

Luke 24 (Part 2): 36-53 • The Resurrected Messiah

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Luke 24, verse 36. We're going to read through this section of Scripture and then we're going to pray and see what the Lord has for us this morning. It begins in verse 36 this way:

"As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!"³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.³⁸ And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?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."⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

(Pardon me just one second; my screen just jumped. All right, verse 44) *Then 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."⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."*

⁵⁰ And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.⁵¹ While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.⁵² And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God." (ESV)

Let's pray, shall we?

Heavenly Father, as we dig into the Scriptures here this morning and finish out these last verses of Luke, we pray for understanding and we pray for insight.

We pray, Father God, that You would speak to our hearts, because You know each one of us. You know what is the greatest need in each heart that is tuning in today. You know us personally and intimately.

And I pray, my Father, that You would speak to each person in that very intimate and very personal way that You are able to do—to reach the very depth of our hearts. To speak to the area of greatest need, and to minister Lord, to us in ways that frankly blow us away.

But we thank You for Your ministry. We thank You for knowing us. And we ask You, God, to fill us now, nourish our hearts from the Word. Bring balance and peace and wisdom and insight and understanding into our hearts. For we look to you to accomplish this work, and we look to no other, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. Amen.

Well, we saw in our last study, last Sunday, that after our Lord was raised from the tomb, the women came to the tomb to finish doing their usual burial preparations to the body of Jesus, and they were met there with an empty tomb. Two angels appeared to them while they were there and spoke to them about His resurrection.

Later that day, the Lord himself appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus as they were walking from Jerusalem. And there have been other appearances already that have taken place that Luke does not tell us about. But now we are in the evening. Time-wise, we are in the evening of Resurrection Day. So we're still on the same day that Jesus was raised from the tomb.

And we're told here in verse 36 that as they were talking—obviously, their conversation—this is what's uppermost in all of their minds. While they were talking about this, it says that Jesus was just suddenly standing in their midst and saying, “*Shalom*” which of course means Peace to you.

This is, of course, all the more incredible when we learn from John something very significant. Let me show you a passage from John chapter 20, verse 19:

John 20:19 (ESV)

On the evening of that day, 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 and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

It says, “*On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were...*” And they were locked because those guys were afraid of being arrested—it says that Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, shalom, peace be with you.

Now, did you notice what John told us there? The doors were locked. I can imagine that it's probably pretty unnerving to have your doors locked and then suddenly find someone in the room who wasn't there a moment ago.

And these guys are nervous. We're told by John that they were afraid that they might be the next to be arrested. So they're already jumpy, and they're sitting there talking. Nobody really—they've heard things, but nobody really knows exactly what's going on. And suddenly, Jesus is standing among them, and He says, shalom. What a beautiful picture!

And it says in verse 37 that they were startled and frightened, and most of them thought that they were seeing a ghost—a spirit. By the way, the Greek really doesn't have a word for ghost. It's the word spirit. And they thought they were seeing the spirit of Jesus but not a physical form. And the reason is because they saw Him die. They saw Him die.

And in our usual life experience, we don't see people who were dead on Friday afternoon greeting us with a smile on their face Sunday evening. It just doesn't happen. Check out how Jesus responded to his followers. I love this. Verse 38: *"And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?""*

Now, you might hear that statement and think, well, Jesus, I mean, give these guys a break. It's not every day that they see somebody die on a Friday and then talk to them on a Sunday. So how can you say to them, *"...Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your heart?"*

Well, Jesus has a right to say that. And I'll tell you why: it's because He told them this was what was going to happen. And what He is actually saying to them is this: Why did you not believe My Word? Why did you not believe what I told you? I told you this is the way it would happen. On the third day, the Son of Man would rise. And that is what He is confronting.

Jesus does that to you and I throughout the course of our lives in various circumstances and situations. He confronts us with our unbelief.

Do you think it's possible for a true born-again believer—and we call ourselves believers—do you think it's possible to be filled at times with unbelief? As a believer? Well, it definitely is very possible. We can believe many things about the Lord and have unbelief in a particular area. And so Jesus is confronting their unbelief.

Has the Lord confronted you recently about your unbelief? Has He been speaking to you at all about an area of unbelief? Maybe something going on in

the world right now that is causing fear for everyone in it. Is the Lord speaking to you and saying, where's your faith? Why are you so troubled in your heart?

