




Jesus' Resurrection - What Changed?

John 21:12: (NASB) *Jesus said to them, Come and have breakfast. None of the disciples ventured to question him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord.*

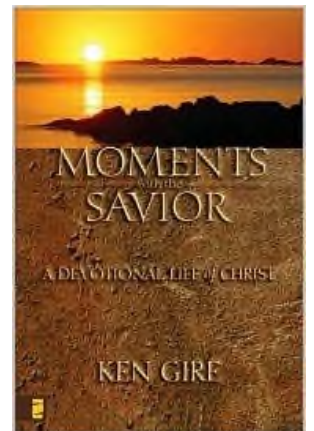


After the greatest act of love ever committed, Jesus lay dead in a donated tomb. His loyal companions and followers were stunned, sickened by what they had witnessed. But beyond the gory details of this death, they were hit with the uncomfortable thought that perhaps all they had known the past three and a half years was a lie, fake, delusional. This man, Jesus, they had trusted and loved was dead. He died like everyone else. There was no last-minute fire from heaven to kill the Roman soldiers or the angry mob of his own brethren demanding his death. There was no angelic rescue team to pull him off that dreaded piece of wood. He was dead. For real. No one was coming to save them from the Roman rule. They would not be sitting on anyone's right hand in the new government. They had seemingly been duped. Now what? Well, three days later, it was imperative that the risen Jesus convince them beyond a shadow of doubt that all he had promised was REAL and was happening. His followers needed to be 100% convinced and energized to tell the Good News at any cost to all who would listen. The man Jesus was gone forever, but the spirit Jesus would have life within himself and power to restore all of mankind back to his Father. They needed to urgently tell that story to you and me. How did the disciples go from feeling ultimate betrayal and grief to absolute certainty and joy?

To set our context, we will begin with a partial quote from the book, Moments with the Savior.

 ***An Intense Moment on the Emmaus Road, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire***
(Only an excerpt from the reading is shown here. Please listen to the audio of our program or refer to the book.)

- It is called Good Friday. But for these two followers of Jesus nothing about it is good. Everything good this day has died. And it seems to them it will be Friday for the rest of their lives. For the rest of Jerusalem, though, it's Sunday. The Passover Sabbath is over, and life has returned to normal. But for these two men the sounds of life returning to normal seems a sacrilege. For them nothing could ever be normal again. No Passover could come without memories of him who was led as a lamb to the slaughter. No sacrifice could be made without remembering the way he was sheared and cut up and stretched out on that God-forsaken cross. Since these two were friends of the man on that cross, a lot of strangers wanted to ask them questions, find out exactly what happened, and exactly what the disciples were going to do now. But the two were so disoriented from grief they didn't know anything vaguely, let alone exactly.*





And what they did know, they didn't want to talk about. Especially with strangers. And since the city was a spilling silo of strangers, they wanted out. They decide the country would be a good place to go, where there is space to think, to sort things out. And they have plenty to sort. They have left everything behind to follow Jesus. They have staked their future on his words - their hopes, their dreams, everything. Now he is gone. And somehow, they will have to get along without him.

Our podcast is all about tragedy, doubt and clarity. When we go through the all too familiar life experiences of tragedy and doubt what we find is that we are always seeking clarity to balance them, to help us cope with and overcome them. At the time of Jesus' crucifixion and death his followers were overwhelmed in tragedy and doubt, the risen Jesus sought to prove to them that the seemingly incomprehensible facts of his resurrection and change were not only factual, but the most world-changing factual events that would ever occur. Giving his followers clarity in such immense and unique circumstances would not be easy. But Jesus is good at “not easy” and this is the story of how he would help his followers to see, absorb and stand for his cause as their risen Messiah.

The revealing of Jesus' resurrection came in steps - small steps - as the magnitude of change and significance that needed to be absorbed by his followers was overwhelming.



