

# Luke 24

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How exactly are we supposed to be a witness for Jesus?

Before I begin, this is the end of Luke. God laid it on me to do Leviticus next. Don't know why, but I am in no position to argue! Now you know the plan. Grateful to everyone who reads this and I hope everyone reading this fires up a prayer for wisdom before reading this! OK then, time to finish Luke:

Most of get the fact by now we ARE saved and are supposed to use our lives to be witness for Jesus! I simply want to ask the question through this chapter how exactly are we supposed to do that? Will our rewards in heaven be based on exactly how many people we lead to Jesus? No. What if I must do lots of things to support myself and my family? Do I have to quit all that to be a witness for Jesus? Do I get less rewards than say someone on the "front lines" doing full-time missionary work or uses their life as a professional pastor? I have always argued that the one prayer God can't resist answering is to pray for a total surrender of our will for His! If you believe God calls you to regularly pray for a man or woman in the full-time ministry, I'd argue your heavenly reward is as great as the one doing that ministry work part or full time. God's aware of what we deal with in life. He simply wants us to be a good witness for Jesus during our lives no matter what He calls us to do!

I get into all this because we are going to read mostly about people other than the "11" (the 12 disciples minus Judas who killed himself at this point) as they deal with angels and Jesus Himself, implying that how each person in this chapter is to be a witnesses for Him, given His death and resurrection and what we're to do with that information. I admit I love the fact the first people to see the risen Jesus wasn't the "11" but others! Jesus gave two men a long lesson on Old Testament Bible prophecy about Him. Those "others" got so excited they ran 7 miles back to Jerusalem to see the 11 and share this information with them. In this chapter some women went to Jesus' tomb to anoint His dead body. They discover He isn't there. They assume someone stole His body and had to be told by angels He's not there. They also did what they could with that information and used it to inform the "11". Again, Judas was dead and those women went to a secret gathering place of the 11 (in fear of death by the Romans)! Then Jesus appears in that locked room out of "nowhere". The text doesn't say Jesus picked the lock or climbed in through a window, but He is suddenly in that room! The lesson for us is about how the disciples dealt with that and it's a great lesson in how they used their lives from that point forward to be a witness for Jesus.

I always loved the fact that history records the 11 disciples (except John), was tortured to death. All of them could have avoided death if they denied Jesus rose from the dead! None of them did that and they were killed for their faith. That's a great lesson in standing up for Jesus when our faith is on the line. I "pound the pulpit" about daily prayer and daily reading the bible as times come when God will test our faith. Knowing the truth about Jesus gives us the strength to take a stand for Him when those moments come. None of that matters in terms of being saved. This is about being a good witness for Him. God tests us to grow in our faith!

With all that out of my system time for details: While the chapter breaks were added over a millennium later, this chapter break was placed a good spot. Chapter 23 focuses on Jesus' death, while Chapter 24's selected events after the resurrection. Notice none of the Gospels ever describe how or when Jesus rose from the dead. That's because there were no witnesses to that event. What we get a few stories of those

who encounter Jesus other than the 11 disciples. The point for us isn't just to understand that Jesus rose from the dead, but what that means we're called to do as a witness for Him. OK, onto the chapter itself:

It opens with the story of some female disciples of Jesus going to His tomb to put spices over His dead body. They knew the right place as they saw where Jesus was buried on Friday. Since they went there to put spices on His body and it was gone, their first thought was someone stole the body! That's when two angels showed up to share the truth. The women ran to the 11 to share the story. Peter and John as stated in John's Gospel went to the tomb. Only Peter went in. No angels appeared to Peter at that point as I suspect God wanted it to sink in. Then Luke moves the scene to two disciples, not part of the 11.

These two were with the 11 when the women came back and after Peter and John returned. Then those two started a 7-mile walk back to where they lived. As they started Jesus joined them but those 2 didn't know it was Jesus. While they walked Jesus gave them, I suspect a fairly intense Bible prophecy study covering much of the Old Testament about Him! (I figure if the first thing Jesus does after resurrected is to give a detailed Bible prophecy study, that means it's biblical when I do that!) Those two guys did not realize it was Jesus, but they were so happy to hear the Old Testament Jesus Bible study they asked Jesus to join them for dinner and spend the night with them! It's another clue that prophecy studies are a thing people are interested in. The moment they knew it was Jesus is when He broke bread. Those 2 men were not at the last supper. I believe God allowed that moment for those two to know it was Jesus is to associate communion with Him! At that moment Jesus disappeared. They stated how excited they were and then probably double-timed the 7 miles back to tell the other disciples!

Beginning at Verse 36 we finally see Jesus talking to the 11. It does not specifically say Jesus appeared out of "nowhere", but other Gospels say the room was locked. I'd argue Jesus didn't climb in a window or picked the lock as it would have been stated. Remember they haven't seen Jesus yet, just got reports from others. Jesus said in effect, "You need proof, look at the holes in my hands and feet. Watch me, I will eat food." (Yes, Jesus appeared to Simon first, but this is for everyone in the room!) Given that the resurrected Jesus could eat (I'll argue we can eat in heaven, but we don't have to worry about digestion, I'd argue our eternal bodies don't have a digestive system based on 1st Corinthians 6:13). I'd argue that there is no waste disposal system in heaven! Sorry I got off topic. The main point is the disciples saw Jesus alive and were all (but John) tortured and killed instead of denying that fact!

The final two verses mention that Jesus was carried into heaven! I admit if Jesus could walk through a wall, why does He have to be carried into heaven? I'd argue our new bodies which are designed to last for all of eternity cannot enter there until after we die or be taken there! Despite the technicalities of all Jesus could and can't do after being resurrected, the key issue is He lived again, just as people will also live again. Jesus being God is in charge of our eternal fate, good or bad!

OK John, most of us know the resurrection story well. We wouldn't be reading this if we didn't believe Jesus was God and was raised from the dead! The big question for all of us is what are we doing about it? I'm not saying we all must write Bible studies. God calls each of us to different roles. The key is to find ways to use our lives for His glory. Try different things. I realize we have to work or go to school or have illnesses or family members we must deal with. The issue is being a good witness through that and when the opportunities come to shine, let God work through us to make a difference for Him. I got to admit to study Luke again not only reminded me of the reality of the Gospel accounts but reading all the details and thinking about them reminded me all of this is real and each of us will live for eternity!

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on the link for the detailed study. It's still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for everyone who reads this.