Obviously, Jesus understands our human propensity to disbelieve. And I love how He responds to his disciples here by saying in verse 39, "*See my hands and my feet...*" And obviously, He's showing them the scars. A spirit is not going to bear scars, right?

And so He says, "...*Touch me* (go ahead and touch me. Reach out, touch me, and see..." And then look at this next statement. This is very interesting. He says, "... *a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.*" And then it goes on to say that with that, He then showed them his scars—the scars on his hands and feet and so forth—and let them touch Him to see that He was flesh and bone.

Now, this is very interesting in light of the fact that—guys, do you know that right now Jesus is in His resurrection body? This is his resurrection body. And that's important for you and I to know because it's the same kind of body that you and I are going to get one day.

Right now, we're flesh and bones, with blood coursing through our veins and so forth, but there is coming a day when we are going to receive a new body. Jesus spoke of it many times, and the Apostle Paul talks about it. But we've got a new body awaiting us, and it's going to be incredible. It's going to be wonderful. But Christians, it's going to be flesh and bone.

Sometimes I think people, when they think about their resurrection body, they're thinking that it's going to be more like the angels—a powerful, spiritual body. But we're going to have human bodies. But our human bodies are going to be different from the standpoint that they're not going to deal with the same limitations that our current human bodies deal with.

Like, we're not going to hunger. We're not going to grow tired. Locked doors are not going to be an issue and that sort of thing. But most importantly, death will no longer be an issue when we receive our new human bodies. And the Apostle Paul actually speaks about this in Romans. Let me show you this from Romans, chapter 6, verse 9:

Romans 6:9 (ESV)

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion (or, I think the NIV uses the word *mastery*) *over him.*

Right?

And we know that what it says about Jesus, it will say about us because He is the first fruits of those who rise from the dead and are given that body that death has no mastery or dominion over. And we know that when we receive our new bodies, death is not going to be an issue.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he gave such incredible insights about these resurrection bodies that we're going to have. Let me show you this from 1 Corinthians, chapter 15. This is great:

1 Corinthians 15:50-54 (ESV)

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

I tell you this, brothers (first of all, he says): *flesh and blood* (meaning, and he's talking about our current physical bodies) *cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable* (Our current bodies are perishable; the new body we receive will be imperishable. So he goes on to say). *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body* (our current physical body) *must* (notice that emphasis) *put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."*

What a glorious truth. Amen? It's beautiful. A beautiful passage, a beautiful reminder that these physical bodies were not created—well, I shouldn't say it that way. I should say these physical bodies that we now possess cannot inherit the kingdom.

The Lord is very gracious while we live upon this earth and on this side of the veil. He's very gracious to dwell within us through his Holy Spirit. But as Paul says, one day we have to put off these physical bodies and put on that which is imperishable, which is created to stand in the presence of God. These bodies cannot endure the presence of God.

Do you remember when Moses asked up on the mountain to behold the glory of God's face? Do you remember what God said to him? God said, you can't, nobody, he said, no one can behold my face and live, because these physical bodies just can't take it. (Exodus 33:18-23)

But there is coming a day when the Lord will give us a new physical body, when the mortal will be set aside, and the immortal will be taken up. And those bodies will be able to endure the presence of God. And that's what we're waiting for. We will receive those bodies when the Lord comes for his church.

And I think about how wonderful that's going to be, especially for people who are living right now in—not just physical bodies like you and I—but in physical bodies that aren't working very well at all. And of course, the older we get, the more pronounced that becomes. But I think about people who are living with constant pain. I think about people who are living in these physical bodies with immobility and disability.

I think about godly women like Joni Eareckson Tada, who is living in a wheelchair, literally caught inside of a physical body that won't move properly. But I think also of how one day all of her limitations are going to be gone, and she will never sit in a wheelchair again because she will receive a new body just like the one Jesus had. What a wonderful, wonderful day that will be, amen?

Paul goes on to express in Romans this current condition of our bodies. Look with me in Romans, chapter 8, beginning at verse 22:

Romans 8:22-23 (ESV)

For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

It says, *For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves* (he says, we're also, we're part of it, and he says, we), *who have the firstfruits of the Spirit* (living within us, we're also), *groan inwardly as we wait eagerly* (and sometimes even a little impatiently) *for adoption as sons* (in other words, for the full adoption to come through), *the redemption of our bodies.*

The renewal of these physical bodies and so forth. We're waiting, but he says, meanwhile, we groan. We're groaning.

