

THE LAMB OF GOD LIVES!
Luke 24:36-53

Jesus has many titles that have been ascribed to Him like the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Door, and the Good Shepherd. But this Easter season we have been focusing on Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God. That's how John the Baptist described Him the first time he saw Jesus – "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." And this title 'the Lamb of God' describes His ministry as the Savior because in order for a Lamb to take away sin, it had to be slain. And that's exactly what happened to Him. On Palm Sunday we saw the Lamb of God Chosen and appointed to making that ultimate sacrifice in the plan of God. And on Good Friday, we saw that plan of God carried out and the Lamb of God Slain. The slaying of the Lamb upon the cross was the apex of human history, the most important moment in all the world. We call it good because it was good for us having our sins atoned for. But it comes with mixed feeling because it was also a very dark day. One almost wants to consider it the real Black Friday. The sky grew dark and God the Son was crying out to God the Father why He was forsaken, He died and was buried in a tomb – It was a dark day. It appeared as though all hope was lost. But then Sunday comes, and we see God show Himself to be the unchanging and perfect God that He is. We see the Trinity working together the whole time to bring about salvation. The Lamb of God is raised to life by the power of the Father through the Spirit and Christ is about to send the promised Spirit to apply salvation. It was all part of the plan. Today, we see the Lamb of God as He is now: Resurrected in a glorified body! The Lamb of God lives! He is risen! Please turn with me to Luke 24:36-48.

“While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be to you.” 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 I Myself; 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. While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” 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, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And 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 He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising God.”

Now there's a few observations I want to make from this passage as it relates to the resurrection:

I. THE RESURRECTION IS A LITERAL, PHYSICAL, BODILY RESURRECTION. (VV. 36-43)

If you go back a chapter and to verses 52-55, there's no disputing that Joseph of Arimathea took the literal body of Jesus and wrapped Him in a linen cloth and laid His body in the tomb. Some women were there also, following this and mourning over it. But on the first day of the week when they came back to the tomb, it says, "they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus." All they found was the linen wrappings. Why? Because He has risen! Literally, physically and bodily risen! No one will ever find the bones of Jesus Christ because they aren't there to find. They aren't in a tomb. They've been resurrected with Him. Notice all of the ways the writer of the text and Jesus in the text are highlighting the physical nature of His glorified body:

1. He stood among them. (v. 36)

He was literally standing there, on His feet, on the ground. It's a detail not to overlook. He wasn't floating in mid-air like an apparition or some disembodied spirit. He was standing there. They became troubled and they doubted so....

2. He urges them to examine Him with their eyes. (v. 39)

Makes you wonder if any of them did the classic gesture of rubbing their eyes with their fists. They just couldn't believe it because they just saw Him scourged and beaten beyond recognition and hanging dead on the cross. They couldn't believe their eyes. So...

3. He urges them to examine Him by touch. (v. 39)

Don't believe your eyes? Use more of your senses. Do you trust your sense of touch? He says touch Me and see with your hands and see that a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones like I have. Then He goes further and directs them to His hands and feet.

4. He shows them His hands and feet. (v. 40)

Why does He do that? Because that's where He still has the marks from the nails that He was crucified with. Poor Thomas, the disciple, wasn't there for the initial manifestation of Jesus to the disciples in this way and became known as the Doubting Thomas because when the other disciples told him about Jesus appearing to them, he said he wouldn't believe unless he too, actually put his finger into the place of the nails, and put his hand into His side. So, a week later, here comes Jesus again and He goes right to Thomas and challenges him: Do it. Put your finger into My hands and into My side. See for yourself. And Thomas did it and believed saying, "My Lord and My God!" Jesus then said, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." That's us! Those who don't see and yet believe. In that account it's evident that though His body is physical, it can also bend the laws of nature in ways we can't explain. It says the fearful disciples had the door locked shut and yet, here He is! Standing among them. He either walked through the door or just appeared there and disappeared whenever He wanted. So it is His body, but it's been glorified and fit for heaven. And **our resurrection bodies will be just like His. Our bodies will not be the same exact body simply reconstituted in the same way they are now, but at the same time, also, it won't be unrelated to the original one because it is our body, just different and made imperishable and glorified.**¹ It won't decay or die and it will be like Christ's; it's fit for heaven, in power and glory.