We begin with the first hint that Jesus was alive:

Matthew 28:1-7: (NASB) ¹Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (and Salome) came to look at the grave. ²And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. ³And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. ⁵The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. ⁶He is not here, for he has risen, just as he said. Come, see the place where he was lying. ⁷Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead; and behold, he is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see him; behold, I have told you.



What was the most gentle and yet believable way that the disciples could receive the message that this Jesus who they knew, who they saw crucified, who they saw dead was again alive? The most gentle and believable way was by announcement of an empty tomb. Not some passerby announcing the tomb was empty and not some Roman soldier's report. This announcement had to have a higher credibility. So, God chose an angel! There is no more powerful messenger than an angel.

The angel said:

1. Do not be afraid. This was similar to the angelic announcement of Jesus' birth.
2. I know why you are here - you are seeking Jesus who was crucified.
3. He is not here.
4. He is risen - AS HE SAID. It was important to establish the fact that Jesus was a true prophet. This very fact established it, because he said this was going to happen.
5. Come, look and see for yourselves - do not take my word for it; he is not there anymore.
6. Go tell the others!

While the actual message was a simple statement of fact, the delivery of the message was a dramatic event. The drama got their undivided attention while the message simply showed them that the door of clarity was in fact open.

When we are faced with tragedy, doubt and grief are we open to hearing the word of God through whatever messenger He may choose to assure us that the door of clarity is in fact open?





Matthew 28:8-10: (NASB) ⁸And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to his disciples. ⁹And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid; go and take word to my brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see me.

For this second step to be a powerful follow-up to the angelic announcement, Jesus would have to appear as himself. There really was no choice, because human nature needs a solid base on which to build a life-changing belief. This second step adds personal recognition to their received information. Had Jesus appeared as anything other than the old familiar Jesus, it would not have been believable. It was a logical second step. He did not push them away; he let them touch and worship him and gave them the ability to have a feel for the communion they once had with him before.

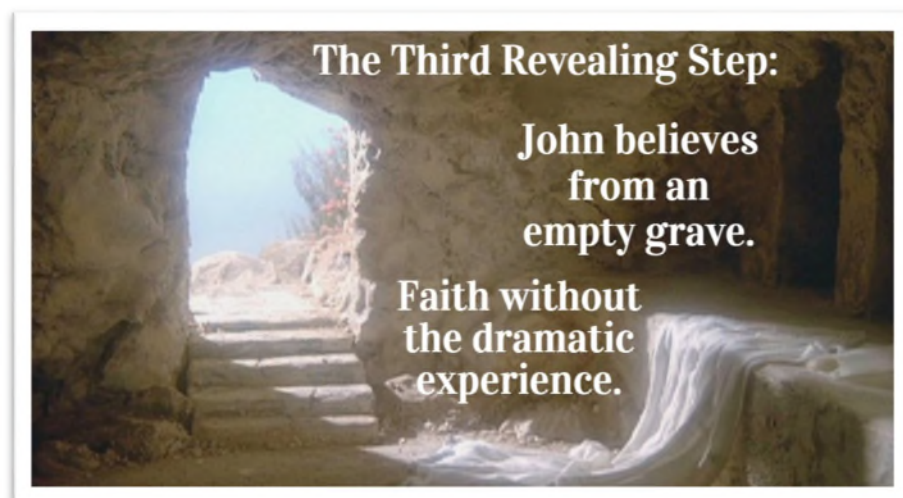
What message does Jesus personally give them? There are four parts to the message.

1. He told them not to be afraid.
2. He told them to go tell the others. Make sure they know this. Spread it by word of mouth.
3. He told them to instruct his brethren to go to Galilee.
4. He told them, “Do not worry; I am not going to disappear; I am going to see you again in Galilee.”

Jesus not only looked familiar, he acted in a familiar way by giving them assurance and instruction. This combination added to the angelic announcement began to address their doubts and enhanced the reality of the open door of clarity.

Do we find our doubts addressed when we go back to read and meditate on our risen Lord and his mission? Are we familiar enough with Jesus to see him and be guided by him to greater clarity?