Do you ever hear that when you're getting up in the morning? You might not—you might be young and able to bound out of bed with hardly a thought. But the rest of us who are a little bit older, we wake up in the morning and we groan.

We get out of bed and we're like, oh man, and we've got to stretch for several minutes to get our backs and our legs working again. And then we have to stand up slowly and get acclimated to not being laying horizontal. And then we start to move through our day. And we groan, right? We groan. We groan inwardly, and we groan outwardly, sometimes.

Verse 41 in our text goes on to say: *“And while they still disbelieved for joy (In other words, they just couldn't believe it. That's what you and I would say: I just can't believe it. I can't believe it) and (they) were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.”*

I keep reading this, and I'm going: broiled fish? Broiled? Couldn't they grill it for Him? I mean, grilled fish is good. Broiled fish? I don't know. I hope they had some tartar sauce to put on it, because broiled doesn't sound good to me at all.

But in the theater of my mind, I see this scene, and whenever I read it, it's almost a little funny. It's a little comical because I see them handing Jesus this piece of fish and all standing around with their mouths gaping open as they watch Him eat this piece of fish and swallow it. Because, again, they thought He was a spirit. And so He's doing all of these things to encourage them and say, It's me. It's me.

Do you know what I love about these verses? I love how they speak of the character of God, who cares? Jesus didn't berate them. He didn't say, come on, you guys. Get with it. What's your problem, anyway? I told you this is the way it was going to be. Now shape up! He didn't do that.

He was gentle with them, like a gentle father. And He invited them: Come, touch me. Look and see. Look at my hands. Look at my feet. Look at the scars. Do you have anything to eat? Yeah, we've got a little bit of broiled fish. Could I have it, please? And then, whatever is going on in the room while He's eating that piece of fish and they're watching—but He's doing it for them.

Jesus didn't eat that piece of broiled fish because He was hungry. He ate it for the disciples.

I want you to think about that because that speaks of the character of God. Are there some areas in your life where you need the Lord to be patient with you? Are there some areas in your life where you just don't get it? And you say, Lord, I'm struggling in this.

Maybe you're struggling just like the disciples struggled as it relates to really believing: He's here. He's in front of us. He's alive. Maybe you're struggling

with something else, and you need the Lord to be patient. Just say to him, Lord, just the way you asked for a piece of broiled fish and you ate it in front of the disciples to help quell their disbelief, I need you to be patient with me and to show me what is real and what is true.

The Lord is very patient, very loving, very gracious. And we see that in this passage.

Verse 44: *“Then 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.”*

Notice how Jesus uses/breaks up the Old Testament into those three divisions: the Law of Moses (the first five books), the Prophets (covering, obviously, a huge section of the Old Testament), and then He divides the Psalms, interestingly enough, into its own division, which, of course, is largely prophetic in its predictions of Messiah and so forth.

But He’s telling them here: This is what I’ve been talking to you about, that these things—and all the things that you’ve witnessed and all the things that you’ve seen—are a fulfillment of what I told you would come to pass.

But you know what? It’s not just enough to talk about the scriptures, is it? Something else is needed. Those disciples that evening needed something else from Jesus. And that is why He did something else for them. And it’s critical that we see this passage and that we understand what it means.

Look at verse 45. This is very important. It says, *“Then (you might want to underline this in your Bible or highlight it, then) he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,”* Oh, that is so important. He went on to tell them, *“⁴⁶...Thus it is written (because now he has opened their understanding), that the Christ (the Messiah) should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,”*

Now, of course, He’s been saying this for a long time, but now He’s speaking to them anew and afresh. Having their hearts and minds opened, He says, *“⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name (which means in His authority) to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”*

But I want to go back and I want to look at this statement because you see, Luke is the one who tells us that Jesus opened their minds to the scriptures. But it’s John who tells them how He did it. Look at this passage from John, chapter 20, verse 22:

John 20:22 (ESV)

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

You just saw here, in John’s gospel account, how Jesus opened their minds to understand the scriptures.

First of all, He used this symbolic action—which is really more than symbolism in his case—but it says, “...*He breathed on them...*” And, of course, that action harkens back to the Book of Genesis, the creation account. Do you remember when God created Adam?

