

Luke 24 Did Not The Christ

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Preacher: Ralph Depping

[0 : 00] on page 1061 in the Church Bibles, verses 1-12. 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 is risen.

Remember how he told you while he was still with you in Galilee. The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, 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.

[1 : 13] But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Let's come.

Sorry, I'm adjusted now. Thank you, Jez, for reading those opening verses from Luke 24. And we're going to continue on the story.

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. And 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 as you walk along? They stood still, their faces downcast.

[2 : 40] One of them, one of them named Cleopas, asked him, are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do 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 him they did not see. He said to them, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

[3 : 49] And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself. And as they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he was going further.

But they urged him strongly, stay with us for it's nearly evening and the day is almost over. So he went in to stay with them. And when he was at the table with them, he broke 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's true, the Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.

Then these two told what had happened on the way and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread. Let's just ask for God's help this morning.

[4 : 57] Our Father, we thank you for your word. The words of scripture that we are free to open up this morning. And we know, Father, that unless your Holy Spirit is here with us, they are just words.

But your spirit can take them off the pages and plant them deep within our hearts. And that's what we ask this morning, Father, that your spirit would be at work through your word among us.

And we ask this in Jesus' name, the risen Savior's name. Amen. Amen. Wake up.

Wake up. Wake up. It's Resurrection Sunday. Quick, John, James, Philip, Matthew. Come on, everyone, get up, get up. We need to go and we need to meet Jesus. Oh, it's been a tough couple of days.

But won't it be great to see him again alive and on his way to glory? Come on, let's go. Let's go and welcome him. That'd be a much better story, wouldn't it?

[5 : 58] If we had written it, I think that's how we would have put it down on paper. If we were to sit down and write the resurrection experiences, we would write about disciples that had understood all of the scriptures.

disciples that understood the Old Testament and had listened so very carefully to what Jesus had told them that when it came to Resurrection Sunday, they would be there.

They would know to look for him again on the third day. But instead, the real events that we read about in chapter 24 show us that the disciples thought that Jesus was literally dead and buried and gone.

The only people that showed up on Resurrection Sunday, we read about in verse 1 in chapter 24, 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.

Some women who come with burial spices for a dead body. There are none of the key disciples here. Peter, James and John are nowhere to be seen on Resurrection Sunday.

[7 : 06] There's no sunrise service that everyone's been invited to. They just didn't see it. The women, the only reason they're here is to take away the smell from that blood-stained, dead and rotting corpse that they were expecting to find.

No wonder in verse 5, the women are frightened when they see these two men. They're literally frightened out of their wits by the appearance of angels.

And as we read down verse 11, they come back to the disciples and those that were following Jesus. And they didn't believe the women because the words seemed to them like nonsense.

It was like the women had been sniffing the spices too much or something. They'd hallucinated.

They'd lost the plot. Celsius, who I'm sure none of you have heard of, I didn't up until this week, is a second century philosopher.

And he was debating against Christianity. And do you know what one of his points was? Well, he said, Christianity couldn't be true because the written accounts of the resurrection are based on the testimony of women.

[8 : 17] And this is him speaking, not me. And we all know that women are hysterical. So that was his take on a resurrection account. You wouldn't write them with women being the witnesses.

And do you know what? The disciples agreed with Celsius at this stage. Hysterical women don't make for reliable witnesses. So by and large, these women were ignored. Except for Peter.

He seems to have a little bit of hope inside him, doesn't he? He runs off to the tomb and a couple of other disciples go with him. But all they find is the empty grave. And they too are left wondering.

What a mess. What a mess. Here we are on Resurrection Sunday. The first one. And no one expects. No one believes. No one understands.

Verse 13. Two of those disciples that hear the women's reports, they don't even bother to hang around any longer to see if it could possibly be true.

[9 : 16] They're off back down the road to Emmaus. They're walking away. And that's where we join them. On that road. As they're walking.

That seven mile trek from Jerusalem to Emmaus. We're leaving the defeat and the confusion of what's happening in Jerusalem.

They're leaving that behind. And they're going somewhere. And it's most likely home. But wherever it is, it's away from Jerusalem. And it's back to some sort of pre-Jesus experience in life.

Do you know it's so easy to catch up with these two as they're walking along this road? Because they're slow. They're plodding. They're like the losing supporters of a team that's been defeated on match day.

You know that big match that you expected to win and the supporters are trundling out of the stadium. Defeated. And as we come, we come close because we want to hear what they're talking about. And they're going through their post-match analysis.