**Angels and recognizing Jesus -
a good start, but we have just scratched the surface!**





In this step, Mary Magdalene plays an important role in the faith of the Apostle John.

An Intimate Moment with Mary Magdalene, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire
(Only an excerpt from the reading is shown here. Please listen to the audio of our program or refer to the book.)

- *It was in a garden ages ago that paradise was lost, and it is in a garden now that it would be regained. But Mary Magdalene doesn't know that. For her, the hobnail boot of the Roman Empire has crushed her hope and ground it in the dirt with its iron heel. Her hope was Jesus. He had changed her life, and she had followed him ever since. He had cast seven demons out of her, freeing her from untold torment. He had given her life...a reason to live...a place in his kingdom...he had given her worth and dignity...understanding...compassion...love...and he had given her hope. Now that hope lies at the bottom of her heart, flat and lifeless. But something helps her survive the cruel boot. Something resilient, like a blade of grass that springs up after being stepped on. That something is love. Love brought Mary to his cross. And love brings her now to his grave.*

This text is from the Road to Emmaus account as the Apostles explained their experience to Jesus:

Luke 24:22-24: (NASB) ²²But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and did not find his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but him they did not see.

An Intimate Moment with Mary Magdalene, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire
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We know what happened - the women told as they were supposed to tell (this is faith in action). The disciples were not quite convinced, so they had to run and see for themselves (this is faith being tested). You cannot blame them. It is a normal response. We do that all the time if somebody tells us something, we say, no we must go look for ourselves. It is not a bad thing, especially under the tragic and doubtful clouds they had lived under for the last few days. So, they ran and they found an empty tomb. The only thing they were convinced of was that Jesus was not there, except for John, whose faith was at this moment stronger. He believed.

An Intimate Moment with Mary Magdalene, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire
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A scriptural account of our readings from “Moments with the Savior”:

John 20:2-10: (NASB) ²So she (Mary Magdalene) ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved (John), and said to them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him. ³So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. (They needed to see for themselves.) ⁴The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; ⁵and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but (out of respect for Peter, the other disciple waited to enter the tomb) he did not go in. ⁶And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the face-cloth which had been on his head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled



up in a place by itself. ⁸So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed.

Obviously, this was an important step - the women already believed because they saw him, but John believed simply because the grave was empty. Why did Peter not believe? Perhaps because of his denials of Jesus he had a longer road to firmness of faith than John.

⁹For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. ¹⁰So the disciples went away again to their own homes.

What we are observing is a slow, methodical process of conviction: an angelic announcement, an interchange with a familiar Jesus and the message of these things relayed to others. Now the others must find their own footing. *Faith cannot always have dramatic events unfolding for it to be built.* Sometimes we are called upon to believe based upon the most basic facts - the tomb is empty, he is therefore risen.

Do we intentionally face our doubts with a willingness to build our faith based on the basics? Are we willing to accept God’s will is present, even if we do not understand it?



Something startling and new happens:

 ***An Intimate Moment with Mary Magdalene, Moments With the Savior, Ken Gire***
(Please listen to the audio of our program or refer to the book.)

John 20:11-16: (NASB) ¹¹But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; ¹²and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. ¹³And they said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him. ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away. ¹⁶Jesus said to her, Mary! She turned and said to him in Hebrew, Rabboni! (which means, Teacher).



Here is Jesus’ first appearance in an unrecognizable form. He chose to appear this way before a woman, which is very significant. Even though Mary had not yet comprehended his resurrection, she seemed to be searching for answers as she could not seem to stay away from the tomb. She was evidently the most ready to receive Jesus in whatever form he would reveal himself.

 *An Intimate Moment with Mary Magdalene, Moments With the Savior, Ken Gire*
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Please note the explanation below regarding the small apparent contradiction in the reading quotation that asserts Mary Magdalene as the first person to see Jesus. This is quoted from Mark 16:9 and contradicts Matthew 28:1-10.

