

Easter

Be Confident of the Resurrection



Background Study Verses

Luke 24:13-35

Lesson Material

Luke 24:15,18-27,30-35

Bible Truth

God's people can be fully confident about the truth of Jesus' resurrection.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Consider the Possibility (24:15,18-24)** – The two disciples on the road to Emmaus thought about the truth of Jesus' resurrection. They talked together about what they knew and what others told them.
2. **Examine the Scriptures (24:25-27)** – Jesus showed the truth of His resurrection. He explained some Old Testament prophecies to the two disciples.
3. **Acknowledge the Lord (24:30-32)** – The two disciples finally recognized Jesus. They had full faith in the truth of His resurrection.
4. **Reflect with Others (24:33-35)** – The two disciples met with other disciples in Jerusalem. All of them knew Jesus had indeed been resurrected.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who was walking to Emmaus?
2. Whose body was missing from the grave?
3. What caused the two men to recognize Jesus?
4. How did the men feel when Jesus talked with them?
5. What did the men do after Jesus disappeared?

Introduction

When I was the pastor of the Deaf church in New Orleans, I preached many funerals. One of the funerals was for Mary Feux. Mary was a kind and generous member of the Deaf church. She was a faithful Christian, and her death was a great loss for all of us. The funeral was a simple graveside service and only a few people came. I signed verses from the Bible and spoke about the resurrection. We all cried because we lost our friend, Mary.

Death is real. But we Christians believe something else is real too. We believe in the resurrection. Jesus died, but Jesus is alive today. Because He is alive, we know death is not the end. Someday, God, by His power will raise Mary Feux, and He will raise me too. He will raise you too when you believe in Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

Today's Lesson

1. Consider the Possibility (24:15,18-24)

Verse 15. Last week our lesson was from Luke 6. Today we jump to Luke 24. The reason we are making this jump is because this Sunday is Easter. It is the time when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Our lesson starts with verse 15, but you can get a more complete understanding of this story if you read all of chapter 24. Read about the resurrection in the other gospels, also.

Jesus died on Friday and was buried quickly. Saturday was the Sabbath day of rest. Early the next morning, a small group of women went to Jesus' grave to anoint His body as was customary for Jewish burial. They were truly surprised when they arrived at the grave and found it empty.

Later that day, two men who were not part of the twelve apostles but were followers of Jesus, made a trip from Jerusalem to the town of Emmaus, about seven miles away. They were very sad as they walked along. They talked about the death of Jesus and the mystery of His missing body.

Suddenly, while they were walking along, a third person joined with them walking down the road. They did not know it at the time but this person was Jesus. Verse 16 lets us know God prevented them from knowing who Jesus was. Jesus joined the two men in their conversation about the recent events in Jerusalem.

Verse 18. In verse 17, Jesus asked the two men what they were talking about. One of the two men was named Cleopas. We do not know the other man's name. Cleopas said he was amazed because this third man did not know what happened in Jerusalem. The execution of Jesus was a very public event. It would have been very hard for anyone in Jerusalem not to know what happened.

Verse 19. Jesus pretended not to know what the two men were talking about. Jesus gave the two men an opportunity to talk until they recognized Him.

Cleopas and the second man started telling Jesus all the events. They started with the beginning of Jesus' story. He was Jesus of Nazareth. The two men described how Jesus was a prophet and how Jesus had done great miracles. These two men knew Jesus well. They were His followers. They were not part of the twelve apostles but two of the many followers who spent much time with Jesus.

Verse 20. In spite of the wonderful work of Jesus, the religious and

political leaders of the Jews had Him killed. The Jews did not have authority from the Roman rulers to execute people, but they persuaded the Romans to do it. Jesus was accepted by many of the people but was rejected by the religious and political leaders of Israel.

Verses 21-24. Cleopas and his friend told Jesus they thought the Messiah would give them freedom. The Bible does not explain what they meant

by freedom. They probably were thinking about both political freedom from Roman control and spiritual freedom because that was the work the Messiah was expected to do. These men seemed to know Jesus was the Messiah. Suddenly the story took a strange turn. The two men told Jesus it was the third day since His death. That morning

some of the women followers of Jesus went to the grave and found it empty. The body of Jesus was gone. The women told a strange story about angels and a message from the angels saying Jesus was alive. Some of the disciples checked out the women's story and found the grave truly was empty. These two men did not know what to think of all these things. They were not yet convinced of the resurrection but they were certainly thinking about its possibility.

