



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

An Unbelievable Story!

Luke 24:1-12

Message #71 of 73 – S866

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Sunday Morning Service

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An Unbelievable Story!

Luke 24:1-12

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 24**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- As an unbeliever, one of the things that turned me off to the gospel was the claim that Jesus died and then came back to life
- It couldn't be explained scientifically to me, therefore I couldn't accept it – it was an unbelievable story
- Over time I came to realize that there were a great many things about God that can't be explained scientifically
- God in His grace brought me to the place where I accepted that if God was who the Bible claimed He was, that there ought to be things about Him that we can't possibly understand
- In fact, as my faith grows, I am more thankful that there are things about God that are beyond human understanding
- I still don't understand how Jesus was raised from the dead – no one does – except God Himself
- It was this unbelievable story of the resurrection of Jesus that changed the world
- It is still changing the world – one life after another
- Let's look at Luke's account of the resurrection and then we'll discuss how it might still change us and the world around us
- Let's pray and then get into our text
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **An Unbelievable Story!**
- The common theme through the first twelve verses of chapter 24 is unbelief
- That is not immediately obvious in the first group of people
- **Luke 24:1**

- Jesus died on Friday afternoon - the Sabbath – the day of rest begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday
- The first day of the week is Sunday
- This was the first chance these women had to prepare Christ's body for death
- This was an act of love and respect, but it was also an act of unbelief
- Keep your finger in Luke 24 and turn to **Matthew 17**
- These women are going to show their love and respect for Jesus
- But they are expecting to find a dead Jesus
- Mark's gospel tells us they were discussing how they were going to roll the massive stone away from the tomb
- So, why is this an act of unbelief
- **Matthew 17:22**
- One of the rules of interpretation of the Bible is; if a simple interpretation makes sense, it is the right interpretation
- Jesus said He was going to be betrayed – was He? Yes!
- **Matthew 17:23a**
- Simple interpretation – Jesus was going to die at the hands of the men He was betrayed to – happen? Yes! Two-for-two!
- **Matthew 17:23b**
- Jesus died on Friday – third day = Sunday
- 'will be raised up' – simple interpretation – Raised from the dead on Sunday
- We know they interpreted this literally, because 'they were exceedingly sorrowful' – even in that we can see the roots of unbelief
- They were struggling to see past 'they will kill Him'
- Turn back to **Luke 24**
- These women know Jesus was betrayed just as He said
- They saw Him die on the cross just as He said
- Yet, here they are bringing spices to anoint a dead body
- They don't believe that Jesus would be raised on the third as just as He said
- **Luke 24:2**
- The tomb was opened, not to let Jesus out, but to let the disciples in.
- **Luke 24:3-4a**

- ‘greatly perplexed’ – where is His body – did someone steal it?
- That Jesus would be raised from the dead was just too far out there
- Had to be some other explanation
- **Luke 24:4b-7**
- Matthew’s gospel tells these were angels
- ‘shining garments’ – like lightning
- These women had come looking for a dead body
- They get a mild rebuke from the angels
- You shouldn’t be here looking for a corpse
- In faith, you should be looking for a living Christ
- Then they call the women to remember what Jesus said
- To be fair, these women were still reeling from watching Jesus die on the cross
- It is hard to imagine the depths of the darkness in their souls at that moment
- This points to spiritual truth – difficult times have a tendency to cloud our vision and dull our memory
- If these women had remembered and believed what Jesus said they wouldn’t be standing there with expensive spices and aromatic ointments that they couldn’t use
- We sometimes need to be reminded of what Jesus said
- That is one of the reasons we need to be in real community with other believers **Hebrews 10:24-25**

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

- The darker the world gets around you, the more you need the light of Jesus Christ shining out of the love of God’s people
- As these women stand there in the presence of these angels shining like lightning, their darkness is shattered
- **Luke 24:8**
- As much as I wish it weren’t so, dark times will come into our lives
- Jesus said as much **John 16:33**