(Source: Biblical commentary by C.T. Russell) Omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts. Evidently Mark’s Gospel was originally incomplete and someone undertook to finish it about the fifth century. The fifth century Alexandrian manuscript is the oldest to contain the last 12 verses. These verses are spurious according to the American Standard Version, the Diaglott and the Revised Version.

John 20:17-18: (NASB) ¹⁷Jesus said to her, Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God. ¹⁸Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that he had said these things to her.

Jesus needed to establish the fact that his nature had changed, that he was the same in character yet entirely different in nature, because flesh and blood had been replaced by a spiritual being. This was radical and was his first revealing on such a level. *Mary recognized his voice and not the way he looked.*

Jesus’ message to Mary:

1. I am going to stay awhile as I have more convincing to do.
2. But he stressed the fact: I am going to ascend.

You have two elements here that demonstrate a change of nature:

1. He does not look the same.
2. He has the ability to ascend. In one occurrence, here he has given two evidences that he is not the same flesh and blood Jesus that they knew.

From angelic announcement, to appearing in a recognizable and familiar fashion, to faith without seeing, to appearing in an unrecognizable state, Jesus was methodically and gently revealing the magnitude of the effects of his resurrection. Small steps give opportunity to find clarity as one seeks understanding.

Are we carefully observing the small steps of clarity Jesus gives us as we wrestle with our personal tragedies and doubts?





How do you help many to believe in something they have NEVER seen before?




-  **An Intense Moment on the Emmaus Road, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**
(Please listen to the audio of our program or refer to the book.)

Luke 24:13-32: (NASB) ¹³And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place.

-  **An Intense Moment on the Emmaus Road, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**
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Hope wrestling with disappointment:

¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself approached and began traveling with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking? And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to him, Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days? ¹⁹And he said to them, What things? And they said to him, The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, ²⁰and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to the sentence of death, and crucified him. ²¹But we were hoping that it was he who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. ²²But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and did not find his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but him they did not see.


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Hope being given clarity:

²⁵And he said to them, O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory? ²⁷Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, he explained to them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures. ²⁸And they approached the village where they were going, and he acted as though he were going farther. ²⁹But they urged him, saying, Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over. So, he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he had reclined at the table with them, he took the bread and blessed it, and



breaking it, he began giving it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to one another, *Were not our hearts burning within us while he was speaking to us on the road, while he was explaining the Scriptures to us?*

 **An Intense Moment on the Emmaus Road, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**
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Jesus again proved (this time to two disciples) that he was no longer a man and that what he looked like to them did not define who he was. He became recognizable *by what he did*, showing that he was still their loving and devoted master. Further, he was able to vanish from their sight. Step by step, element by element, they are beginning to understand the magnitude of who and what their Lord is.

Do we allow the magnitude of who and what Jesus is to overwhelm us with clarity in the face of our tragedies and doubts?



Up to this point Jesus appeared to one, two or three. Now that he had begun expanding the minds of a few and given them the ability to communicate their experiences, he again appears miraculously to several: Luke 24:33-37: (NASB) ³³And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, ³⁴saying, *The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon.* ³⁵They began to relate their experiences on the road and how he was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread. ³⁶While they were telling these things, he himself stood in their midst and said to them, *Peace be to you.* ³⁷But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit.

This startled reaction was in part because they were in a locked room.

John 20:19: (NASB) *So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, Peace be with you.*



Not only was Jesus capable of vanishing, he could also pass through walls or doors!

Luke 24:38-49: (NASB) ³⁸And he said to them, Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹See 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. ⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, he said to them, Have you anything here to eat? ⁴²They gave him a piece of a broiled fish; ⁴³and he took it and ate it before them.

Jesus obviously appeared in his recognizable form and furthered their ability to comprehend him by showing them things they could identify with. He showed them his hands, feet (perhaps the wounds of the cross) and that he could eat with them.

⁴⁴Now he said to them, These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day...

Jesus then tied his own words together with the words of prophecy as the absolute proof of what had happened, and how it was that he was now miraculously standing before them.