What do you think? Could someone really die, be dead for three days, and then come back to life? I have never seen anything like that with my own eyes. Have you? These two men were thinking about if it was possible or not.

2. Examine the Scriptures (24:25-27)

Verses 25-26. Suddenly Jesus took over the conversation and started to teach them. He said they did not understand the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament). Many verses told about the death and resurrection of the Messiah. Keep in mind that the word *Messiah* is the Hebrew word and *Christ* is the Greek word for our English word "Savior." All three words mean the same thing. Jesus said the Hebrew Scriptures explained the Messiah would suffer and die. The Old Testament also showed how He would not stay dead, but after three days He would be raised from the dead by God's power.

Verse 27. Jesus started teaching the Scriptures beginning with Moses. Moses wrote about the future Messiah and so did the prophets. Jesus carefully began to take the verses from the writings of the prophets and explain how those writings predicted what had happened to Jesus. Can you imagine how wonderful that teaching was? It would be great to

have Jesus for a teacher. The two men listened very carefully while Jesus explained what all the prophets said about Him.

3. Acknowledge the Lord (24:30-32)

Verses 30-31. In verses 28 and 29 we learn how the two men asked Jesus to stay the night with them. This was a common practice when Jesus lived. The two men showed their hospitality when they invited Jesus to stay with them.

But then an amazing thing happened. Jesus sat down at the table to eat with the two men. Jesus took some of the bread they were about to eat, and He prayed over the bread. When Jesus broke the bread and gave it to the two men, they suddenly recognized Him. For all this time God had prevented them from knowing who Jesus was. But when He prayed and broke the bread, their minds were filled with the memories of Jesus doing that many times. God allowed their minds to be opened, and they saw Jesus and knew Him.

They were truly surprised and maybe frightened a little, but mostly they felt great joy. Here was Jesus, their master and teacher. Here was Jesus, the one in whom they trusted for freedom. They knew immediately the story the women told was true—Jesus really was alive.

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THE STORY WAS TRUE—
JESUS REALLY WAS ALIVE.

Verse 32. Then suddenly, Jesus was gone. The Bible does not tell us how that happened. The two followers felt deep emotion when this happened. They were not upset when Jesus disappeared. Their thoughts were not about His disappearance but about their feelings while Jesus spoke to them. They described their feelings this way: “It felt like a fire burning in us when Jesus talked to us.”

I can understand this feeling. I clearly remember the night I made a public decision in church to follow Christ. I remember holding onto the pew in front of me. I remember how my heart beat fast, and I remember the freedom I felt when I stepped into the aisle of the church and walked to the front to share my decision with the pastor.

A feeling like this is wonderful, but there is something far more important than a feeling. The two men demonstrated the thing of greatest value. They believed in the resurrection of Jesus. Believing in the resurrection of Jesus is necessary for salvation. This is what a person must believe in order to be saved: Jesus, who was God in flesh, lived on earth and died on the cross for our sins. But He did not stay dead. God raised Him to life. Now, because of His death and resurrection anyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved from sin and given a new life. Does that make your heart burn within you?

4. Reflect with Others (24:33-35)

Verses 33-34. Quickly the two men left the house and hurried back to Jerusalem. I can imagine they traveled that seven miles back to Jerusalem quickly. They found the apostles and others together. No doubt, all of them were trying to figure out what was happening.

When the two men arrived, the people in the room were discussing the appearance of Jesus to Simon Peter. The people in the room were talking about the reality of the resurrection. They said, “The Lord really has risen from the dead!” Most of the people in the room had not yet seen Jesus, but they were already believers in the resurrection. They would see Him soon.

Verse 35. Cleopas and his friend could not be quiet about what happened to them. They quickly shared their story. They saw Jesus and talked with Him for a long time. What amazed them most was how they did not recognize Him until He broke the bread. That simple act of sharing a meal opened the eyes of the two men to the person of Jesus.

Here is an additional lesson to learn from today’s story. The two men and the believers gathered in that room openly talked about the truth of the resurrection. We need to do this, too. Most people in the world do not believe Jesus rose from the dead. We believe without the resurrection there is no salvation. It is truly important for us to tell others about the resurrection of Jesus.

I am telling you now what I believe. Some day in the future, Mary Feux and I will stand alive before our living God and worship our Lord who raised us, like Jesus, from the dead.

