern each scene starts with disciples who observe resurrection facts and they are bewildered by them and then there's an explanation and then they're transformed and they rush off to share the news happens three times once on easter sunday morning once late afternoon and then later on in the evening and we're going to spend our time in that middle scene the afternoon scene the account of two of the disciples on a journey out of jerusalem but also on a journey of transformation they're on the road from despair to wonderful joy and luke wants us to see that we can go on the same journey as them so let's get into it these two disciples in verse 13 they're heading to a village called emmaus as though they thought it's all over now we may as well leave town luke tells us in verse 18 one of them is called cleopas it could be two men it could be a husband and wife i'm going to assume it's two men we don't know but the scholar richard borkham tells us that the reason luke would have named one of them and not the other would have been because that most likely is because it's cleopas who luke interviewed as he investigated everything and it may well be that cleopas was still alive as the first copies of luke were being circulated and so luke is handing down to us eyewitness evidence so these two men they get joined by a third man and look at verse 15 as they talked and

discussed these things with each other jesus himself came up and walked along with them but they were kept from recognizing him now that's really intriguing because they've met jesus these two they're followers of jesus and we know from other resurrection appearances of jesus that he was recognizable but jesus is right there with him and they don't have the eyes to see it so this is a spiritual

blindness and because of that the next thing about these two is they are downcast verse 17 he asked them what are you discussing together as you walk along they stood still their faces downcast i only noticed that for the first time a few days ago that um that when jesus asks them it literally something like what are you two battling about together on the road they stop and they just stand still hanging their heads in despair and cleopas asks are you the only one visiting jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in these days in other words what are we talking about what else could we be talking about what is everyone talking about you must not be from around here more than that you must be the only visitor who doesn't know what's happened because everyone's seen this and everyone's talking about it but he draws it out of them verse 19 what things he says about jesus of nazareth that he was a prophet you know he was a man who spoke god's word and he was he had great power powerful words powerful deeds but they've killed him they've crucified him and then the despair in verse 21 we had hoped we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem israel these men are greatly disappointed why two reasons the first is they had a different agenda for jesus than his agenda they wanted him to be a conquering warrior to overthrow the romans who had occupied their land and if you spend time following jesus but instead of letting him set the agenda you set him a different agenda if you bring him into your life thinking he's going to do for you something he never promised he would do then you are on a road to great disappointment but the other reason they're disappointed is they're looking at life without the resurrection life without easter let me suggest that when you look at life without a resurrection and we think about death and the future it's appropriate to feel a sense of despair i've been at funerals um where things have felt terribly bleak i'm sure many of you will have done i think of a friend whose daughter died in infancy and being there at the funeral with hopelessness a friend who died living leaving behind two twin boys but the truth is even if we live a long life and uh we we are we live a successful life however we've mentioned that so that at our funeral people are saying you know he had a good innings or however that whatever they'll say eventually death takes it away that's the reality it takes our loved ones away and it takes away everything we've ever worked for without easter we look at the world and we came from nothing and we end up with nothing that's the reality and we live in strange times about this because if you're a young person and you're being raised in scotland you're being raised in a culture that says your origin is nothingness and your destiny is nothingness but by the way in the middle you have to live by these values you have to treat everyone as equally valuable valuable you have to fight for social justice fight against racism look after the planet and no wonder some people are thoughtful enough to stop and say these things just don't go together it seems to me my life has no point at all it seems there's no value to anyone's life or what we do anyone who looks at life without a resurrection should stop in their tracks and be downcast so our two companions on the road they've put their hope in jesus to change that he was the very best of men he was the perfect man and now they are greatly disappointed but they're going to end the day completely transformed so how

[15 : 59] does that happen well three things they're on the sheets for us first their heads are whirring at the facts of easter so look with me at verse 22 they say in addition so adding to what they've said to jesus already in addition some of our women amazed us they went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body they came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels who said he was alive then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said but they did not see jesus so these are the crucial historical facts of the first easter and we heard them in our first reading the women went to the tomb joanna and mary and the other mary and others to take spices they're not expecting a resurrection they're taking spices as their custom to anoint the body they were the the first ever spice girls and they find verse two the stone has been rolled away in verse three the tomb is empty i think that is the most significant fact in the history of the world in human history that the tomb is empty they find it empty verse three in verse four the angels appear with the words in verse six he's not here he's risen the women go and tell the eleven disciples and cleopas and his friend are telling jesus who they don't recognize that they're trying to piece it all together but here's the crucial thing hearing the facts about easter the facts has left them still feeling downcast isn't that interesting surprising why well isn't it