⁴⁷and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending forth the promise of my Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

And now Jesus for the first time adds into his explanation their part - their responsibility going forward to him and to the Gospel.

The journey of clarity for Jesus’ followers continues as Jesus appears as himself, though now he shows several followers that he can pass through inanimate objects at will. He is the same Jesus, yet so very different as he now as a spirit being and no longer human, obviously wielded a spiritual power they could not even comprehend.

Are we cognizant of the ever-present and ever-powerful existence of Jesus in all aspects of our lives? Does his presence bring us clarity and peace as we face our personal doubts?





**With all this proof of the risen Jesus,
was there still room for doubt? Yes, there was!**



With all the varied appearances of Jesus in such a short time, the Apostles and disciples had much to work with. They had angelic announcement, they had Jesus appear multiple times in a familiar form as well as in an unfamiliar form, and he could come and go miraculously. More than all of this, they had Jesus on several occasions point them to the prophecies of old as infallible proof of what had happened. He verified those prophecies by reminding them of his own words! Yes, he had indeed been raised - raised to a glory beyond their wildest imaginations!

With all of this we can still doubt. Thomas was in that little boat of doubt. He had not yet himself seen the risen Lord and was called upon to trust in the accounts of the others.

Thomas was not there in the last revealing step behind locked doors, as we see from the continuation of the John text:

John 20:24-29: (NASB) ²⁴But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So 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.

I will not believe - unless - such are the proclamations of those of us who might be in that little boat of doubt with Thomas. Such a boat has no anchor of trust and finds itself listing about as we think and wish, as we wonder and second guess and as we are reduced to desperately clinging to the sides of that little boat, ever fearful of capsizing. Jesus understands doubt, and if we are willing, he will gently show us how to step out of that little boat of doubt and into the unsinkable vessel of his love and power.

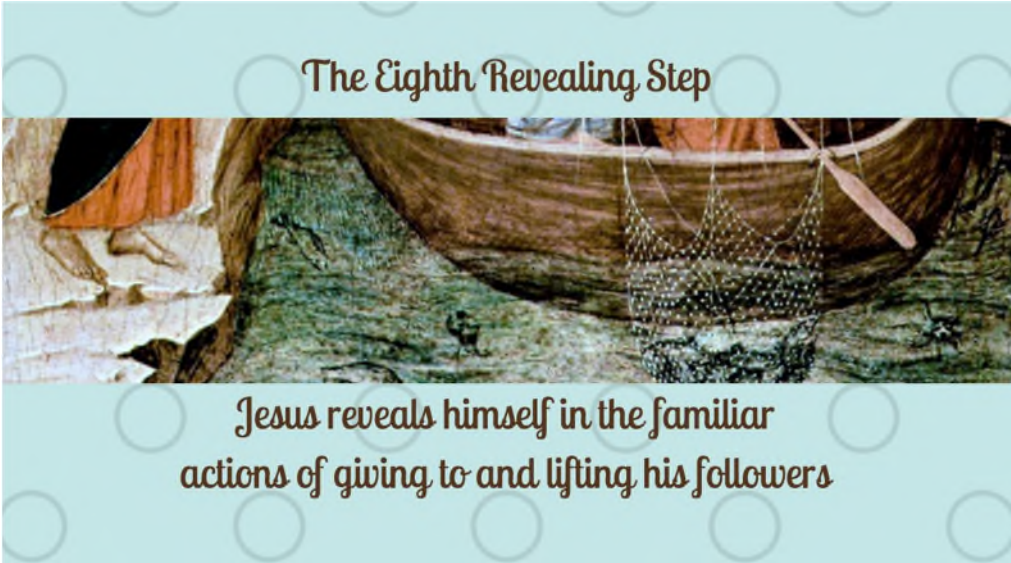
²⁶After eight days his disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, Peace be with you. ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, Reach here with your finger, and see my hands; and reach here your hand and put it into my side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing. ²⁸Thomas answered and said to him, my Lord and my God! ²⁹Jesus said to him, Because you have seen me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.