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

- The question is, will we go through those dark times like these women?
- Here they are looking for the living among the dead
- They are doing the wrong things – and they are miserable while they do it
- They are hopeless – they will do this last act of love and then try to figure out what they are going to do with the rest of their lives
- During the last few months as our family has gone through a season of hard things – there were many opportunities to lose hope – to despair
- But thankfully, we were surrounded by people who love God and showed it by loving us
- They reminded us to remember His words, not just by what they said, but by what they did
- I knew through God’s Word that we need each other
- Over the last couple of months, I have experienced the reason why we need each other in a very real way
- I can already sense that God has changed me in some profound ways, though I don’t know that I can tell you what they are yet
- These women were changed too – they went to the tomb in darkness and left reflecting the glorious light of the angels and with the message of hope; “He is risen!”
- **Luke 24:9-10**
- They come in excitedly sharing the unbelievable story with the disciples – stone rolled away – Jesus’ body gone – two angels – so bright we couldn’t look at them – told us ‘He is risen!’
- Jesus is alive!
- Remember, Jesus said He would rise on the third day – that’s today!
- He did it – Jesus has risen from the dead! Isn’t that awesome!
- Of course, the disciples believed every word, right?
- **Luke 24:11**
- The disciples were Jesus’ closest companions on earth
- They had all heard Jesus say on several occasions that He would rise from the dead
- Jesus had proven Himself over and over again in ways that should have convinced them that it was true

- He even raised the dead in their presence several times
- They had come to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God
- To them, they could accept that a living Messiah could raise the dead, but not a dead one – even though He had said He would
- They did something that many Christians do – when what they believed or felt was true - came into conflict with what Jesus said, they went with what they believed
- God is writing the story of Jesus living out of your life
- There will be chapters of that story that are hard, painful, or troubling
- There will be chapters of loneliness, doubt, sickness, many things
- How you handle the Word of God will determine how those chapters turns out **John 17:17**

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

- It is almost impossible to answer the ‘why’ questions that arise during difficult times
- But what I do know it that once that hard thing is in your life, God is going to use to ‘sanctify’ you – to make you more like Jesus
- And He will do that through His Word
- The women went to the tomb in unbelief and had an encounter that caused them to believe
- They shared what they believed and experienced with the disciples who felt their story was idle talk = utter nonsense – unbelief
- Then Peter gets himself into the story

- **Luke 24:12**

- Even Peter is struggling to believe this story
 - Jesus would later rebuke the disciples for their unbelief **Mark 16:14**
- Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.**

- Everyone in this text was struggling to believe what Jesus said would happen after He died
- At least the women, when confronted with the truth – believed
- This book, the Bible, the Word of God is truth
- Most of the world doesn’t believe what is written in this book
- Many in our culture believe that what we feel is true - is truth

- If you approach this Book honestly and faithfully, there will be times when what it says conflicts with what you believe or feel
- The women in our account, when confronted with the truth – changed what they believed and that changed how they felt
- The disciples, when confronted with the truth, chose to remain in unbelief
- What will you do when you come to a verse like **Matthew 5:44**
But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you...
- What if, as you read that, you think of that co-worker who seems to really dislike you? Or that neighbor who is always complaining about your dog or kids?
- Do you pause and reflect upon a verse like this and ask God if there is anyone in your life like this?
- Or do you justify ignoring it because no one tried to shoot you this week?
- The women believed the impossible story – the disciples didn't
- Which group do you think the Lord was pleased with **Hebrews 11:6**
But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
- Jesus had risen from the dead just as He said he would
- It is an unbelievable story that we are called to believe
- Faith is believing what you can't explain
- I still can't explain the resurrection, but I believe it – He is risen!
- And by believing it, our lives are changed forever
- Next week I am going to share what the resurrection means to those who believe
- And so, the question is, do you believe?
- Jesus died just as He said He would
- He died for the sins of the whole world just as the Bible said He would
- Jesus was raised to life on the third day, just as He said He would
- The Bible also makes a promise **Romans 10:9**
...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.
- God is writing the amazing story of Jesus in your life
- Is your story of belief or unbelief?

- **Pray!**