

He IS Risen Indeed!

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning. It's good to be back with you.! Amen.

My name's Tom Zentz. My wife, Carrie, and I have been at Maranatha for 41 years. And I look out here and there's people I don't know.

And we talk and just marvel at the things that God's doing and the fruitfulness that He's brought to our church. And we're very grateful. It's our joy.

And to Christ be the glory, right? Right? This morning we have the privilege of maybe peeking into the Word of God to see how that happens.

And it's not because we've figured out something unique. So I hope that you can pick that out a little bit later. I have the privilege of wrapping up our study in the Gospel of Luke.

[1 : 16] It's been very good, hasn't it? You know, Pastor started this January of 2022. So it's been a while. Some of you weren't even attending our church then. But it's been a blessing.

And this morning as we look at the final verses of chapter 24, we're going to be looking at one of the most powerful texts in the Scriptures. The record of the resurrected Christ appearing to His fearful followers, convincing them of the Scriptures, not just the Scriptures, but of God at work.

He's going to commission them to global action, to be His witnesses. Witnessing the victory that Christ secured at the cross and over the grave.

And then we'll conclude with His celebratory ascension. Let me begin by praying. Our Father, You are so kind.

Who has shown more love than You? No one. And there is no God like You. In Your sovereign plan, You had in store for Your Son to suffer and die on our behalf.

[2 : 33] We don't understand it. And we don't deserve it. But we are grateful for Your mercy. We're grateful for the transformation that You bring into our lives. Thank You for Your Word.

Thank You for Your Spirit. This morning as we look into Your Word, we ask that You would open our eyes. Help us to see the areas that You want us to be transformed in.

The areas that You want to empower us. Lord, as we've been challenged by the music and as we will be by Your Word, help us to be Your witnesses. To tell others who are hurting and broken, how they can be made whole because of what You, Jesus, have done on the cross.

And because of Your victory over the grave. Lord, thank You for the way that You have blessed.

We appreciate our pastors. We pray for Pastor Andrew as he continues to heal.

Give him a swift and complete healing. Lord, this morning there may be someone here who does not know Jesus.

[3 : 42] Whose life is just turned upside down. And I pray, Father, that Your Spirit would show them from Your Word the need for repentance and the offer of forgiveness of sins.

We're so grateful how You restore lives. It's for Your glory, Jesus. And we praise You in Your name. Amen. Amen. In a moment, we're going to be looking at Luke chapter 24, but I want to invite you to open your Bibles first to Luke chapter 1 to give you a little bit of background.

You recall that as we're in the Gospel of Luke, it might not be so obvious, but the author is Luke, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And the Gospel of Luke is really just book 1 of a lengthier version of what he was writing to a man named Theopolis.

Book 2 is the Acts of the Apostles. And so this morning, we are finishing up the end of book 1 or part 1 of this lengthy book.

And there in chapter 1, if you'd follow along with me in verses 3 and 4, we read this. It seemed good to me also, that's to Luke, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty regarding the things that you have been taught.

[5 : 07] This morning, let me just share with you what I've been looking at this text about. We don't know who really Theophilus was. We can guess.

He was called most excellent Theophilus, probably somebody of importance, probably in the Roman political system. We don't know if he was a new believer, and if Luke's trying to encourage him in his faith.

We don't know if he was somebody seeking to know more about Jesus, and Luke's trying to show him who Jesus is. But what I think that Luke is trying to accomplish from books 1 and book 2 is to help Theophilus understand what's happening in his world today.

Because see, when Luke is writing the scripture, this is decades after the ascension of Jesus Christ. And what's happening in his world at this time is, there's a group of these uneducated, untrained, average people and they're turning the world upside down.

And so I would submit to you that Dr. Luke is writing to give an accurate, fact-checked, orderly, unique, and persuasive explanation to Theophilus and to all who read part 1 and part 2 of this lengthier book, how this uneducated, ordinary group of people are doing this.

[6 : 27] How are they so effective at transforming lives? How are they turning the world upside down? And I would submit to you that what he says in the book of Luke, the gospel of Luke, is that this explanation is not that they just figured out something.

It rests solely on the foundation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ. Would you imagine for a moment that you are Theophilus there in chapter 1?

You received this part 1 of this letter from Luke. And this is the very first time you're reading through this. You can imagine as you're following the events of the birth of Christ, and it's like, wow, just as the scriptures foretold.

The prophets said this is going to happen. And it is. It's amazing. And then you read about how Jesus is doing all these wonderful miracles. And you hear about the words that he spoke with such authority.

