

The Gospel According to
Luke

“Spice Girls”
Chapter 24:1-12

Introduction

It should have been standing-room only outside of the tomb. Jesus told His followers more than once that He would **be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.**

The place to be was outside of that tomb, waiting for the Lord to appear. It was going to be the first ever Easter Sunrise Service. **What an opportunity to invite your unsaved family and friends to Church!**

Instead, some disciples were preparing to head home to Emmaus; the apostles were in hiding; and the women were hopeless as they were preparing spices to finish anointing Jesus' dead body.

The first followers of Jesus had no expectation of His rising from the dead, even though they had His word. He did rise; they were reminded, and remembered, His word; then they went forward in the power of the resurrection to turn the world upside-down for Jesus.

Centuries later, **we** are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are the ones who are to go forward in the power of the resurrection. But sometimes we find ourselves *home...* or *hiding...* or *hopeless*:

1. We find ourselves literally staying home when we ought to be gathered together with the Lord and His people. Or we allow the world to become too much our home, rather than living as strangers and pilgrims passing through on our way to Heaven.
2. We find ourselves hiding. For example: When the Lord has prompted us to do or say something, but we draw back from it.
3. More commonly, many of us experience feelings of hopelessness in the midst of our struggles and sufferings.

I don't want to be home, or hiding, or helpless; I know that you don't either. How can we overcome these things?

Remember. It's mentioned twice in our verses. Those who were going home, or hiding, or hopeless were reminded, and **remembered**, God's word.

I think that we, too, need reminding in order to remember the resurrection. Not that we ever forget it as a true historical event; but we can forget its power to affect our lives.

We'll organize our thoughts around two points: #1 Remember You Are Seeking The Risen, Living Lord, and #2 Remember You Are Speaking For The Risen, Living Lord.

#1 Remember You Are Seeking The Risen, Living Lord (v1-8)

Jesus rose from the dead. Ten different appearances of our risen Lord are recorded in the Bible:

1. He appeared to Mary Magdalene at the tomb.
2. Then to the 'spice girls' - Mary, Salome, Joanna, and others - near the tomb.
3. Then to Peter alone.
4. Then to two believers on the way home to Emmaus.
5. Then to the ten disciples, Thomas being absent, and others **with them** at Jerusalem on the evening of the resurrection day.
6. Then, a week later, to the disciples again, Thomas being present.
7. Then to the disciples when fishing at the Sea of Galilee.
8. Then to the eleven, and to more than 500 believers at once in Galilee.
9. Then to James, then the apostles immediately before the ascension as they traveled from Jerusalem to Mount Olivet.
10. There they saw Jesus ascend **till a cloud received him out of their sight.**

In addition, Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road. Luke, who wrote both this Gospel and the Book of Acts, implies (in Acts 1:3) there may have been other appearances.

Jesus' resurrection is unique. Religions may have strong ethical systems, concepts about life and afterlife, and claim various holy writings. Only Christianity has God who became human, literally died for his people, and was raised bodily in power and glory. That's why we like to explain that Christianity is not a religion at all, but a relationship with a living Person.

The first people to disbelieve the resurrection... ***Were the believers!*** Luke's account begins with the women on their way to finish anointing Jesus' dead body.

Luke 24:1 Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

The thing to note from this early-morning visit to the tomb is that they had zero expectation Jesus would rise from the dead. Their intentions were loving and lovely; but they were hopeless.

You have no hope in life or in afterlife if Jesus has not risen from the dead. He has – and you should be full of hope in life and afterlife.

We tell others about the risen Lord, to introduce them to Jesus. We hold out the hope – the sure certainty – of the forgiveness of their sins and eternal life.

Sometimes we need to be reminded ourselves He is alive; or we need to remind other believers. Times of depression... despair... discouragement... disappointment... Anytime there is a sense of hopelessness in our struggles or sufferings; we have forgotten Jesus is alive.

Luke 24:2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.
Luke 24:3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

Luke doesn't give you all the facts. He doesn't mention the tomb was sealed and guarded, for example. He focuses your attention on the women and their actions and reactions.

The women – bless their hearts – went out of love, but had no plan for getting inside the tomb. They did not expect to find the [stone rolled away](#); they did expect to find [the body of Jesus](#).

You'd be surprised at the influence of your expectations. The Lord promised He would be spiritually and powerfully present whenever His Church gathered together on the earth. Yet we can come and go and never have a sense of His presence because we were not really expecting it. Then, afterwards, we have a sense that the body of Jesus on the earth today – His Church – was 'dead,' because nothing extraordinary happened.

He is here... He is here... He is moving among us... Do you remember that early chorus? Let's take the Lord at His word and believe He is spiritually present, with the power to heal and help.

[Luke 24:4](#) And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

God allowed them to see the angels who had been dispatched to the tomb. There are angels all around. You need not be overly concerned about them; you should not become fascinated by them. It is enough to know that they are available to help you.

[Luke 24:5](#) Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

Angels often seem impatient with humans. *They should cut us some slack!* After all, they are in Heaven, surrounding the throne, seeing the glory of God. We're on earth – called upon to walk by faith, not by sight.