surprising what jesus then does next if you were him what would you do at that moment wouldn't you say look guys it's me i'm alive it's good news isn't it we love to share good news straight away i remember kathy my wife and i going out some years ago with a couple of friends for dinner i thought there might be some good news because they suggested nando's and i love nando's so i'm in nando's thinking what's going to happen before we'd even sat down she said i'm up the duff that was it out there no delay good news to share we love to share good news don't we why doesn't jesus do that guys it's me i've conquered death well that brings us to our second point secondly their hearts are burning at the meaning of easter so look with me at verse 25 he said to them how foolish you are and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken did not the messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory the messiah is god's promised king and it sounds harsh to us doesn't it that expression from jesus how foolish you are how slow to believe but he's pointing out to them that they've had all the words that they need all along to make sense of this they had the old testament scriptures and they've had jesus as their teacher and frankly they should have known better all through this chapter there are people who have the words they need to make sense of what's happening words from jesus words from the old testament scriptures and when the women come with the news the tomb is empty and there were angels there no one stops and says hang on a minute it's the third day he said something about this no one does that it was so beyond their comprehension that a man would rise from the dead that they didn't hear and jesus says how foolish you are and maybe we could think about how today people around us know so much don't they people know so much about so many things and how little attention we seem to pay to the bible might jesus say the same to us as well

but what jesus does next is just what we all need he patiently shows them verse 27 what's written in the bible verse 27 and beginning with mooses and all the prophets he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself that the bible is all about him luke doesn't tell us where where jesus took them in the bible he might well have started right back in genesis chapter 3 when the first people sin as satan the evil one disguised as a serpent entices them to sin and god pronounces his curse on humanity and on the serpent satan and but but says that a victorious one will one day crush the serpent's head but not before the serpent strikes his heel so a glorious victory for the coming one but not before suffering at the hands of the evil one he could have reminded them of psalm 22 a psalm written by king david but speaking prophetically of the coming messiah in david's line ending with the glory in verse 27 it says all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the lord and all the families of the nations will bow down before him but before that earlier in psalm 22 astonishingly written centuries before crucifixion was invented he writes this dogs surround me a pack of villains encircles me they pierce my hands and my feet all my bones are on display people stare and gloat over me they divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garments almost certainly jesus would have taken them to the servant songs written by the prophet isaiah 700 bc where he predicts the suffering of god's servant chapter 50 verse 6 it prophesies that the servant of god would say i offered my back to those who beat me my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard i did not hide my face from mocking and spitting and then it explains why the servant is going to suffer isaiah 53 verse 6 we all like sheep have gone astray each of us has turned to our own way and the lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all perhaps jesus would have taken them to the prophet zechariah writing after isaiah where in chapter 12 of zechariah god himself says this they will look on me the one they have pierced and then he says on that day a fountain will be opened to the house of david and the inhabitants of jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity well all across the scriptures jesus shows them that god has spoken and told us through the ages that his messiah has to suffer before he enters his glory and what we know about them is they loved it they loved it we see that in their reaction in verse 32 they asked each other were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us he sets their hearts ablaze as their excitement is so great as the lights come on for them and they understand how the cross was always god's plan it's an experience i've had and i think every christian should have had and can hunger for that as we open the bible and the god of the universe speaks to us our hearts burn and crucially as we think about easter it means that luke is saying to us here look at how jesus got these men off the road to nowhere and on the road back to him look at how he got them on the journey of transformation from despair to joy because he used a method that he can use with you today through the word of god but there's one more step that's our third point their eyes are opened by the

