

Burial To Ascension

Lesson 5

- A study has been made of the burial of Christ, His resurrection on the first day of the week, and many of His resurrection appearances.
- In the last lesson a study of His appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus was made. (Mk. 16:12, 13; Lk. 24:13-25).
- During the breaking of the bread at Emmaus, not the Lord's supper, Jesus revealed Himself to them. (Lk. 24:35).
- They had not recognized Jesus because He had appeared "in a different form" to them and God or Christ prevented their eyes from recognizing His face or voice. (Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:16, 31).
- Once Jesus revealed Himself to them, they immediately left and told the eleven and the others who were with them. (Lk. 24:33).
- Jesus next would appear to all the apostles except for Thomas. (Jn. 20:26).
- Some believe "the eleven" is not used literally, but was a designation for the group of the apostles even if one or more of the disciples was not present.
- The first appearance is recorded by two gospels - Luke and John.
- The second appearance is recorded by Mark and John.

Mark's Brief Account Of Christ's Second Or First Appearance To The Eleven

Mk. 16:14 **Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen.**

- "Afterward" refers back to Mark 16:13 where the two disciples from Emmaus reported to the apostles and others with them that they had seen the Risen Lord.
1. Mark's account of this appearance is very brief and he omits many of the details recorded by Luke and John.
 2. Mark's account is best understood not to refer to the initial appearance of Jesus to His apostles.
 3. It is better understood to reference Christ's second appearance to His disciples when Thomas was present. (Jn. 20:24, 26-29).
 4. It is possible it could refer to His first appearance to the apostles if the words "the eleven" are understood to refer to the group of the apostles and not literally all of the apostles. Thomas was not present at Christ's first appearance.
 5. Jesus rebuked them because they had not believed the reports of those who had seen Him after He had arisen.

- a. "He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart."
- b. Jesus felt the disciples had sufficient evidence for belief in His resurrection.
- c. They had the eyewitness testimony of the women and three men. (Matt. 28:9, 10; Lk. 24:34,18).

Luke's Account Of Christ's First Appearance To Apostles

Lk. 24:36 While they [the two disciples from Emmaus] were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be to you."

Lk. 24:37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit.

Lk. 24:38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

Lk. 24:39 "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

Lk. 24:40 And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

Lk. 24:41 While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"

Lk. 24:42 They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish;

Lk. 24:43 and He took it and ate it before them.

1. Luke's account is giving a very brief account of Christ's first appearance to the apostles and others.
2. The "they" in Luke 24:36 refers to the two disciples from Emmaus. (Lk. 24:13).
3. They reported they had seen the risen Lord, but this met with doubt and skepticism from the apostles.
4. Luke says "He Himself stood in their midst and said to them "Peace be to you." See Jn. 20:19,21.
5. The disciples were terribly frightened and "thought they were seeing a spirit," that is, a bodiless Jesus. (Lk. 24:37, 39).
 - a. This most likely was caused by Jesus' sudden appearance to them.
 - b. This fear was also created by the fact they did not expect to see Jesus risen from the dead.
 - c. They concluded "they were seeing a spirit." (Lk. 24:37).
6. Jesus asked them about their being troubled and about their doubts. (Lk. 24:38).
7. Jesus showed them "His hands and His feet." (Lk. 24:39, 40).
 - a. He was demonstrating to them that He was not "a spirit." (Lk. 24:39).
 - b. He was still in His physical body that had been nailed to the cross and had come forth from the tomb early Sunday morning.
 - c. He invited them to touch Him to remove all doubts from their minds that they were seeing His resurrected body.
 - d. Luke does not mention Jesus showing His wounded side to them.
8. Seeing these things the disciples still could not believe it "because of their joy and amazement." They wanted to believe, but it was too good to be true.

9. Jesus said, "Have you anything here to eat?" Lk. 24:41.
 - a. Jesus was likely very hungry, but this was not the reason for His question.
 - b. They had "a piece of broiled fish" and He ate it in their presence.
 - c. This proved conclusively He was not a spirit, but they were seeing His fleshly body.
 - d. His body had been raised, and it did not see corruption. (Psa. 16:10).

John's Account Of Jesus' Appearance To The Apostles

- John's account does not contradict the accounts of Mark and Luke, but he emphasizes some facts not recorded by these other writers.
- John's account, being more detailed in some ways, brings out that Jesus appeared to the disciples on consecutive Sundays.
- His account is divided into two parts.

First Appearance To Apostles Other Disciples Present Part 1

Jn. 20:19 So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut [locked] where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

Jn. 20:20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jn. 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Jn. 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and *said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Jn. 20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

Jn. 20:24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

Jn. 20:25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

- Other disciples are with apostles as indicated by Luke's account of this first appearance to the group of the apostles.. (Lk. 24:33-36).

Lk. 24:33 And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven **and those who were with them,**

Lk. 24:34 saying, "The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon."

Lk. 24:35 They began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.

Lk. 24:36 **While they were telling these things,** He Himself stood in their midst and *said to them, "Peace be to you."

- "Didymus" [Gr. "didumus] meaning "twin" refers to Thomas. (Jn. 20:24; 11:16; 21:2). It was the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Thomas." The identity or gender of his twin is not known.