Jesus faces the doubts of Thomas with the truth. He not only shows Thomas exactly what he needs to see, he demonstrates his spiritual power by recounting what Thomas had said eight days ago! Jesus had already invisibly been in the presence of Thomas, it is just that Thomas could not see him! Thomas immediately displays the humility and faith that had been left behind when he boarded that little boat of doubt. Thomas leaps from his little boat of doubt as he worships the risen Lord!


Sometimes because of tragedy and doubt the clear evidence of truth and hope that is presented can be ignored. Thomas had his heart in the right place and Jesus knew just how to reveal himself in such a way that Thomas would again stand in faith.

**Are we too comfortable in our little boat of doubt?
Are we looking for the clarity of Jesus’ presence in our lives,
even when we cannot see him? Even when we cannot see him, he IS there!**



We have seen Jesus reveal himself by way of prophecy, miracles, physical gestures and voice. Now he would reveal himself to his disciples in an even more familiar way. He would help them, feed them and teach them as he had done so often before. He would now also remove the clouds of guilt that they had stubbornly covered themselves with.

John 21:1-3: (NASB) ¹After these things Jesus manifested himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and he manifested himself in this way. ²Simon Peter, and Thomas... and Nathanael..., and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. ³Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing. They said to him, We will also come with you. They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.

 **A Final Intimate Moment With Peter, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**
(Only an excerpt from the reading is shown here. Please listen to the audio of our program or refer to the book.)

- *What do you do when you’ve failed a friend? After you’ve cried till you’re numb. After you’ve replayed the failure over and over in your mind. After you’ve run*



yourself down and can't think of any more names to call yourself. What do you do then? You find some way to hold back the pain. "I'm going fishing." That is Peter's way of dealing with the pain. He's tired of thinking. He's tired of the incriminating conversations he's had with himself. He wants a mindless diversion, an escape. But the sea is unsympathetic. And the night refuses him a reprieve. In the melancholy darkness, Peter is lulled by the rhythmic slapping of waves against the boat. His mind ebbs nostalgically back...back...back to when Jesus was in the boat with them and calmed the storm...back to when he walked on the water...back to when...Thus he passes the night away, throwing out his net and catching only slippery moments from the past. Memories. That's all he's got now. But one of those memories he wishes he could throw back: how he stood there when Jesus needed him the most...stood there and denied even knowing him...cursed and swore and, and...

John 21:4-6: (NASB) ⁴But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵So Jesus said to them, Children, you do not have any fish, do you? They answered him, No. ⁶And he said to them, Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch. So, they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

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John 21:7-13: (NASB) ⁷Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord. So, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish. ⁹So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, Bring some of the fish which you have now caught. ¹¹Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, Come and have breakfast. (It sounds like Jesus never left.) None of the disciples ventured to question him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise.

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This was a powerful moment as these humble fishermen are face to face with Jesus and FINALLY, no one had to ask, “Who are you?” They all KNEW. With their knowledge came a sense of awe and an even deeper sense of humility as well as an awareness of the clouds of guilt that haunted them.

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Jesus’ tender forgiveness towards a guilt-ridden Peter took this step of revealing himself to a whole new level because it gave his followers a profoundly practical sense of clarity. This Jesus was undoubtedly the same in character but he also carried a depth of godliness that transcended human capacity. Peter especially would change as a result of this new beginning.

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The risen Jesus in these last two revealing steps addressed and dissolved two of the most debilitating experiences of the human condition - doubt with Thomas and guilt with Peter. The clarity and familiarity of his message to both troubled men changed them.

Are we willing to have Jesus change us? Do we tenaciously cling to our little boat of doubt and stubbornly persist under our dark cloud of guilt or are we willing to face our Lord, see his works, hear his words and accept his love?

What more could we possibly hope for from the risen Jesus?



