

=FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

Lesson 51

Luke 24

INTRODUCTION: At the end of Luke 23, we find the body of Jesus lying in the tomb, but that is not the end of the book of Luke. That chapter is not the end of the story! In other words, our Lord's death and burial was not the end. Thank God there is another chapter, and that is the chapter which presents the living Christ.

In Luke 24 we have Luke's presentation of the risen Lord. He gives far less about the resurrection than do the others. He presents the resurrection on an earthly level. This is natural since Luke was a doctor, and his purpose was to present Jesus as the Son of Man. This brings up an interesting point. Each of the four Gospels is the same story about the same Person, but each one looks at Him from a different angle. Matthew presents Him as the King, Mark presents Him as a servant, Luke presents Him as the Son of Man, and John presents Him as the Son of God.

In Luke 24 the story is divided into three definite parts: (1) what happened in the early morning, verses 1-12; (2) what happened in the afternoon, verses 13-32; and (3) what happened in the evening, verses 33-49. In the early morning He presented Himself to the women; in the afternoon, to the disciples on the road to Emmaus; and in the evening, to the apostles in the upper room.

I. THE MORNING. See Luke 24:1-12.

1. The women loved Jesus dearly. The women were finding their way to the sepulchre. They intended to find His dead body and honor it. Their highest hopes had been extinguished; yet, they still believed in Him personally and loved Him with a great love. Remember, Mary Magdalene had said, "They have taken away the Lord." Though He was dead, He was still her "Lord." Ah, what love and what devotion!

2. The angels caused the women to remember Jesus' words. Notice the words in verse 8, "And they remembered his words." In verse 5, the two men standing in dazzling apparel had asked this questions: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" Immediately the ladies remembered! Perhaps they had forgotten in the midst of their sorrow that He had distinctly foretold that beyond the suffering and His death, He would be raised again. Perhaps they had never caught the significance of it. Yet, notice in verse 9 what happened. They immediately hurried away to tell the disciples what had happened. This is also our job. We are to tell everyone that we have met the living Christ.

II. THE AFTERNOON. Read Luke 24:13-32. We should remember that this was not the Sabbath day; it was the first day of the week. The journey that these two men were taking was a journey of 60 furlongs, or in our measurement, it was about 6½ miles. As they walked along the road, they were communing and talking together of all the things which had happened in Jerusalem. This was quite natural. What else was there to talk about? The most exciting story in years had taken place. Jesus had been killed. There were certain reports circulating that He was alive, but there was no evidence. As these two disciples journeyed on their way, a Stranger joined them. As He joined them, He did not reveal to them Who He was, and they did not recognize that it was Jesus. This is quite natural, for in the early morning Mary had supposed Him to be the gardener. Now these two men did not recognize Him either. They talked with Him about what had happened in the last few days. Then He asked them a very interesting question in verse 17, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" Ah, here is an interesting portion of Scripture. How could anyone who is saved be sad? (Teacher, talk to the students here about the joy of the Lord.)

Then He asked them another question in verse 19, "What things?" He knew what things they were talking about; He was the very One about Whom they were speaking. Yet, He wanted to hear them.

There are many times when Jesus asks us certain questions when He knows the answers. He just wants us to tell Him. This was the case when Jesus asked Peter in Matthew 16:15, "But whom say ye that I am?" He wanted to hear Peter express his love. Jesus wants to hear you express your love. You were created to fellowship with Him. He wants you to fulfill the purpose of your creation.

Another thing of note in the afternoon is that Jesus was with them, and they did not know it. How easy it is for us to be in the presence of God and not even realize His presence!

Notice in Luke 24:21a the words that they said: "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." The past tense in the use of the verb "trusted" revealed the fact that their hope had perished. Their hearts were still loyal and filled with love, and they still believed in Him; but they had been driven to the conclusion that He had failed, and consequently, their hope could not be realized. If they only knew, their hope was just about to be revived! This is the way life is. So many times we are just about to give up when the answer is around the next corner, when the light is just beyond the next valley, when victory is just beyond the next struggle.

There is another sweet thing found in verse 28. Notice the words, "And they drew nigh unto the village...and he made as though he would have gone further." He wanted to stay with them, but He would not push Himself. Jesus never pushes Himself. He comes in only when invited. Thank God, it was then that they said to Him, "Abide with us: for it is toward evening." (Teacher, teach the class here the importance of letting Christ abide with us. It is vital that we let Him live with us.)

III. THE EVENING. Notice Luke 24:33-49. The apostles are in the upper room. Jesus comes to see them. First He must prove Himself. He begins with the old commonplace greeting heard on the street, in the marketplace and in the countryside, "Peace be unto you." Then He gives them three proofs that He is alive. First, He stands among them, even though the doors were shut. Then, in order to demonstrate the actuality of His resurrection, He shows them His hands and His feet. Then, thirdly, He asks for something to eat to prove that He is not a spirit. Then the Bible says He "opened" their minds. This is very interesting, for during the afternoon He had "opened" the Scriptures. The word "opened" is the same in both places. It means, "to disentangle and to bring into true and right relationship." When a person is in the Lord's house with God's people and Christ is in their presence and the Word of God is being discussed, then the mind is opened, the Word is opened, the will of God is opened; then and only then are our lives disentangled and we enter into a true and right relationship.

CONCLUSION: What a way to spend the first Sunday after the resurrection! What a way to spend any Sunday, fellowshipping with the risen Christ, having our faith strengthened and finding ourselves in the house of God!