You see the stories of lives changed. And then all of a sudden you get to this unfair, this treasonous treatment of Jesus Christ, even from his own followers.

[7 : 44] And you see that it leads to his suffering, and it leads to the cross. The very first time you're reading this, just imagine that. I could see Theophilus just kind of looking up to heaven going, what are you doing?

This isn't fair. This isn't right. But he continues to read. And then he reads of the resurrection in Luke 24.

And he reads about the accounts of those that encountered the living Jesus Christ, the one who is risen indeed. And he says, oh, I think I'm beginning to get it.

Jesus Christ is no longer dead. He's alive. He's risen indeed. And he's actively building his church. One of those occasions that we heard about last week was when Jesus approached those two on the road to Emmaus.

Remember that? And Jesus comes alongside of them and begins talking with them, asking about what's happened. And what does he do? Jesus begins to open their minds to understand that from the very beginning of Scripture to the very point there that they have of Scripture, it all focused on Jesus the Christ.

[9 : 06] And their hearts burned within them. And remember what happened when they got back to their home in Emmaus? Jesus is like, can we eat? He liked to ask that question.

Can we eat? And they started eating. And as soon as he broke bread, they recognized him. And then what? He just disappeared.

He just disappeared. And immediately, they're excited. Immediately, they just said, we got to go back. And so they make the seven-mile trip back to Jerusalem as fast as they can.

And they come to the place where the disciples are at and they have to knock on the door. John tells us they have to knock on the door because those doors are locked. So, the disciples, they were terrified.

Well, let me read it for you. On the evening of that day, this is John 20, the first day of the week, the doors being locked, where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them.

[10 : 16] Now, friends, I mean, one moment, they're there talking. The doors are locked. And in another moment, the Lord Jesus Christ is there.

That had to be terrifying. And you and I could be like, oh, come on. You know, guys, you should know better. But if that were you and me, we would be terrified as well.

And so the disciples were thinking that they saw a spirit. Their lives had been shattered just three days earlier. The one for whom they've given up everything. He was taken, he was tortured, and he was killed.

Their dreams, their hopes were crushed. And then that very morning, earlier, they heard these reports trickle in. Somebody has seen Jesus.

They've seen Jesus. And more and more reports were coming in. They saw Jesus alive. Even Peter saw the resurrected Christ.

[11 : 21] In fact, when the two from Emmaus made their way back to the house, and they were allowed to come into that locked room, they wanted to share, we've seen the Christ.

Before they could even say anything, the rest of the group was saying, we got news for you. Peter saw him. He's really alive. And they're going like, yeah, yeah, we know. We saw him too. And right then, that's where we come into verse 36 of Luke chapter 24.

Would you follow along as we talk about the appearance of the resurrected Christ? As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them.

And then in verse 36, I would say this. He's going to comfort them. He gives them his comforting words. As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, peace to you.

And they were startled and frightened and thought they were seeing a spirit. The words, peace to you, you're familiar with these words, I believe. It's a familiar Hebrew greeting, shalom.

[12 : 25] But here it signifies something more. This word signifies wholeness, a completeness, a unity, and a harmony.

I had in some previous notes, Pastor Andrew one time saying, when you know Jesus, K-N-O-W, you know peace.

When there is no Jesus, there is no peace. You see, when life becomes fractured, when life just doesn't make sense, the peace of God invites us to have the whole, the complete, the unified perspective with our good and loving Lord.

We don't see it. But by faith, we trust that he is good. And he is in control. By faith, we trust that God is ruling over all the circumstances.

And this is the peace. This is the wholeness. This is the wellness that he brings into the lives of broken people. Jesus is the prince of peace himself.

[13 : 38] We read in Romans 5.1, Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have what? Peace.

We have this wholeness. We have this completeness. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus not only offers the disciples his peace, he invites them to use all of their senses to recognize who he is. He wants them to believe that he is indeed the risen living Lord standing before them.

We're going to look briefly at some of these convincing proofs. We could spend a whole hour on these. And it would be tempting because it's really cool. But I just want to go through them quickly.

His convincing proofs, verse 38. Jesus says this in verse 38. He said to them, Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?

[14 : 41] He's inviting them to use their ability to hear. Hear me. I want you to hear me. Why are you troubled?

Why do doubts arise in your hearts? This is not like some Jacob Marley ghost from Christmas past that's moaning and wailing. This is Jesus in his resurrected body speaking normally just like we would talk to one another.

He's addressing them about their troubled and doubting hearts. He's calling them to faith just as he does us when we're troubled. When life is turned upside down.