The Bible says He formed Adam out of the ground—literally out of the dirt. And He created this beautiful human body, but it was lifeless. And so the Bible tells us in Genesis that God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, and he came alive. He became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

But what happened? We get to the third chapter of Genesis, and we find that sin happened. And sin brought death, didn’t it? The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death. (Genesis 3:17-19)

So what did Jesus tell Nicodemus—he said, now it’s not enough just to be born. You must be born again. You must be born of the Spirit, right? Every human being on earth is born, but you must be born a second time. And so what Jesus is doing at this point—and what we read in John’s Gospel—is that this is that picture of the second birth (John 3:3-7). He breathed on them and said, “*Receive the Holy Spirit.*” (John 20:22).

And, of course, this is when they became born again. This is when they received the Spirit to indwell. And this is when the Spirit does that extra work of illuminating our hearts and minds to understand the Scriptures.

Do you remember before you became a Christian, before you gave your life to the Lord—maybe those few times you either heard of the Bible or picked it up to read it a few times?

And maybe you even opened up some of the pages and read things. And there might have been some things that were mildly interesting, but you didn’t really get it. And so you probably threw it down and thought, yeah, whatever. But then, through circumstances and situations in your life, eventually, you came to a place where you surrendered your heart to Jesus Christ and you opened your heart to Him and the work that he did on the cross. And He saved you.

But what happened on that day when He saved you? He breathed on you, and He said, “*Receive the Holy Spirit.*” And you did. You received the Spirit. And then you began to read your Bible, and you were excited about what you were learning.

You understood the Scriptures, and you were excited about that understanding. And it is a wonderful benefit of receiving the Holy Spirit when we come to Christ—that He opens our hearts and minds to understand the Word.

I found, in one of my study Bibles, an amazing quote that I want to show you here. It’s from the Holman New Testament Commentary. I just thought this was very well said:

Scripture cannot be understood by the simple human mind. God has to open the mind to understand Scripture. Reading Scripture is not like any other reading assignment you might undertake. Reading Scripture must begin with a dedication of your mind and heart to God and with a willingness to listen to God as he speaks to you through Scripture. We understand Scripture only as God’s Holy Spirit opens our minds and becomes our teacher. - **Holman New Testament Commentary**

Scripture cannot be understood by the simple human mind. God has to open the mind to understand Scripture. Reading Scripture is not like any other reading assignment you might undertake. Reading Scripture must begin with a dedication of your mind and heart to God and with a willingness to listen to God as he speaks to you through Scripture. We understand Scripture only as God’s Holy Spirit opens our minds and becomes our teacher.

And, of course, this quote that I just read for you from the Holman New Testament Study Bible is based upon various Scripture passages—not the least of which is 1 Corinthians, chapter 2. Let me put this also on the screen for you, verses 12 through 14:

1 Corinthians 2:12-14 (NIV84)

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

We have not received the spirit of the world but (when we come to Christ as our Savior, we receive the) the Spirit who is from God, that (look at this) we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words

taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit,...” Expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

And then he goes on to say: “*The man without the Spirit...*” And I’m quoting this from the NIV because I like the wording here, the man without the Spirit—and it literally means, in the Greek, the natural man, is not going to accept the things that come from the Spirit of God because they’re idiotic to him. They’re foolishness to him. He can’t understand them. Why? Because they are discerned spiritually. We must have the Spirit in order to discern such things.

A couple of verses later, look with me also in 1 Corinthians, chapter 2, verse 16. Paul writes:

1 Corinthians 2:16 (ESV)

“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” (And that’s a question that’s quoted out of Isaiah 40. But then he goes on to say this,) *But we have the mind of Christ.*

In other words, we’ve been given the mind of Christ through the Spirit that we might understand the work of the Spirit. And that’s one of the reasons why we pray every Sunday morning, every Wednesday evening, when we’re studying the Word of God. I read the Scripture, and then we prayed.

We say, God, open our hearts. Open our minds. Help us to understand your Word. It’s vitally important because He is the teacher through His Spirit. He is the teacher who gives us understanding.

Jesus goes on speaking to his followers, saying in verse 48, “*You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you...*” Now, I want you to notice that He’s talking about a different work of the Spirit here.

The indwelling presence of the Spirit comes in, in, into indwell. But now Jesus says, I’m going to send the promise of my Father upon you—which is a different preposition—and we’ll read about that later. But he says, “*...stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*”

And He tells them right there what this promise—the promise of the Father—is going to do for them. It’s not going to save them. They were already saved. They’d received the Spirit. He breathed on them: “*Receive the Holy Spirit.*” They’re born again. Their minds are open. They’re saved.