[10:20] Where did it go wrong? We had great expectations for our team. We wanted them to win. And who's to blame for this disaster? Was it the ref? The coach? The players? It's that kind of discussion.

That post-match analysis. But while we're just content to eavesdrop and to listen in from a distance, who's that?

He's coming up right beside them. Where did this bloke come from? Who's that? Well, this guy, he's far more direct than us. We're just casually listening in.

But he actually interrupts them and he asks them in verse 17. What are you discussing together as you walk along? What is it?

What are you discussing? And they stop. And you know that heart-sinking feeling, don't you? That sudden feeling of pain, the one you've been coping with.

[11:18] And then suddenly someone says something or reminds you of something and it just prods it again, the pain here. And it feels like your heart rises up slightly and then just sinks down again into your stomach.

And it's that audible sigh. And then your head just withers and it goes to that spot. The one 12 inches in front of your toes.

And we've all been there, haven't we? We've felt that kind of pain in our lives. And for these broken disciples, it's just a simple question.

A simple question from a stranger. What is it you're talking about that brings it all back again, all to the surface again? And once he begins to recover from this initial downcastness that we read in verse 17, Keopas, he's suddenly puzzled by the question.

And he says, well, most translators actually put his response like this. Are you really the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn't know what happened? Didn't you see the big matchup this weekend?

[12:27] It was Jesus versus the rulers. I mean, how could you have missed it? It was the biggest show in town all weekend. There was earthquakes. There was darkness. There was a show trial.

There was the mob rule. Bane, crucify him, crucify him. And there was the crucifixion. How could you have missed it? Verse 19.

The stranger says, what things? What things? Well, now they have their chance, don't they? And we're going to listen a bit closer because we want to know that they have an opportunity to give their version of the story.

What Jesus versus the rulers was all about. And who is to blame for things going wrong. And I'm kind of glad this new guy has come along because, you know, and he's asking these questions because now we're going to get the detail.

Verse 19. Cleopas gives the answer. And this is what he says. Jesus of Nazareth. Well, he was a prophet. And he was a pretty good one at that.

[13:35] He was powerful when he spoke. And powerful when he acted. And it was just obvious to everyone around, even to God himself. This was a great prophet.

And then the leaders got him. And they handed him over to the Romans who killed him. Would you believe?

We kind of hoped that this Jesus, he was the one who was going to make Israel great again. He was going to restore our country. He was going to restore Israel.

So there we have it. Their version of the story. Jesus, the failed prophet. Beaten by the chief priests and the leaders and killed.

What a disappointment. He was meant to win out and turn some of those mighty words and some of those mighty deeds into the actions that would defeat the Romans, defeat their enemies and restore Israel to some great nation again.

[14 : 37] And this view of Jesus is, it's a very popular one still today, isn't it? It survived from the New Testament right up until now. Jesus, the really nice guy who did and said some wonderful stuff.

Remember that? Love your enemies. Turn the other cheek. He healed people. What a wonderful example. A great teacher that, well, he just got beaten up and killed by those nasty religious folk over there.

Nothing more than a man with some great ideas that was overtaken by the power-hungry leaders and the angry mob. In his famous fiction book, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the author, Douglas Adams, who is a very avid and vocal atheist, he compliments and then dismisses Jesus in the same way as the disciples have just done.

This is what he says. One man nailed to a tree for saying, how great it would be to be nice to people for a change.

One man nailed to a tree for saying, how great it would be to be nice to people for a change. Jesus, the good, nailed to a tree. It's a popular view of Jesus today, isn't it?

[15 : 55] Your friends or people that are willing to acknowledge that Jesus existed say, yeah, Jesus, he said some good things. He just ended up being nailed to a tree for it. That's their Jesus as well.

Great hopes for him, but he's dead and buried now. The amazing stories of the angels from the women and the reports of the empty tomb that they'd heard from their fellow disciples. They're not enough.

All of these reports, they're just a confused noise to these two. The reality for them is that Jesus has failed. He's dead. He's buried. He's gone.

What a shame. What a shame. You see, the disciples, their view of Jesus, they had an idol Jesus. And an idol Jesus is really a one-sided view of Jesus that we construct ourselves.

We have our Bibles because we're Bible-believing Christians and we find a verse or we find some idea and then we take this one idea and we build our Jesus around us.

[17 : 03] Jesus will restore Israel again. Oh, that's great. I can follow that Jesus. That's cool. And it's something that we still do today.

We look at the disciples and kind of say, well, they missed it, but we miss it. And here's another one that I heard again recently from a church leader.

And his emphasis was this, that Jesus is the King. King Jesus. If Jesus is the King, therefore we're children of the King. And as sons and daughters of the King, ask.

