

Though they had been told in advance, the recognition that Jesus was no longer dead would now revolutionize His followers' lives.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. But when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened that while they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling apparel; and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

And they remembered His words, and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven as well as the others. This included Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James as well as other women with them who were telling these things to the apostles. These words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them. [But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. And stooping and looking in, he saw just the linen wrappings; and he went away to his home, amazed at what had happened.]

ON THE ROAD

And two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. And they were conversing with each other about all these things which had taken place. And it came about that while they were conversing and discussing, Jesus Himself approached, and began traveling with them. But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. And 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.

All of Jerusalem was in turmoil, and should have been! It was one thing that the Son of God had been crucified and killed, but now He was missing. And worse yet, He was beginning to show up in specific places...alive!

And one 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?" And 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, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that He was the one who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. And some of the women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. And some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but they did not find Jesus."

*Moses and the prophets
clearly represented the Messiah
(Savior). To miss Him
was to miss it all!*

*Every appearance of Jesus
after the resurrection had a
purpose. Here they were
being taught to see with
spiritual eyes.*

*He ate the fish to prove He was
more than a ghost. He was a real
risen-from-the-dead person with
a real risen-from-the-dead body,
just as His friend Lazarus
had been, only better!*

*The Temple became a
rallying place for these new
believers and these witnesses to
the Living Christ who once was
dead. The world was never
going to be the same!*

And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He would travel farther. And they urged Him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over." And He went in to stay with them.

And it came about that when He had sat at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they 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?" And they arose that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, saying, "The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon Peter." And they began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.

And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood among them. But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is Me; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." [And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.] And while they still could not believe it for joy and were gazing in astonishment, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; and He took it and ate it before them.

Now 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." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "It is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

"You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending 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 He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came about that while He was blessing them, He parted from them. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising God.

The nail prints in Christ's hands and feet will never leave the body of the eternal Jesus Christ. They will be an eternal reminder of the great love of the Father and the incredible sacrifice of the "Lamb of God."

The Holy Spirit was given to comfort and empower them. Christ would now be gone and would speak to them through the Holy Spirit (the Comforter). He would empower them to be His witnesses through the Spirit's power.

It was neat that Thomas responded in faith, but even cooler in God's mind when someone who does not see the nail prints still believes.

"This is the third time"... Jesus' ministry after His resurrection was key in that it proved all He said was true. He took the time to carefully allow them to see and handle the One who had been dead. There is more historical proof for the resurrection than much of what we readily accept as historical truth!

FEED MY SHEEP

John 20:19-21:25

When evening had come on 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 among them, and said to them, "Peace be with you." And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained." But Thomas, one of the twelve, called "the twin," was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the nail holes, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

FISHERMEN

After these things Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and this is how it happened. Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will come with you." They went out, and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. But when the day was breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus therefore said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." And He said to them, "Throw the net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you will catch some fish." They threw out their net and they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. The disciple

whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." And so when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his heavier garment (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the smaller boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.

And so when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already prepared, and fish placed on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you just caught." Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three. Although there were so many, the net was not torn. 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. Jesus came and took the bread, and gave them the fish as well. This is the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.

So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

JOHN'S FAREWELL

"Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to plan your way and hold yourself together, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will carry you, and bring you where you do not wish to go." Now this He said, revealing what kind of death he would experience to glorify God. He said to him, "Follow me!"

Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His breast at supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" Peter therefore seeing this exchange said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!" This saying therefore went out among the brothers that this disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"

This is the disciple who witnessed these things, and wrote them down; and we know that my testimony is true.

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books they would fill.

*Peter had denied Christ
three times, now he asserts
three times that He will be
faithful to his calling
to feed sheep.*

*This exchange must
have been both painful
and comforting
to Peter.*

*We have about forty days
of Christ's three or four year public
ministry recorded in the four Gospels.
Can you imagine the things
that are unwritten!?*

DAY FORTY 40

TO THE END OF THE AGE

Matthew 28:16-20

But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him but some were doubtful. And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Theophilus was a Greek who received an earlier letter from Luke. The Gospel of Luke is the most consecutive of the four Gospels, and The Acts of the Holy Spirit is a continuation of the incredible ministry of Christ.

