

4.11.21 ~ Resurrection Appearances of Jesus: Part One

Over these past weeks, we have studied the Scriptures that record the events surrounding Passion Week: Christ enters Jerusalem for the last time; He pours out His heart to the people about God's love for them; He sets aside the old covenant of Passover to establish the new covenant of the Lord's Supper; He is arrested and taken to stand before five mock trials in the early morning; He is mocked and beaten and then crucified; Christ's speaks seven last times from the cross, and then He gives up His spirit and dies; He is buried and on the third day He comes out of the tomb alive.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to many of His followers over a 40 day period, before He went back into heaven to the right hand of the Father.

Today we'll begin to look at the biblical record concerning each of the Lord's appearances, until He ascended up into the clouds with His disciples watching.

Please turn to **John 20:1-10...** It is Sunday morning, the first day of the week. Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb while it is still dark, and she finds that the stone covering the entrance to the tomb has been moved aside, Jesus is gone!

Mary runs to find Peter and John, and and to tell them that the Lord's body is gone. When Peter and John had heard her report, don't understand what it means (**Luke 24:11**), "these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them," but they immediately go to the tomb see what has happened.

John gets to the tomb first and looks in to see the burial cloths, but he did not go in (**John 20:5**), he waits for Peter to arrive, and of course Peter goes right into the tomb and finds that Jesus' body is gone; the burial wrappings are there and the face-cloth is neatly rolled up.

John (**John 20:8**) now enters the tomb, but neither he nor Peter had really understood that Jesus would rise from the grave.

Luke 24:12 tells us, "Peter saw the linen wrappings; and he went away to his home, marveling at [wondering] what had happened.

Let's read **John 20:11-17...** Peter and John left the tomb to go to their homes; but Mary had evidently returned and was just outside the tomb weeping, when she saw two angels near where Jesus' body had been laid (although she just saw them as men, not knowing that they were angels).

They asked her (**John 20:13**), "why are you weeping?" She shared her concern that the Lord had been taken away and she didn't know where He was. Mary then turned around (we aren't told why), perhaps she sensed someone was there? Jesus is now standing there, but Mary doesn't recognize Him in His resurrected body.

Jesus asks Mary why she is crying, and who she is looking for? Thinking that He is the gardener she asked Him if He knows where Jesus' body has been taken, so that she might go and get it.

At this point (**John 20:16**) Jesus calls her name, "Mary," at that moment she recognizes Him (cf. John 10:27) and responds to the Lord, saying "Rabboni!" [Teacher, Master, expressing honor and reverence.]

Mary holds tight to Jesus (**John 20:17**), but Jesus tells to her she must release Him, as He has not yet ascended to the Father.

We don't know how much of the upper room discourse Mary was aware of, perhaps the apostles had told her what Jesus had said, that He was going back to the Father and He would send the Holy Spirit, though whom He would come to live in them (see **John 14:1-3, 7, 16-20; 16:7**).

Back to **John 20:17**, Jesus tells Mary to go to His "brethren" [lit. brothers], speaking of His disciples. Jesus had previously referred to His disciples as slaves, and then friends (**John 15:15**), "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."

Now Jesus refers to His disciples as His brothers, after saying, "I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God."

Please turn to **Matthew 28:1-10**... Matthew records Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene, and the "other" Mary (**27:56**, Mary the mother of James and Joseph). Jesus instructs them to go tell the disciples that they will see Him in Galilee.

Please turn to **Luke 24:13-35**... Jesus appears to two disciples, on the day of His resurrection, as they are walking on the road to Emmaus, about 7 miles away.

These two are not part of the eleven remaining disciples (who made up the original Twelve, Judas now deceased).

We are given the name of one of them (cf. **Luke 24:18**), his name is Cleopas; and although he is named nowhere else in the New Testament, he must have been known to the followers of Christ, or he wouldn't be named here.

These two disciples (cf. **Luke 24:13-16**) don't seem to have any idea that it is Jesus who approaches them and begins to walk with them, listening to them explain to Him about the things which have happened concerning Jesus the Nazarene (cf. **Luke 24:17-24**), how He was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people; and that He had been arrested by the Chief Priests and turned over to be crucified, that He was buried, and yet when some of His followers went to the tomb they found it empty, but there were angels there telling them that He was indeed alive!

Jesus now reminds them (cf. **Luke 24:25-26**) that the prophets had foretold how it was necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to “enter into His glory,” meaning that He would return to the Father in heaven after completing His mission here on earth: “It is Finished!”

Then (cf. **Luke 24:27**), “beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures,” (cf **Genesis 3:1-15**). **1John 3:8**, “The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.”

As Jesus and the two approach Emmaus (cf. **Luke 24:28-29**), it is beginning to get dark, so they invite Him to stay with them at their house. They now go in and sit at a table, preparing to having something to eat (cf. **Luke 24:30-31**).

Jesus takes the bread and blesses *it*, then breaking *it*, He *begins* giving *it* to them and at that moment, “their eyes are opened and they recognize Him; He then vanishes from their sight!” [earlier that day at the tomb (**John 20:13-18**), Jesus’ appearance was hid from Mary Magdalene until Jesus called her name, “Mary,” and then she recognized that it was the Lord.]

These disciples from Emmaus (cf. **Luke 24:32-35**) now understand that the stranger is Jesus, and they recall how their hearts burned within them as they walked along the road, while Jesus explained the Scriptures to them. They immediately head out for Jerusalem, where they find the eleven and those who are with them, gathered together saying, ‘The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon [Peter].’ [Then the two disciples from Emmaus] *began* to tell of their experience on the road [with Jesus] and how they only recognized Him when He broke the bread and gave it to them.

Just moments after the above narrative, Jesus shows up in the room, at this gathering behind locked doors (**Luke 24:36**), “While they were telling these things, He Himself [Jesus, the risen Lord] stood in their midst and said to them, ‘Peace be to you.’”

Next week we will explore the when and where of Jesus’ appearance to Peter. But for today, let’s consider the following as we close our time together.

The women near the tomb saw the risen Lord!

The disciples on the road saw the risen Lord!

Peter saw the risen Lord, and although we are not told where, it clearly happened sometime between the early morning appearance of Jesus to the women in the garden, and the arrival in Jerusalem of the two disciples from Emmaus, who had seen the Lord along the road in the late afternoon, and had recognized Him while at their table breaking bread, as the evening approached!

Next week we will explore the when and where of Jesus’ appearance to Peter.

But for today, consider the narratives of those we studied about today, witnesses of the risen Lord.

What is the responsibility of a witness? To tell the truth about what they have seen, heard, experienced.

Acts 1:8-11, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.’ And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.’”

If you are a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, you are a witness of His resurrection and you need to tell others about Him.

2Corinthians 5:16-21, “Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God was making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Pastor Mike
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