Ask whatever you want and Jesus will make it happen. God will bless you and prosper you because that's who He is. He's the King. And do you see what's happened? We've taken something of Jesus and we've made it all of Jesus.

We've taken something of Jesus and made it all of Jesus. And that's an idol Jesus, not a real Jesus. And in our idol Jesus, He is the King, which means that we're all just princes and princesses.

[18 : 05] Jesus. The disciples did it, didn't they? They did it here and they did it in other parts of Scripture. Jesus, Jesus, my two sons, can one of them sit at your left hand and one of them sit at your right hand in heaven?

Jesus, those bad people over there, can we call down that fire from heaven? That would be good, wouldn't it? Let's burn them up. Jesus, we're hungry. Do you remember that trick you did with the loaves and the fishes?

That was great. Could you do that again? Could you feed us again? Jesus, restore Israel. So Jesus, all of Jesus, just gets broken up into little, manageable, pocket-sized chunks.

Jesus, the ruler. Jesus, the judge. Jesus, the giver. Oh, I'll have some of that. That's grace. But at some point, we take out our pocket-sized version of Jesus the one we've created and he doesn't deliver.

He doesn't deliver. Remember that time that you were fed up when Jesus didn't deliver for you? Oh, you might have said it like that. You wouldn't have used those words. But really, really you'd started to give up on Jesus yourself.

[19 : 19] And someone, someone comes along like verse 19 and says, or verse 17, what things? What's up? What is it?

What's the problem? What are you discussing? And there's the same reaction. There's the, there's the downcast eyes, the sigh, the disappointment.

I was really hoping for a result this time. That job, it just seemed right for me and I would have loved to have worked for that company.

You know what? I had loads of people praying for me. I had loads of people in the church and my friends and some family even and they were praying that I would get the job and then I didn't. And I don't know what's on the road ahead or where it's leading.

I really thought that Jesus this time was going to sort this one out for me. You see, if you haven't already walked this road to Emmaus, maybe you're walking it now but sometime soon you will walk it.

[20 : 21] We have this particular idea of Jesus or of his church and then Jesus fails to deliver so we start to walk away slow, plotting.

We walk away from the church, away from the community, away from Jerusalem and we're off somewhere else. As we walk, just like these disciples, our eyes, our eyes are literally closed to the real Jesus in front of us.

We can't see him. We can't see the resurrected Jesus that is standing there. The stranger has listened very politely.

Verse 25. He's listened to your story but there's a fire in his eye now. Something he wants to say.

So, we're a bit nosier now so we're coming a little bit closer and we're drawing a little closer.

How foolish you are. How slow of heart to believe. Sounds a bit like road rage is happening on the way to Emmaus. We actually take a step back because we're not sure where this is going to go.

[21 : 33] How foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe. Why? Because they've missed the resurrection. They've missed the resurrection. Don't be mistaken here.

This is a rebuke. This is a rebuke. These are strong words. This person can see clearly where they've gone wrong in their understanding of Jesus. Where their idol Jesus has come from and where it has let them down.

And this is what he says. You are slow to believe all. Hear that word all that the prophets have spoken. Yes, they believed some of this.

Remember, they'd taken the bits they liked and stuffed it in their pockets for use later. They'd believe those easy bits about the Messiah coming to rescue Israel and to redeem it.

The bits about freedom from their enemies and maybe having bigger borders and the bits about feasts in the Old Testament. They're quite nice. I wouldn't mind some of that and beating enemies. That sounds good.

[22 : 34] And their idol Jesus was quite easy to construct from those few pages of the Bible, the Old Testament. But the other bits, they just didn't understand. They didn't get it. They didn't see it.

But now, it was going to be shown to them, wasn't it? For now, now if we look, the most important phrase in this whole section is in verse 26.

Everything hinges on this. Listen up. Listen carefully now. In fact, come a little bit closer to the conversation. For first came the rebuke, now comes the correction.

And these words, these are the words that are going to drag the disciples away from staring at their navels. and have their hearts burning again for the real Jesus. Did not the Christ, did not the Christ, come closer, look again, did not the Christ have to suffer these things and enter his glory?

Verse 27, and beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself. The stranger has rebuked, now he corrects by opening the Bible up for them.

[23 : 54] Come and look closer. What does the Bible say about the Christ? Suffering and glory. Read the Bible. Suffering and glory.

Look here, the obvious place, if you look at Isaiah, God's servant, he's gentle, he's humble, and then he's taken and slaughtered, suffering.