THE STORY GOES ON

Acts 1:1-2:4

The first letter I sent, Theophilus, to tell you about all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To 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. And gathering 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; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Christ appeared over forty days to hundreds of people after His resurrection. This established and energized the ministry of His early followers, and caused them to leave everything and to follow Him.

And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is this the time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall 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."

Christ was God - it was no longer a disputable issue for the disciples. They had seen Him killed, disappear from His tomb, reveal Himself numerous times, and ascend to heaven to return to the Father!

And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were all watching, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. As they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. And they 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." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a week's journey away.

And when they returned, they went up to the upper room where they were staying: Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

*People debate whether
or not the choice of Matthias to
replace Judas was presumptuous,
and that Christ's choice
of Saul who became
Paul was the real replacement
for Judas. We don't
know for certain.*

*The choice of Matthias
was from a select group who
had been around since the
beginning and seen it all!
Pentecost took place 50 days
after Passover, and during
this time the risen Jesus had
appeared to many, to even 500
people at one time,
demonstrating to
His followers that the grave
had not held Him.*

*The Jews were gathered in
Jerusalem from all over the world
for this great feast. Though their
languages differed they all heard
what the disciples were saying in
their own languages.*

With one mind they were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers.

At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted as one of us, and received his part in this ministry." (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeidama, that is, the Field of Blood.) "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his household be made desolate, and let no man dwell in it'; and, 'His place let another man take.'

"It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us -- beginning with Jesus baptism by John, until the day that He was taken up from us -- that one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection." And they selected two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, "You, Lord, know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was counted with the eleven apostles.

THE OUTPOURING AT PENTECOST

And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues that looked like fire, distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them the ability.

Acts 2:56-41

Now there were Jews staying in Jerusalem, devoted men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs - we hear them in our own

languages, speaking about the mighty works of God.”

And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!” So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others were mocking and saying, “They are intoxicated.” But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen carefully to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you are thinking, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning; but what you see is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

Joel the prophet had spoken hundreds of years earlier that such phenomenon would occur!

The purpose of the pouring out of the Spirit in the last days was to invite many souls into the Kingdom!

The numbers of people who have lived since the Incarnation of Christ are huge compared to those who came before us!

King David is quoted because a promise was made to him that one of his sons would sit on his throne eternally.

David was from the tribe of Judah (one of the twelve tribes of Israel), and so was Jesus! Read Psalm 16.

‘And it shall be in the last days,’ God says, ‘That I will pour out My Spirit upon all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. Upon My people, both men and women, I will in those days pour out My Spirit and they will prophesy. And I will perform wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it will be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him among you, just as you know -- this Man delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.”

“For David says of Him, ‘I was always beholding the Lord in my presence; for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue is filled with praise; and my flesh also will hope and live securely; because You will not abandon my soul to the grave, or allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You have made known to me the path of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.’

“Brothers, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to place one of his descendants upon his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hell, nor did His flesh decay. God raised Jesus up again, to which we are all witnesses. Having been lifted to the right hand of God and

When King David spoke this prophecy in the Psalms hundreds of years earlier, he had to be speaking of someone else because he died and was buried.

Peter appeals to the Jews' knowledge of the Scriptures and demonstrates that Jesus is being spoken of in this Psalm, and it pierces many deeply, and has a staggering affect.

This phenomenon continued to spread throughout the Roman Empire, and the message of Christ swept the earth, as it continues to do today.

As long as there is a Holy Spirit there will be new life, and as long as there are believers in Christ the truth of the Gospel will be told!



Peter and John in the Temple with a paralyzed beggar. What they lacked in financial resources they offered in truth. Eternal life is provided in the Name of Jesus!

having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out what you both see and hear. For it was not David who went into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."' Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus you crucified."

Now when they heard this they were pierced in their hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For this promise is for you and your children, and for all who are yet to be born, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."

Acts 2:42-47

And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Now I make known to you, brothers, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which you stand. By this Good News you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, so you have not believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Peter, and then to the twelve.

After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep in death. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, to one untimely born, He appeared to me as well.