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What About You?

Do you believe the resurrection of Jesus really happened? The truth of Christianity depends on that truth and our hope for the future rests in its truth. There are so many reasons to believe in the resurrection. The most important is this: I believe because I have met the living Jesus myself. He lives in me. He will live in you, too, when you trust Him as your Savior and Lord.

If you are not sure about the resurrection, talk with your pastor or a mature Christian and renew your faith.

Applying the Lesson

If you believe in the resurrection, here are some activities you can do to show you believe:

1. Pray everyday to the risen Lord.
2. Tell your friends and family the exciting news, "Jesus is alive!"
3. Worship the living Lord regularly with your church family on Sunday.
4. Look forward to the day when you will be living in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Verse to Remember: "Starting with what Moses and all the prophets had said about Him, Jesus began to explain everything that had been written about himself in the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27).

Easter

Be Confident of the Resurrection

Background Study Outline

- 1. What is the Possibility? (Luke 24:13-17)**
- 2. What Do Others Say? (24:18-24)**
- 3. What Do the Scriptures Teach? (24:25-29)**
- 4. What Is the Truth? (24:30-35)**

Lesson Material

- 1. Consider the Possibility (Luke 24:15,18-24)**
- 2. Examine the Scriptures (24:25-27)**
- 3. Acknowledge the Lord (24:30-32)**
- 4. Reflect with Others (24:33-35)**

Bible Truth

God's people can be fully confident about the truth of Jesus' resurrection.

The Bible in Context (Luke 24)

Each of the four Gospels tells the story of the resurrection, but each one tells it in a different way. It helps to read all of the stories at one time in order to get the full picture. Begin with the stories about the burial of Jesus in Mark 15:42-47, Matthew 27:57-66, Luke 23:50-54, and John 19:31-42. Then read about the empty tomb in Mark 16:1-8, Matthew 28:1-15, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:1-9. Finally, read how Jesus appeared to many people Mark 16:19-20, Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:13-53, and John 20:10-21:25.

Explore . . . Resurrection Appearances (Luke 24:15-32)

In Acts 1:3, Luke said Jesus showed Himself to His followers. The first to see Jesus was Mary Magdalene (John 20:14-18, Mark 16:9), then other women (Matt. 28:9). Then Peter saw Jesus (Luke 24:34). Next were the two men in today's lesson (Luke 24:15). Jesus next appeared to the 11 disciples (John 20:26-29, Matt. 28:10-17). Jesus talked with several disciples at the seaside (John 21:1-14). Five hundred saw Him at the same time before His ascension (1 Cor. 15:6).

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Note the jump to the end of Luke because of Easter. Encourage class members to read the material and look up the verses in “The Bible in Context” and “Explore...” above. This will help them get a more complete picture of the Easter story.
- Use a Bible map to identify the town of Emmaus and its relationship to Jerusalem, seven miles away.
- The title and theme of today’s lesson is “Be Confident of the Resurrection.” This is the evangelistic lesson for this quarter. Ask class members to tell their experience of salvation. Refer to Donnie Wiltshire’s testimony on page 4.
- Make the lesson come alive!** This is a good lesson to have three class members do a skit to present the story from verses 13-35. You may be able to secure costumes from your church or another church in your community. Ask them to tell the story related to each section of the lesson. Then pause to discuss the meaning of that section.

STEP TWO – CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY (LUKE 24:15,18-24)

- Have the class members present the skit through verse 24, then ask how class members may have felt if this happened to them. Would they recognize Jesus if He walked along with them?
- Note what the two men were discussing when Jesus appeared (vv. 14-15). They were talking about Jesus.

STEP THREE – EXAMINE THE SCRIPTURES (24:25-27)

- Present the skit through verse 29.
- Emphasize how important it was for the two men to know and understand the Scriptures Jesus spoke about. Jesus can speak to us more easily when we are familiar with His Word.

STEP FOUR – ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD (24:30-32)

- Present the skit through verse 32.
- Encourage discussion of what it was that made them recognize Jesus (He let them know Him—v. 31). What is necessary for us to recognize when Jesus speaks to us through the Holy Spirit or through His Word?

STEP FIVE - REFLECT WITH OTHERS (24:33-35)

- Complete the skit through verse 35.
- Note how these two men were quick to tell others what they learned from Jesus.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using the Study Questions.
- Close with prayer that class members will be confident of the truth of the resurrection and quick to tell others.