These angles asked a great probing question. It is just as probing today. It's probing for both *unbelievers* and *believers*:

1. Unbelievers are always seeking the living among the dead. For example: They look for wisdom and guidance from men who are

dead rather than turning to the living Lord. All the world's religions and philosophies are attempts to find life from the dead.

2. Believers can seek the living Lord among the dead in a variety of ways. One is when we become rigid, rule-oriented and ritualistic. Instead of enjoying a personal relationship with the risen Lord, we can put distance between He and us. We invent priesthoods and practices that keep Him on the Cross.

I can't resist quoting H.A. Ironside for your consideration:

We are not preaching the Gospel of a dead Christ, but of a living Christ who sits exalted at the Father's right hand, and is living to save all who put their trust in Him. That is why those of us who really know the Gospel never have any crucifixes around our churches or in our homes. The crucifix represents a dead Christ hanging languid on a cross of shame. But we are not pointing men to a dead Christ; we are preaching a living Christ. He lives exalted at God's right hand, and [He saves to the uttermost all who come to God by Him.](#)

The angels continued their Easter sermon:

[Luke 24:6](#) He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,

[Luke 24:7](#) saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'"

They had forgotten these clear and simple words. There are always a variety of reasons that we forget, or seem to ignore, the clear and simple words of God. Sin and selfishness; suffering; sadness; busyness and business; apathy and anguish; the list is somewhat endless.

Identifying why I forget God's Word can be important, but regardless the reason, the solution is the same:

[Luke 24:8](#) And they **remembered** His words.

They were *reminded* and they *remembered*.

We must constantly be reminded of God's Word. I need a daily strategy of being reminded – by reading it, by meditating upon it, by hearing it taught.

We must remember the words – the exact, inspired words. Whatever I hear from others, I must test by the Bible. Whatever I think God says to me, through His Word or by prophecy or in a vision or a dream, it still needs to be tested by what is written.

Anytime we are home, or hiding, or hopeless, we have forgotten that the power of His resurrection is available to us. Simply put: The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to you, to enable you to obey the Word of God. You seek the living God, the Lord Jesus Christ; and He desires to be found by you.

#2 Remember You Are Speaking For The Risen, Living Lord (v9-12)

Sometimes in life you speak from a position of weakness; sometimes, from a position of strength. In the Christian life, you are always enabled to speak from an authoritative position of strength – because Jesus is alive, in control, and coming back.

The ladies literally couldn't wait to tell the boys back in hiding.

Luke 24:9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

Luke 24:10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles.

Do you remember when you first got saved? You had to tell somebody! Jesus was alive – and so were you, for the first time in your life.

The apostles – those men who had been most with Jesus – were huge skeptics. Listen to what Luke said about them:

Luke 24:11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.

Idle tales can be translated *nonsense*. It made **no sense** to them that Jesus was alive.

Unbelievers still think the resurrection of Jesus is nonsense. They have their theories on what happened to the body of Jesus. None of

them make any sense, but are themselves nonsense. Their theories are harder to believe than the resurrection.

Do sincere believers ever consider the resurrection as making no sense? I think we can be somewhat hesitant to speak for the risen, living Lord because we think others will believe us to be naïve or uninformed. I would cite the interest Christians have in secular psychology as one example. The Bible... prayer... fasting... memorization of Scripture... Discipleship... These are thought to be inferior, or at least deficient, in our advanced day and age. Techniques and theories from godless and even God-hating men are added to, and integrated with, biblical soul-care. I don't want to get into the whole issue – I'm just citing it as one example of believers considering the power of the resurrection as nonsense.

[Luke 24:12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.](#)

At this point, Peter was a believer with no power in his life. All that would change, however, on the Day of Pentecost. The Lord would send His Holy Spirit to indwell and come upon His followers. Not only did they believe the resurrection, it became the cornerstone of their preaching.

You are a believer who can have power in your life to speak for the risen, living Lord. It is something that you and I need to be constantly reminded of. The reminding, and our remembering, seem to refresh us and revive us to go forward with a renewed vigor to share the Lord with others.

Applying the Word...

I should come to Church expecting to encounter Jesus. He is spiritually present whenever His people are gathered together on earth.

One of the ways I know I am expecting to encounter Him is my enthusiasm to be at gatherings of the Church. Look at it this way: Knowing what we know, wouldn't you have been at the tomb, waiting

to see the Lord rise from the dead? You should have the same enthusiasm to be together with others any time we meet and celebrate His resurrection – especially since He promised He'd be there!

If you are not yet saved... There's a cliché that fits your situation. *Get a life!* You were born dead in your sins. You are physically alive, soulishly active, but spiritually dead. You have no life or afterlife until you meet the risen, living Lord, Jesus Christ.

SECOND SERVICE

Before we dismiss, I'd ask you to remain seated for a few more moments.

We have a special piece of business to attend to. It begins with a special song, and will become clear to you in just a moment...