“Christ Arose, Low in the Grave, He Lay” (Verse one) hymncharts.com

Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior,
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

Refrain:

Up from the grave he arose;
With a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Acts 1:1-8: (NASB) ¹The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after he had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³To these he also presented himself alive after his suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

The summary of Jesus’ steps of revealing himself tells us that for those 40 days his appearances were stunningly successful. His revealing came through angelic announcements, being seen as himself, as a stranger and as one who could miraculously appear and vanish. His voice revealed him, his breaking of bread revealed him, his prophetic teachings revealed him and his very character revealed him. He had shown himself unequivocally to be Jesus



Christ, but he was now Jesus Christ the powerful spirit being, far above any station that a mere man could manage. Why these overwhelming proofs? There was world changing work to be done as a result of his change!

⁴Gathering them together, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, Which, he said, you heard of from me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

The Holy Spirit would change everything and his followers needed to be steeped in the conviction of Jesus’ resurrection and glory to be able to wield such godly power.

For more about the Holy Spirit, please see the CQ episode from November 28, 2016, “How Can I Get the Holy Spirit?”

⁶So when they had come together, they were asking him, saying, Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel? ⁷He said to them, It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by his own authority; ⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

In this last revealing step, Jesus gives specific instructions about where and when and he also tells them that just because they will have God’s influence it does not mean that they will know all things. Such advice dovetailed well with the lessons of deep humility over the past 40 days.



“Christ Arose, Low in the Grave, He Lay” (Verse two) hymncharts.com

Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus my Savior,
Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

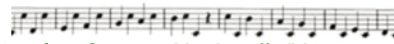
Refrain:

Up from the grave he arose;
With a mighty triumph o’er his foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Because Jesus had so meticulously prepared his followers these past 40 days he was now totally convinced they were able, capable witnesses. There was no question that could not be answered by them because of all the appearances Jesus had made. They now knew in the deepest recesses of their souls who Jesus was! Their, “Who are you Lord?” question had been answered for all ages to come!

Acts 1:9-11: (NASB) *⁹And after he had said these things, he was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received him out of their sight. ¹⁰And as they were gazing intently into the sky while he was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹They also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched him go into heaven.*

The risen Lord Jesus was first announced to have ascended from the grave by two angels all clothed in white and as he now ascends to his Father he is again announced by two angels in white.



"Christ Arose, Low in the Grave, He Lay" (Verse two) hymncharts.com

Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior;
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!

Refrain:

Up from the grave he arose;
With a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

This announcement was not the end! It was just the beginning, for the Angels also spoke of his returning, the same returning that Jesus himself had taught them about. This return would be for the purpose of entirely finishing the work that he had started. This return would wrestle the kingdoms of this world from Satan's grip, it would dissolve all the ungodly governments of this world and end the reign of sin, terror and death. This return would restore that which was lost - human harmony with God Almighty on a perfect earth.

Micah 4:1-5: (NASB) ¹And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. ²Many nations will come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the house of the God of Jacob. That he may teach us about his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ³And he will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, distant nations...



"Hail the Power of Jesus Name," Paul Baloche

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all
Lord of all

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race
Ye ransomed from the fall
Hail him who saves you by his grace
And crown him Lord of all
Hail him who saves you by His grace
And crown him Lord of all Lord of all

Lord of all
You are Lord of all!
Lord of all
You are Lord of all!

Let every kindred, every tribe
On this terrestrial ball
To him all majesty ascribe
And crown him Lord of all
To him all majesty ascribe
And crown him Lord of all





...Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war. ⁴Each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. ⁵Though all the peoples walk each in the name of his god, as for us, we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

The revealing of Jesus' resurrection came in small steps. What a caring and sensitive way Jesus revealed himself to those whom he loved. These steps helped them to know he was there and what he would become when he was raised to the Father with all power and glory to bring the kingdom to its full fruition. Everything Jesus did after he was crucified and resurrected was for giving his followers not just hope and clarity, but direction and confidence that they could do the work before them, because Jesus was risen and more powerful than they could have ever imagined.

*So, Jesus' resurrection - what changed?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