- “Twelve” was a common way of referring to the group of the apostles. (Jn. 6:71; Acts 6:2; 1 Cor. 15:5). It did not always mean all twelve were present. This can only be determined if the context makes it clear.
 - The use of the “twelve” suggests it means something different than the word “disciples” in this context.
 - At this time there were actually only eleven apostles.
 - John is referring to the same event as Luke in these verses, but he brings out some details omitted by Luke and Luke brought out some details omitted by John.
1. John affirms “it was evening on that day, the first day of the week.”
 - a. John is using Roman time since the evening of the first day of the week was Monday Jewish time.
 - b. The Jewish day was from sunset to sunset.
 2. John records “the doors were shut” because Jesus’ disciples feared the Jews. (Jn. 20:19).
 - a. The word “shut” seems definitely to denote “locked” from the context.
 - b. The word “doors” indicates there was more than one door. (Jn. 20:19, 26).
 - c. This may point to a door at the entrance of the house, and a door into the room where Jesus appeared.
 3. John sets forth, like Luke, that Jesus stood in their midst and said to them “Peace be with you.” (Jn. 20:19, 21; Lk. 24:37).
 4. He showed the disciples His hands and His side. (Jn. 20:20).
 - a. John does not mention Jesus showing them His feet, but does not deny it.
 - b. Luke’s account “See My hands and My feet.” (Lk. 24:39).
 5. “The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.” (Jn. 20:20).
 6. Jesus then “breathed on them” and said to them “Receive the Holy Spirit.” (Jn. 20:22).
 - a. They did not receive the Holy Spirit immediately as revealed by a study of other related Scriptures.
 - b. This was a sign or pledge they would receive the Spirit. (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:7).
 - c. They received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. (Acts 2:4).
 7. Jesus then gave this statement about them forgiving sins. (Jn. 20:23).

Jn. 20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained." The perfect tense in Greek denotes a past action with abiding results. Forgiveness comes from God, and not man.

 - a. Though others were present, these words appear to be addressed to the apostles only.
 - b. Forgiving or retaining sins was not an arbitrary action by the apostles.

- c. The Holy Spirit would guide them into “all truth.” (Jn. 14:26; 16:13).
- d. God gave to them the requirements for forgiveness, and on the basis of God’s word they could declare sins forgiven or retained.
 - e. An example of this would be Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:4, 37-38). See also 1 John and Acts regarding God’s law of pardon for Christians. (Acts 8:22; 1 Jn. 1:7, 9).
 - f. No person, inspired or uninspired, can by his/her authority forgive or retain sin for alien sinners or Christians.
- 8. John stresses the fact Thomas was not present the week before. (Jn. 20:24).
- 9. Thomas exclaimed he would only believe Jesus had been raised from the dead under certain conditions. (Jn. 20:25).
 - a. Thomas refused to accept the testimony of others.
 - b. He had to see Jesus and touch Him.
 - c. The skepticism of Thomas and the evidence Jesus provided him and the others of His resurrection gives us even more assurance Jesus was raised from the dead.

Second Appearance To The Apostles Eight Days Later Part 2

Jn. 20:26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."

Jn. 20:27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Jn. 20:28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jn. 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

1. John reports that “after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them.”
 - a. John uses the inclusive method of courting.
 - b. It included the preceding Sunday on which Jesus had been raised and the current Sunday.
2. The doors were shut again, but Jesus entered the room and “stood in their midst.” (Jn. 20:26).
3. Once again He said, “Peace be with you.” (Jn. 20:26).
4. There is no reason given for the absence of Thomas, but he is not blamed or praised for it.
5. Jesus gave Thomas the opportunity to do what Thomas said he must do to believe. (Jn. 20:27).
6. It is not stated if Thomas actually touched Jesus, but it is very possible he did since he had said he would not believe unless he touched Jesus. (Jn. 20:25).
7. Thomas being convinced Jesus was truly raised from the dead said to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!”
 - a. Thomas recognized Jesus as “Lord.”

- 1) Jesus is the Christ, the anointed Ruler.
 - 2) We must hearken to Him. (Lk. 6:46).
- b. He also recognized Jesus as “God.”
- c. There is no indication that he believed Jesus was God the Father.
- 1) He was not God the Father.
 - 2) He was Deity in the flesh.
- d. By the word “God” he was recognizing Jesus as Deity.
- 1) The Bible clearly reveals that Thomas had reached the right conclusion about Jesus.
 - 2) Jesus is our “Lord.”
 - 3) Jesus was and is Deity. (Matt. 1:23; Jn. 1:1;10:30; 14:9; Col. 1:15; 2:9).
- e. John 20:29 is a very significant statement of Jesus.
- 1) Jesus expects us to believe on the basis of the evidence of the witnesses and the empty tomb.
 - 2) The empty tomb is a powerful argument for the resurrection, but it was never directly used by the apostles.
 - 3) The apostles stressed the importance of believing the eyewitnesses of the resurrection.
 - 4) These witnesses were willing to live and die for the Risen Lord.
- f. John 20:29 may also be interpreted to mean Thomas came to faith by seeing Jesus without touching Him.
- g. John 20:29 may also be a mild rebuke to Thomas.
- 1) Thomas had to see Jesus and perhaps touch Him to believe.
 - 2) They vast majority of believers have never had the opportunity to see or touch the Risen Lord.
 - 3) Believers rely on the testimony of the eyewitnesses of Jesus’ resurrection.
 - 4) This testimony comes from those who were willing to live and die for their belief.

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