redeemer of easter so in verse 28 they get to the village emmaus and jesus acts as if he's got further to go and they urge him to stay with them why because there's no time left to keep going it's nearly evening the day is nearly gone so they ask him in and because they ask him in they experience verse 30 if you have a look there when he was at the table with them he took bread gave thanks broke it and began to give it to them then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he disappeared from their sight so now jesus opens their eyes in other words he is the one who can cure our spiritual blindness so that we can see the truth about him and you can imagine that whenever cleopas and his companion told this story for the rest of their lives they would have recalled what they say in verse 35 it was when he broke the bread that we recognized him now just think about that for a moment the other time in luke's gospel that he uses these same words to describe what jesus does taking bread blessing it breaking it giving it out is when he fed the 5 000 and that feeding miracle was a crucial revelation of who he is the very next thing that happens in luke after he feeds the 5 000 is peter confesses for the first time you're the messiah the lights come on why well the feeding miracle pointed his people back to something that god had done in the past at the exodus that he'd redeemed his people from slavery in egypt and rescued them out and he brought them into the wilderness and he fed them manna from heaven that's the rescue pattern god redeems and then he provides for his people so when jesus chooses that moment on that first easter sunday the breaking of bread to open the disciples eyes as to who he is is he also showing them i've redeemed you and now i'm providing for you they'd wanted him to be their redeemer to rescue them from their situation to change their situation but the bible tells us and then that we've got a bigger problem than that god made us to know him he's given us all the good things in our lives and we've pushed him away and we've built our lives on the good things instead of on him and there has to be a penalty paid for how we've mistreated god like that the writer and minister mark ashton put it like this some years ago he said every one of us will face god to answer for our lives and every one of us will hang our heads in shame as we realize that we have to be condemned for the way we've lived in god's world as if it was our own world but at the cross jesus was condemned to pay that penalty in our place all of the sin of everyone whoever trusts in him was laid on him as he stood on the cross instead of us and he paid the ransom price for it so there is a great irony here in verse 21 that those two on the road would think to themselves jesus can't be our redeemer because they crucified him when the truth is it's because he is our redeemer that they've crucified him and jesus needs to explain to them patiently you have not even begun to grasp how much i've just done for you that's why jesus knows we need the scriptures to be our explanation of easter it's not just that they tell us that the messiah must suffer it's that they show us why the messiah has to suffer before glory as you read the bible it reveals to you the awfulness of your sin plus the deep extravagant love of god for you together equal the necessity of the cross there was no other way and it's wonderful it means easter confirms that if we'll receive that gift and turn back to god we have absolutely certain forgiveness and hope of life forever with god so it's on it'll come on the screen the writer mark ashton i just quoted was dying of cancer and certain that judgment day was close for him and he wrote these words in the face of death we just go to the next slide again for a christian believer death is not bad news but good it's not the end of the story but the beginning my death will be the event with which my physical life on earth ends but also the moment at which my relationship with jesus becomes complete so back then with our two companions on the road they are transformed from disappointment to wonderful joy and the result is immediate proclamation look at verse 33 they got up and returned at once to jerusalem there they found the eleven and those with them assembled together now this is a brilliant moment in the story remember why they didn't want jesus to travel on when they got to emmaus it was too late it was getting dark the day was nearly done now it's even later isn't it they've had dinner with him and they leg it back to jerusalem how far seven miles that's park run twice right after dinner in the dark because they've got the most sensational news to share with the other disciples and they finally get there you can imagine them with a stitch breathless getting up the stairs to the upper room and what happens someone opens the door and says to them verse 34 it's true the lord has risen and appeared to simon they already know you're telling us we just ran seven miles to tell you in the dark but then jesus appears to them all over again all of them and he says peace be with you and he eats with them and he teaches them and just as the two had rushed to share the news jesus now commissions them all to go and tell verse 46 he told them this is what is written the messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations beginning at jerusalem you are witnesses of these things so

folks have you gone on the same journey as the two companions have you begun to grasp what
jesus has done for you on good friday he endured all of your shame so that when you stand before
god he will lift your head on easter sunday he smashed death to bits for you well if you're here
today and you're thinking i still don't see it i'm still struggling to see it well you need jesus what you
don't need you don't need jesus to show up in your life and say look it's me but open god's word the
bible and ask him and ask him and ask him to open your eyes with both the facts of easter and the
meaning of easter and if you are a follower of jesus today then thank him and thank him and thank
him that he has opened your eyes
and that day by day you can hand him all of your great disappointment and he can hand you
wonderful joy because he achieved his agenda for you the reason he came that he gives you today
what he always came to do full forgiveness and certain hope so who do you want to tell who do you
want to tell today let's pray together risen lord jesus we thank you and we thank you that you are
our friend and our rescuer that you suffered the cross to die our death and you rose again to give us
new life and so by your spirit would you continue to teach us and transform us and use us to make
known the news that you have risen offering forgiveness and hope for your name's sake amen
amen