And then he adds this. He says, See and touch me. Look at the marks on my hands and my feet. He invites them to use their senses.

Jesus says, See my hands and my feet. That it is I myself. And I don't want you to miss this. When Jesus says, It is I myself.

[15 : 52] These are powerful words. In fact, He's inviting them to hear that He is calling Himself the I am that I am. And they had heard this before.

Following Jesus, they heard Him say, I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the door of the sheep. I am the good shepherd.

I am the resurrection and the life. I am the way, the truth, and the life. And now once again, He says to them, It is I myself.

It's me. I am the Lord. I am the Lord. I am your living Lord right here in person. Touch me and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones. What was Luke's profession? He was a doctor. Dr. Luke wants his reader to know by what Jesus said that this new resurrected body is still flesh and bones. [16:56] How can flesh and bones enter a locked room? I don't know. I don't. Apparently this resurrected body is not limited like ours is.

John MacArthur calls this feature of the resurrected body adaptability. Jesus wanted to be in a locked room. So He was. I imagine that if I want to be in Cincinnati and I have a resurrected body, I would be.

It's not limited like our current bodies. This may be a stretch, but in your next two blanks, I put taste and smell.

We eat fish once or twice a week in our home. I think that's no exaggeration. Right, dear? We lived in Japan for a decade. We love fish.

And so when Carrie makes fish in our kitchen, I can smell it. And I like it. Some of you don't. But fish smell.

[18:02] And I think what Jesus is doing when He says, do you got something to eat? And they offer Him broiled fish. He's inviting them to use more senses.

Taste and smell. Verse 41. And while they still disbelieved for joy. I think that means they just couldn't believe this was happening. It's like, wow. And they were marveling.

And He said to them, have you got anything to eat? And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish and He took it and He ate before Him. And we were laughing, my wife and I, when we read that passage.

I mean, you can imagine all the disciples in that locked room, Jesus says, you got anything to eat? And so they gave Him fish and they're all just watching Him eat. Yeah.

In the same way that Jesus revealed Himself to the two in Emmaus at that house, when was it that they understood who He was? It was after He ate.

[19:03] It's like, oh, it is. It's Him. It's Him. I would submit to you that the appearance of the resurrected Christ gave them peace within.

Peace within. And now we come to verses 44 and 48. I have entitled this The Assignment of the Resurrected Christ. In almost the same manner that Jesus revealed Himself to the two on the road to Emmaus, He does this for those that are in that locked room.

follow along in verse 44 as Jesus, He calls them to understand the Scriptures. He said to them, these are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

And then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And can't you just hear Cleopas and that other disciple, the two on the road to Emmaus, remember, it was at the house and on the way there that they heard Jesus do this same thing and they're going like, oh, here it comes.

Here it comes. He's going to talk about who He is from the whole beginning to end. I'm sure they were really excited. And Jesus does.

[20:31] He reveals. The Scriptures focus on the Christ and He is the Christ. Everything is unfolding according to God's plan.

Just as it had been written out. Aren't you glad you have the Scriptures? Do you know the perspective we have is divine?

And I don't mean that in any bad way. When we read the Word of God, God has allowed us to see events from His perspective.

We get to see because if we're in that situation, if you're Jonah, you're Jonah and it's dark and it's smelly and you're in a fish.

When you read the Word of God, you see God's perspective on the situation. Some of you here are in desperate situations.

[21:34] Some of you are in needs and your life is fractured and broken. Can I tell you, you need God's perspective. You need God's peace.

You need the wholeness that He gives and offers. You need to understand the Scriptures. It's all about Jesus.

He causes them, He desires for them also, secondly, to believe the Scriptures. Verse 46. Verse 46 says, And He said to them, Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.

Jesus is calling them to believe, to believe even the difficult parts of the Word of God. I'm reading through Leviticus. Oh, it's hard.

It's hard to understand some. But I believe it. And I believe it points to the Lord Jesus Christ. And friends, the Scriptures are there for you to believe and to obey.

[22 : 45] Verse 47. Verse 47. Let me back up one thing. The Word clearly states that Christ would suffer and die.

And how many times did Jesus tell His disciples that? We're going to Jerusalem. There I'm going to suffer and I'm going to be killed. And three days later I'm going to rise from the dead.

You can read and hear the Word of God and it just passes over your head. You and I are called to read the Word of God and to believe it and to trust in it.

Even when life doesn't make sense. Even when the words are difficult. Jesus says, I'm here.

I'm standing before you just as I told you. So believe. believe. And then He does something quite subtly.

