

Appearance to the Disciples – Thomas Absent Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25

Appearances of Jesus after the Resurrection:

1. Mary at the tomb – John 20:11-18
2. Woman leaving the tomb – Matt. 28:9-10
3. Two followers on the road to Emmaus – Luke 24:13-32
4. Peter – Luke 24:34
5. 10 of the 11 disciples – no Thomas – John 20:19-25
6. 11 disciples – Thomas (8 days later) – John 20:26-31
7. 7 disciples at the shore of Galilee – John 21:1-25
8. 500+ disciples and followers in Galilee – I Cor. 15:6
9. James the brother of Jesus – I Cor. 15:7
10. 11 disciples at the ascension – Acts 1:3-11

Jesus will also appear to Paul on the road to Damascus. Paul will mention this opportunity to see Jesus in I Cor. 15:8.

The disciples never really believed in a physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus. Their reaction to Christ standing before them tells what was in their heart!

I. Jesus Came to Them - Fearful and Faithless

“Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, (“And as they (two followers of Christ from the road to Emmaus) thus spake” Luke 24:36) when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews (“as they sat (Gk - reclined) at meat,” Mark 16:14), came Jesus (“himself” Luke 24:36) and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” John 20:19 “But they were terrified (startled) and affrighted (afraid), and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise (continued reasonings and doubting) in your hearts?” (“and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.” Mark 16:14) Luke 24:37-38

“same day at evening, being the first day of the week,” – This is still Sunday, resurrection day, but we have now moved into the nighttime hours.

“the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews” – The story had gone out from the Religious Leaders that the disciples of Jesus had stolen away the body of Christ. These men feared for their lives. They were secretly huddled together with the door barred in fear! The phrase “the doors were shut where the disciples were” means “locked tight” in the Greek.

“came Jesus himself” – Dr. Luke, the writer of the Book of Luke, **will seek to make it very plain that Jesus was a man of flesh as before His crucifixion.** He will twice use specific words to indicate it – “himself” v. 36; “myself” – v. 39 He will spend much time explaining the details of Jesus showing His crucifixion wounds. The disciples knew that Jesus had powers and abilities they did not. His body could do things unknown to them -

walk on water; disappear from crowds; move from place to place Jesus' sudden appearance really should not have surprised them but remember He had been dead!

“Peace be unto you.” – This scene began very suddenly and unexpectedly. One moment the disciples were alone listening to the unbelievable report of the two men from Emmaus and then Jesus stood among them! There was no noise of warning, no knock at the door, suddenly Jesus was there! The first words of Jesus to them were not words of rebuke and discuss but instead **gentle words of peace and comfort!** Often when we find the disciples in distress, Jesus spoke peace to them! We have this same Jesus when we are fearful and faithless! “Peace be unto you” had been a theme of Jesus throughout His ministry, a few nights before in the Upper Room, and now as they coward, fearful in the night!

“supposed that they had seen a spirit.” – Gk – “they really thought they were gazing on a spirit” Jesus was dead. They knew it. It was one thing to hear reports of seeing Him but a very different thing to see Him standing before them.

“unbelief and hardness of heart,” – Instead of joy and praises, it was fear and terror they felt! They had hard hearts of unbelief! Evidently there was a division in the room that night. Some had seen and reported the good news. Yet those who heard it was full of unbelief and a hard heart! The hardness of man's heart was highlighted by Mark in his writings. Mark 6:52; 8:17

II. Jesus Reassured Them – Wounds and Ate

“ Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet (“and his side” John 20:20). And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. (“ Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD.” John 20:20)” Luke 24:39-43

“handle me, and see;” – Jesus will seek to calm and reassure their fears and doubts. He will give them evidence of His bodily resurrection. Christ will encourage the disciples to touch and observe Him. They probably did, matter of fact, Thomas will also insist on the opportunity to put and thrust his hand in the wounds! Jesus was flesh and bones just as in the past. He was a resurrected Jesus, not a spirit or ghost. Note: We might say “flesh and blood” – but that is not the case here---Jesus' blood was shed on the cross for us! Could that blood be restored, absolutely. But remember His hands, feet, and side carried the wounds that came at His crucifixion. Three times He will show His wounded hands, feet, and side. Jesus was marred on the cross because of our sin, those wounds will be visible for all eternity! (Rev. 5:6, 9, 12) Praise Him! He took our sin on Himself! (Rev. 1:5; Heb. 9:11-14)

“they yet believed not for joy, and wondered,” – This is a strange combination – unbelief and joy, unbelief and amazement. Several commentaries put this phrase like this, “The fact that Jesus was alive and standing before

them, was too good and too great to be true!” The disciples could not wrap their minds around the fact that Jesus was resurrected from the dead; their minds and hearts were now mixed with joy and unbelief! This feeling of joy with unbelief can be seen in other places in Scripture. Jacob when finding out that Joseph was still alive – Gen. 45:26-28. God’s deliverance of the Children of Israel from a foreign power – Ps. 126:1-3.

“Have ye here any meat?” – Don’t miss this! This is big! Jesus ate! Dr. Luke will use this as a clear proof of the physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead. He was not a ghost or spirit! In Emmaus earlier, Jesus had only blessed the food, but now He will eat the disciples left-over supper! Peter will later mention the fact that Jesus ate as an evidence of His bodily resurrection. (Acts 10:40-41)

“Then were the disciples glad,” – The disciples really were hard to convince. They did not believe Jesus’ words of prophecy. They did not believe Mary and the other woman who had seen Jesus earlier that morning. They must have doubted Peter’s witness and they did not believe the two men who had walked with Jesus to Emmaus. And now they had a hard time believing their own eyes. But when He took the fish and honey and ate before them, just as He had said a few nights before in the Upper Room (John 16:22), their sorrow turned to great joy.