But now He says, there's a promise that my Father has given you to clothe you with power from on high. And so wait in the city until this promise comes to pass.

And we know when that promise came to pass. It came to pass during the Feast of Pentecost, which is 50 days past after Passover. And that's why it was referred to as Pentecost. This is the time when the disciples were in Jerusalem worshipping together, and the Spirit fell upon them, and so forth.

And Jesus referred to that work that we read about in the book of Acts as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And the baptism of the Spirit is not for salvation. It is for empowering.

In fact, there's a lot of questions that people have about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I get questions pretty regularly from folks, and one of the most common is, how can I know that I've been baptized by the Holy Spirit? I always take them to Acts, chapter 1, where Jesus promises this work of the Spirit. Let me show you on the screen what it says.

Acts 1:5,8 (ESV)

"...John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now... 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."

Jesus said, *"...John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now..."* And He's talking to them—this is speaking to them prior to His ascension. He says, *"...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."*

Okay, did you catch that passage? And did you see what Jesus said would happen when they were baptized? He said they would receive power. Well, that's how you know if you've been baptized by the Holy Spirit.

If you're lacking power in your Christian life—if you're lacking power to witness, if you're lacking power to do the work that God has called you to do—I would encourage you to call out to God and ask Him to baptize you with His Holy Spirit.

Now somebody might say, wait a minute, Pastor, why would I do that? I'm already saved. I've already received the Holy Spirit. Well, yes, you have. You've received the Spirit for salvation, and that's a once-for-all thing.

When you receive the Holy Spirit—when you come to Christ and put your faith in His finished work on the cross—you receive the indwelling presence of his Spirit. And that’s something that never goes away. That’s something that never lessens or you’re never, you know what I am saying that work of the Spirit never has to be redone because you’re saved, you’re born again.

But the baptism of the Holy Spirit is different. What we see in the book of Acts is that the people of God were repeatedly baptized with the Holy Spirit. Those who had been baptized before, we see them later baptized again. And so, we see in Scripture that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that we need often—daily, at times—to be empowered daily, right?

And so that is important to remember: the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a work of salvation. It is a work of empowering to those who are already saved.

All right, now as we close with these last four verses, Luke skips over a period of about 40 days where Jesus spent time with his disciples, appearing to them after his resurrection.

But Luke actually does go on to speak of those days when he writes about them in the book of Acts, because Luke is the author of the book of Acts. Let me show you what he wrote from Acts, chapter 1, verses 1 through 3:

Acts 1:1-3 (ESV)

... I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, 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 forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

...I have (and this is Luke speaking here, he says) dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, 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 forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

So Luke tells us in his Acts letter that Jesus spent 40 days talking to the disciples, speaking to them. Paul adds this comment from 1 Corinthians, chapter 15. Check this out:

1 Corinthians 15:6 (ESV)

Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

And remember, that term “*fallen asleep*” is a euphemism for death—Christian death—because the body appears as if it is sleeping, but the person themselves has gone to be with the Lord.

Interestingly enough, we’re not told a great deal about all the things that Jesus did and said during that 40-day period when Jesus met with his disciples. We assume that it was an amazing time of instruction and preparation for the ministry that they were about to embark upon.

But it tells us here in verse 50 of Luke 24, look with me in your Bible: “*And he led them out as far as Bethany...*” And we know from the book of Acts that He was literally on the Mount of Olives with His followers. And it says, “*...and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹(And) while he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.*”

And then, let me show you from Acts, chapter 1. Luke adds this note saying,

Acts 1:10-11 (ESV)

And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? (And then look at this.) This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

How did Jesus go up into heaven? In the clouds. How is Jesus going to return from heaven? In the clouds. Right? We know that we’re going to actually meet Him in the clouds, in the air, as the church. When He comes first for his church, then He will come to the earth.

And in verse 52, it says, “*And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy...*” Can you imagine? Can you imagine their joy? And they were constantly—or continually—in the temple, blessing God. Which—and this is interesting—it says in the ESV, “*blessing God.*”

I had someone write me recently and say, how can we bless God? I thought He blesses us. Well, this is an interesting Greek word that literally means *to* praise. In this case, it means *to* praise. So they were continually in the temple, praising God.