[23 : 52] Jesus is going to command them in a way that we're not used to commanding. There in verse 47, He's going to command them to proclaim the Scriptures.

Let me read it for you and explain what I mean. Verse 47. And that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations. Beginning from Jerusalem, you are witnesses of these things.

Having lived in Japan for a decade or so, one of the cultural differences is that over here, we're fairly direct. Not fairly. We're direct. If you need something, you just need it, you say it.

Not in a lot of Eastern cultures. They get the point across, but they say it indirectly. And here we read, forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed.

We have six kids. They're older now. But imagine that when they were teenagers and we were having guests, they're going to stay the weekend and we're going to have those guests stay in one of my kids' rooms and Carrie and I, we go up to the room and it's a horrible mess.

[25 : 03] And I turn to my teenager and I say, this room should be clean. Is that a suggestion? No, it's not, guys. I'm saying, clean the room.

Now, as pressing as it might be that company's coming in that illustration, what Jesus tells his disciples here is it has eternal ramifications. The forgiveness of sins based on the completed work of Jesus Christ.

He is the only remedy for sin. Lost, sinful mankind needs to hear about Jesus Christ.

We know family members and co-workers and you do too. Neighbors and they're still chained by sin. Sin still dominates their lives.

What they need and the only one who can free them is Jesus Christ, right? The assignment of the resurrected Christ gave them purpose.

[26 : 19] We not only have the peace of God that makes us whole, we now know what we're to do and we are to be about the business of telling people about Jesus Christ and sharing the good news of the gospel.

Next we turn to verses 49 and 50 and we see the authorization of the resurrected Christ. Follow along as I read verse 49 please.

And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father unto you. But stay in the city until you're clothed with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as Bethany and lifting up his hands he blessed them. This phrase, I'm sending, points to the authority of Jesus. The authority to bestow the Father's promise of the Holy Spirit.

And this is the Holy Spirit that gives us power from on high. Matthew says the same thing. Little different words. And you're very familiar with Matthew's account of this in chapter 28.

[27 : 26] This is verses 18 through 20. And Jesus came and he said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

There's the authorization. Teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you and behold I am with you always to the end of the age. What right do you and I have to talk to somebody whose life is just burdened by sin and their life is ruined?

What right do we have to say to them to say to them friend there's another way and his name is Jesus and the path you're walking on right now it's not the right way.

In fact if you keep following that path it'll lead to more more harm and eventually death. What right do we have to tell somebody that? God of all creation who took upon human flesh who's called the word of God is standing before them right now and he's saying I'm giving you that right.

You have that authority because any other way it leads to destruction. destruction. Paul writes it this way in Romans 1 16 for I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the what?

[29 : 11] The power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes to the Jew first and also to the Greek. and then Dr. Luke in part 2 of his book Acts chapter 1 he puts it this way these are very familiar verses he reveals this promise of the spirit at Pentecost as one of power in chapter 1 verse 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

You see for the disciples in that locked room frightened fearful the authorization now of of the resurrected Christ gave them power within they had peace within they had purpose within now they have power within and then we come to this concluding scene of Luke's gospel the ascension of the resurrected Christ guys this is one of the most overlooked events in the life of Jesus Christ its impact however is significant please follow along as I read verses 51 to 53 this is the ascension of the resurrected Christ while he blessed them he parted from them and was carried up into heaven and they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually in the temple blessing God Luke here concludes his gospel and what he's going to do is chronologically truncate over a month into a few verses in Acts chapter one he gives a little bit more explanation so I want us to see that so in Acts chapter one what we read is this in the first book

O Theophilus and here he is addressing Theophilus again in the first book that's the gospel of Luke O Theophilus I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up that is the ascension that's where we're at at the very end of Luke 24 after he had given commands see I told you it wasn't suggestions it was commands after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen he presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs appearing to them during 40 days and speaking excuse me and speaking about the kingdom of God and while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the father which he said you heard from me for John baptized with water but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now but you will receive power when the

Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria to the end of the earth and when he had said these things as they were looking on he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight so what's so significant about the ascension it was much more than the disciples just looking up into the sky watching Jesus in a cloud going up and up and up until he disappeared you see Jesus was returning as king of kings and lord of lords what we couldn't see what the disciples couldn't see on earth was that in heaven oh there was a celebration there was a victory I'll call it a dance there was a party Jesus Christ appeared to them in that locked room and they didn't realize what he had just done he had just rose from the dead he had defeated Satan he defeated death he defeated hell the power of sin he is the victorious one standing right there in front of them he's God in the flesh and now he's going back and it's a celebration it's a coronation and it's going to be an amazing event that he was going to all they saw was sky Paul put it this way in Philippians 2 verses 9 through 11 therefore God has not just exalted but God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God and not only is Jesus returning to a coronation to that celebration he's returning to the holy of holies as our great high priest