But look over to Daniel and the Christ, he's called the son of man, coming in his glory to judge and to rule. Glory. They're both there, the suffering servant of Isaiah and the ruling son of man of Daniel. Clearly, the Messiah must both suffer and then enter his glory. But there's the obvious things like that, the Christ-centered passages that we can go to.

But look at the whole story, look at all the pages. Look, there's Joseph. Joseph? Well, see how he suffered. Remember Joseph down the well? Remember Joseph in prison for something he didn't do?

[24 : 56] He's low, he's suffering. But now, flick on a few pages in the story of Joseph and there he is, he's the second in command of the whole of Egypt, providing for all the people. Not just the people in Egypt, but the people who come from afar, who are suffering famine.

Joseph in his glory. Look at Noah. I'm not just saying that because it's his birthday today, by the way, he's two. But look at Noah, the Noah of the Bible. 120 years he stood there building that ark, hammering away and the people came and they mocked him.

They ridiculed him and he suffered. You can be very sure if you were to build something for 120 years on dry land that looked like a boat, your neighbours would be, your neighbours would be looking strange at you.

But look at the end and he is one of eight people that is rescued, enjoying glory. Or look at the Exodus story. Egypt, suffering, slavery.

40 years later, glory, the promised land. The whole Bible, the whole story, suffering, then glory. Of course, we want to see Jesus the King.

[26 : 05] Yes. We want to see Jesus the King for he is the King but never forget that Jesus is also the suffering servant. You see, there's a problem with just the Jesus is King view because at times our lives aren't very princely, are they?

And at those times, how are we going to cope if all we see of Jesus is Jesus the King? How does that help us in those situations? This Resurrection Sunday, this Easter weekend, we need to remember that the crown of thorns came first before the crown of gold.

This seven mile trek to Emmaus is literally life transforming for these disciples. they now see Jesus through the pages of the scripture as the suffering king.

And as a result, in verse 31, we have this unblinking, their physical eyes are suddenly open. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

And then just like that, he's gone. just when they see him physically. Well, you see, his work here is done. And it's not just because they recognize that this stranger is in fact the risen Jesus.

[27 : 26] No, it's that they see him from the eyes of their heart. That's why Jesus' work is done. Verse 32, were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us?

You see, Jesus has come alongside and they've been kindly rebuked, corrected, and trained by Jesus from the Bible. Yes, yes, they had seen the risen Lord, bodily resurrected, and they'd recognized him.

But there's nothing accidental that Luke, and this is one of Luke's longest passages, by the way, or narratives or descriptions in the whole of his book, there's nothing accidental that the first people in Luke's story to see the resurrected Jesus are these two two.

You know, in some of the other accounts, the focus is on the people that saw Jesus around the grave, but for Luke, these are the first people that actually see Jesus, that we read about actually seeing him.

Why is that? Why did Luke choose to take this story? Well, you see, it's important that they saw Jesus with their eyes, yes, but more importantly for Luke, it's that they can see Jesus now with their hearts and their minds through the pages of the Bible.

[28 : 41] You can say, well, yes, but surely seeing the resurrected Jesus with their eyes is the important thing. It is, but it's more than that. It's just as crucial for them and for the generations that would come that they could see Jesus not just with their physical eyes, but with their hearts through the pages of Scripture.

and that's why Jesus took the time to open the Bible for them and gather around and over their shoulders saying, look, look here, look at this bit. I bet you never, I bet you never realized that's what that was about.

That was about me. Did not the Christ? Did not the Christ? Put your eyes on the real Jesus. The Bible is all about him.

Every story, every page just whispers his name. Have you had your eyes opened to Jesus? Have you?

Have you seen him? All of him? The Jesus of the Bible? From the God who came from heaven down to be born as a baby? Have you seen the Jesus that is angry with sin?

[29 : 48] Have you seen that Jesus? Have you seen the Jesus that picks up the weak and picks up the lowly and fights for the poor? Have you seen the Jesus that's going to come back again in his

glory to judge? We need a whole Bible view of Jesus.

Not just, not just this little idol view. So again, which Jesus have you seen? The popular one? Do you remember the one we spoke about? The nice but dead Jesus?

Or have you seen the all-powerful suffering king? You see, our eyes are open when we read and hear the Bible explained to us. and the words are almost taken off the pages and embedded in our hearts by the work of the Holy Spirit.

We need to know about sin. We need to know about our need for a suffering king. A king who dies in our place and turns aside the wrath of God so that we can be rescued.

And what a difference this view makes. Just look at these two disciples. Do you see the differences? Do you remember the story we've read so far and how they were on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus?