They had never completely believed in a physical resurrection!

III. Jesus Commissions and Empowers Them – Good News and Forgiveness

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” John 20:21-23

“Peace be unto you:” – This is the second time He will say this phrase to the disciples. Now they are convinced of the resurrection. It is almost like Jesus starts the conversation again now that He has their attention, heart, and mind! He had something very important to tell them!

“as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you” – The Great Commission, found in Matt. 28 and Acts 1, was not the only time Jesus told the disciples about their Gospel mission to the world. Jesus had taught the fact that they would be the mouthpiece and laborers of the Gospel in John 4:34-38. (Samaritan woman and village) Twice Jesus sent the disciples out by themselves to preach and heal in His name. Even just a few nights before, He prayed for them and the task ahead in John 17:18-21. Now here, after the disciples realized that Jesus had risen from the dead, Jesus will very plainly repeat their responsibility. Jesus was sent by His Father to die for the sins of the world. He has now accomplished the work, and Jesus is sending His close followers to tell the world the Good News!

“he breathed on them,” – Only one other time do you ever see this phrase in the Bible, the creation of man! There is life in the breath of God! At creation (Gen. 2:7) His breath gave physical life and now after the resurrection His breath gave spiritual life, to a new creation in Christ. There was debate among the scholars I studied on the exact meaning of this action of Christ. Some believed it was at this moment the ten disciples received the Holy Spirit, others thought it was a promise of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost as was Acts 1:8, or perhaps a foretaste of what they would experience, one thought the disciples came to salvation here. Good teachers disagree. But this is what we know:

- This is what Jesus said, most English translations seem to agree with this word usage in the KJV
- Acts 2:1-4 is 40 days later at Pentecost where they received the Holy Spirit and power to speak in various language
- Sometimes we might not have an easy answer – but we do know the breath of God gives life

Remember: it is here the disciples believed in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ! They have observed and believed in His deity.

Sins - remitted or retained – This is Holy Spirit work done through the believer! The work of Christ, the suffering and sacrifice the disciples had observed Jesus do, was for saving people from their sin! That was the real need! Now the disciples have the responsibility to take the news of this deliverance to the world! Jesus had said something like this before in Matt. 16:19; 18:18. Of course, Jesus is not saying we have the power to forgive or not forgive sins! But through the Holy Spirit we have the power to take the Gospel to unbelievers and see them forgiven! Only God can forgive sins! Mark 2:5-12; Acts 13:38-39

Peter will preach this in Acts 10:42-43.

IV. Thomas – Missing and Unbelief

“But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him (Gk – repeatedly and continuously), We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.” John 20:24-25

“Thomas...was not with them when Jesus came.” – We don’t know where Thomas was that night, Jesus will not rebuke him later for not being with the others. We cannot assume negative on Thomas.

Disciples – “We have seen the Lord.”/ Thomas – “I will not believe.” – The disciples declared the good news to Thomas, “We have seen the Lord.”! **In the Greek, they told him over and over again!** He had all the evidence he needed to believe Jesus had risen again---the word of the other disciples, friends he had traveled with for 3+ years! But he did not believe them! Thomas’ words were certainly dramatic and graphic! Talk about a doubter! He was a super-charged doubter! He not only declared the need to see Jesus himself, but also that he would have to touch the risen Master! **In the Greek Thomas’ last statement was a double negative, “I positively will not believe!”**

It will take a physical appearance of Jesus for all 11 disciples to believe that Jesus arose! **Not one of them will believe without seeing Him first!** All the disciples will need to be convinced in their minds. Their preaching will center on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for the sins of the world!

Believer's Application:

1. We shall be like Christ's resurrected body someday! I John 3:1-2; Phil. 3:21 We shall all be changed! I Cor. 15:52-53 Jesus was not a ghost! Let's review the facts we know about the resurrected body of Jesus.

- He was touched and handled
- He looked like himself – carried his death wounds
- Christ ate – Luke 22:18
- Appeared and Disappeared
- Passed through solids – grave clothes, doors or walls,
- Traveled distances in a moment – Emmaus to Peter

What will we be like in heaven? We are not totally sure, but these seem to be hints to our new body!

Read I Cor. 15:35-56 Our earthly response is found in verses 57-58! Thankfulness & service to God!

2. The disciples' hearts and minds were full of fear, unbelief, worry, sadness, and confusion. They had forgotten the words and works of Jesus! Let's seek not be like the faithless disciples!

The Disciples Forgot:

1. Words of Jesus – 7 times Jesus will tell the disciples of His coming death and resurrection
2. The power of God – Matthew 22:29; Luke 9:43-44 – Jesus connected the power of God and the resurrection
3. The past miracles of Jesus – Past miracles – this was a pattern for the disciples Mark 8:14-21
4. The Scriptures – Road to Emmaus Jesus taught himself from the Old Testament

We Forget:

1. The words and truths of Jesus
 2. The power of God
 3. Past miracles that God has performed for us!
 4. The Scriptures
3. Jesus sent His disciples to give the Good News to the world. Let's all renew our commitment to this task.

Read Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Cor. 5:14-21