[34 : 28] Hebrews 4 14 says this since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens Jesus the son of God let us hold fast our confession Hebrews chapter 8 verses 1 and 2 says now the point and what we're saying is this we have such a high priest one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven a minister in the holy places in the true tent that God the Lord has set up not man friends aren't you glad that Jesus Christ is actively praying for

you as your high priest that's 1 John chapter 2 he intercedes on your behalf and my behalf when the accuser says Tom look he's at it again Lord Jesus is saying I've already paid for that

I've completely covered that isn't that amazing that is the repentance of sins repentance and forgiveness of sins that we are witnesses of and not only is Jesus return at this point returning as king of kings to his coronation not only is he returning as a great high priest to the holy of holies guys he's just returning home he's going home remember what the father said at his baptism this is my beloved son hear him the father and the son love each other Jesus had just gone through a terrible separation from his father at the cross and now in victory he stands and now in victory he returns home in fact Peter puts it this way in 1 Peter 3 there in verse 21 through the resurrection of

Jesus Christ who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him Jesus is with his father it's a home going now I want you to note the response of the disciples as they're hearing all of this they're still in the locked room they were taken out later 40 days later to the ascension and look what it says in verse 52 and 53 after Jesus rose up in the clouds they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually in the temple blessing God for those confused and broken disciples angels the ascension of the resurrected Christ 40 days later would give them hearts filled with praise within praise within they celebrated the victory of Christ over death and sin

Jesus their Lord and Savior is risen indeed amen I think what Luke is saying to Theophilus and to all the readers of Luke and Acts is this the appearance of the resurrected Christ to his disciples it gave them peace within life was torn apart but the peace of God brings it back and makes it whole the assignment of the resurrected Christ gave them purpose within we now know what we're here to do you know what you're here to do it's a matter of obedience isn't it the authorization of the resurrected Christ gave them power within you and I if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior have the Holy Spirit within there is no more power that you need you have the power of the word of God the power of the spirit of God proclaim the good news and let God work and the ascension of the resurrected Christ it gave them hearts of praise within well I had to ask myself as I was reading this how did the disciples really respond to receiving this peace this purpose this power and this heart of praise did it really make a difference in their lives there's a lot of passages we could go to we could go to

Acts chapter 2 you could look at 1st John chapter 1 but I want us just to take a moment to see something and Dr. Luke is going to be also recording this in chapter 10 of his second book of Acts in Acts chapter 10 follow along as I just go through verses 34 to 36 this is the background is where Cornelius and his family are going to come to trust by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in that context it says this verse 34 so Peter and guys this is the same Peter that denied the Lord Jesus Christ that said I don't know him I swear I don't know him now it's the same Peter what a what a remarkable story of God's grace and mercy so Peter opened his mouth and he said truly I understand that God shows no partiality but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him and as for the word that he sent to Israel that's the scriptures preaching good news of peace through Jesus

[40 : 28] Christ he is Lord of all you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil for God was with him and we are what we are his witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem they put him to death by hanging him on a tree but God raised him on the third day and he made him to appear not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead and he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be the judge and the living and the dead and to him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name I think they understood I think the

Theophilus was starting to see oh it's not about the disciples it's about Jesus Christ and what he does through ordinary people who obey the word of God and proclaim the name of Jesus guys that's that's a challenge for us there are people that you know whose lives are shattered they need to be made whole and you can't do it but you know somebody who can and that is the Lord Jesus Christ and that's our calling isn't it to tell people about Jesus may the Lord help us do that this week let's pray father we have the incredible privilege first of all of being called your children thank you for

the wholeness and the oneness that we have with you through Jesus Christ with humility we just say thank you

Lord that you we pray that you would give us opportunity and boldness even this week to testify of the good things that Jesus has done but not just the good what he has done at the cross and through the resurrection the forgiveness of sins that's available Lord perhaps there's someone right now whose life is just all messed up everything's falling apart I pray that the good news of Jesus Christ that through that word you would make them whole through their repentance and trust in you Lord that you would bring salvation thank you for your work here at Maranatha thank you for the commitment to the word of God and the preaching of the word of God and we ask that you would continue to glorify yourself Lord be pleased to use us we pray this in Jesus name amen thank you you're dismissed