[30 : 58] Well, now they're back on the road again but they're going the opposite direction. They're going back to Jerusalem. Back to the church. Back to their mission. Back to persecution and threats of the authorities. It's late in the evening and they're tired.

They've said it. Come stay with us. It's late. But that doesn't matter now. That doesn't matter that it's late. They practically run the seven miles back to the others. Do you see it in verse 33? They can't get there quick enough.

Remember their original road. Plodding. Slow. Downcast. What a change. What a change. Now their hearts they're on fire and they're no longer worried that it's evening and it's bedtime and I'm tired.

For them the day is just beginning. It's not the end of the day. Yes, they've missed the resurrection service. Oh, what a terrible one. Imagine missing the resurrection service. Imagine being there the very first Sunday resurrection Sunday and actually seeing Jesus come out of the tomb.

Well, they'd missed that but that's okay. They've seen the resurrected Jesus through the pages of scripture. They've seen him in person and now they're running back. They're back on the road to Jerusalem back on mission.

[32 : 04] What a Bible lesson that must have been. Much better than maybe being here on a Sunday and listening to preaching here. Imagine having Jesus with you for seven miles on that trip opening up the Bible for you and being able to listen to him.

Wouldn't that be amazing? Wouldn't that be great? If only, if only. Imagine Jesus being our guide through the pages of the Old Testament. We need not imagine.

For Jesus sends his Spirit, his Holy Spirit to be our helper. His Holy Spirit is what we need to see Jesus in the pages of the Bible every single day and understand the mission that we have been called to to tell others.

Remember, Jesus tells us in the book of John that the Holy Spirit was going to come. Do you know, yes, it's great having me around, but I'm going to go to my glory and that's better for you. It's better for you that I leave because the Spirit is going to come and the Spirit goes everywhere and is going to live within each one of you and remind you of the things that I've said.

I'm going to remind you of the Scriptures that they're all about me. The Spirit comes. Jesus sends his Spirit to us. You know that idol Jesus? I don't know which one you picture.

[33 : 20] I have a few that I picture at times. You know, it looks attractive. Well, we've made it ourselves and we're pretty clever people. It promises much, but someday or something is going to take that and nail it to a cross.

And our defeated idol Jesus is going to put us on the road out of Jerusalem and on the road to Emmaus.

It's going to put us away from the church, away from our mission and it's going to put us back to an old life. And the sad thing about the idol Jesus that we construct is that we're not clever enough to know that we should be looking for a resurrection.

And so we'll put our heads down and we'll march away defeated. But look over your shoulder.

Who's that coming alongside? It's the one who listens to our story.

It's the one who, when the time is just right, will rebuke us. Will rebuke our slow and foolish hearts.

[34 : 28] And then, and then, he's going to set about painting this amazing picture. This massive picture this picture, this picture that, that blows our idol Jesus away from the, from the scriptures of the Christ, the full picture.

You see, that's the spirit of Jesus working then. Did you, did you know that? That when your pastor comes alongside you at that time, that that's Jesus' spirit working through your pastor, showing you the scriptures, painting that picture of Jesus for you.

that that's the spirit of Jesus who's talking through that godly Christian friend who's, who's helped you in the past and, and now you're not feeling well or something's not right and they're, they're, they're coming beside you again, aren't they?

and encouraging you. That's Jesus. That's his spirit at work through his people, through his church to help you. Lifting your eyes off the ground in front of you, lifting your head up to see Jesus again. And can I encourage you with this as we finish? That when that happens, when you feel like you're on that road, when your idol Jesus has been nailed to a cross and that person comes beside you, don't cling too hard to that statue of Jesus that you had.

[35 : 43] Don't, don't, don't, don't grab it. The one you've relied upon up to now, just, just let it go and let your heart like these disciples burn again, burn again for the real Jesus.

Get back on the saddle. Get back on the saddle and turn back to Jerusalem and share the joy of a risen, suffering king with the community of his people once more.

Let's pray. Father, we need a rebuke every now and again, more often than we realize.

And we thank you this morning that your word rebukes our hearts, our slowness, our hostility, our unbelief. And Lord, if we had been there, we would have been in our beds that morning.

Lord, forgive us. But Lord, we thank you that you don't leave us in that state and you give us your word. We thank you for these words of scripture. May our hearts burn again. We thank you that this morning we are here 2,000 years later on a resurrection Sunday celebrating the risen king, the suffering king, our Jesus.

[36 : 53] Help us, Lord. Help us to encourage one another to have the spirit of Christ working through us as your people, taking your word, making us ready and fit for our mission.

In Jesus' name, Amen.