In Revelation 5:6, the apostle John is describing a vision he is having of heaven and the throne of God and what's taking place there just before the tribulation and he says, "And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders, a Lamb standing, as if slain." So what John is saying is that, even though this is future, there's something

about the way Jesus looks that you can tell He has been slain. And I believe that it's the marks in His hands and in His feet! He's standing there as the Lamb, but a Lamb that has been slain. He still has the marks. And every created thing in heaven will see this and reflect upon His sacrifice and fall before Him in worship. It's intriguing that out of the 35 times I counted the title 'Lamb of God' used in the New Testament, Revelation used it 30 out of those 35 times. I think the book of Revelation, a future book (a lot about a future time), doesn't want us to forget Christ is the Lamb...and even in eternity on the New Heaven and New Earth with the New Jerusalem, the throne of God is called 'the throne of God and of the Lamb' (vv. 22:1, 3). We won't be forgetting He is our Lamb. The one who paid for our sins with His sacrifice on the cross. In Rev. 5:12-13, all created beings in heaven are proclaiming, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing... To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." The fifth highlight of His physicality is that...

5. He asks for something to eat and He eats it. (v. 41-43)

The text says they actually gave Jesus a piece of broiled fish and He took it and ate it. Just like the time where He manifested Himself to the disciples on the shore of Galilee (His third manifestation). Do you remember? He surprises them by acting like a stranger on the shore, asking if they'd caught anything. They tell Him no and He says, throw it on the right-hand side of the boat and you will. And they caught so many they couldn't haul it all in! Peter is overjoyed and says, "It's the Lord!" and jumps into the sea and swims to Jesus and Jesus has a little charcoal fire already lit and is cooking some fish for them. And they have breakfast together. Spirits don't eat like this. I do think it's important to note that while Jesus is eating, we shouldn't extrapolate from this that Jesus' body is dependent upon food because it's not. He's immortal.ⁱⁱ

Pointing out the physicality resurrection is important because the idea has always been out there floating around there that Jesus' resurrection is merely spiritual. One of my instructors from Bible school heard a preacher declare once that, "We are the resurrected Christ!" What was he saying? He didn't believe a literal resurrection of Jesus but that we, His body, are it. This is similar to the error that the Corinthians were falling into. They were doubting the resurrection of the dead. And Paul says to them in 1 Corinthians 15 if there's no resurrection from the dead, then Christ hasn't been raised, and our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain and you're still in your sins. But while we are considered His body, we aren't "His resurrection". Jesus Christ has bodily risen and His body has been glorified! **Docetism**, too, is a term used ascribed to an old false teaching, stemming from the Gnostics, saying Jesus was made up of celestial substance and everything was just an illusion that He went through – He wasn't really man. The reason they said this is because they thought of things that are spiritual as good, and the things that are physical (matter) as bad. Spirit, good; physical matter, evil. Heavenly, good; earthly, bad. That's what Gnostics believed and some of your eastern religions and isolations think (e.g. Monks). It's all about being spiritual and if you can just disconnect from the earthly and escape the earthly, through contemplative prayer and emptying your mind and connecting with the divine nature on the inside, then you can connect with what is good; what is god. But that's just not the testimony of the Word. The Word says don't empty your minds; fill your mind with His Word and what is good and pure and lovely and right. The Bible also doesn't teach that matter is evil. God cares about the physical world! Things we do for God in the physical world can be very spiritual. He loves creation! He loves to restore created things. He's a God of restoration. A God of resurrection.

The Lord has a heart for restoration. He is looking forward to removing the curse on creation and restoring creation. We don't just die and that's it for all things physical. We're not merely looking to escape these bodies but to have them resurrected and renewed, living on a resurrected world with a resurrected Savior. We will be changed in the twinkling of an eye a raised to life, while unbelievers, later on after the 1,000-year kingdom, will be resurrected unto eternal condemnation and judgment in the lake of fire. Everyone is raised, but some to a blessed life and some to judgment.

The second observation about the resurrection is that...

II. THE RESURRECTION IS A FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY. (VV. 44-49)

He reminds these discouraged and fearful disciples that what had just happened was not some strange thing and that it was all part of the plan. He reminds them a couple of different witnesses to prove that it's all under God's control.

A. Jesus reminds them of His previous words to them. (v. 44)

He says in verse 44, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was with you." I told you guys these things were going to happen to Me. Several times He said it. In 9:22 He told them, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day." Word for word, that's what He said. In 9:44 He said, "Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men." But they did not understand the statement. They couldn't imagine the Messiah suffering. They wanted the King who ruled, as we saw last Sunday. On their way up to Jerusalem He told them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again." Sounds pretty straight-forward? Still, it says, "But the disciples understood none of these things, and the meaning of this statement was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said. We'll see why later.

B. Jesus reminds them of the Scriptures. (vv. 44-45)

Secondly, He tells them the Scriptures foretold all this too – the Law and the Prophets, the Psalms – and they had to be fulfilled. This is the same thing He told the disciples on the road to Emmaus. In Luke 24:27 (same chapter) He's walking beside these two disciples and they're just as discouraged as can be – they're telling Jesus (they don't know it's Him) about how there was prophet mighty in word and deed and he was crucified... they said "we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. It's been three days and now no one can find His body." They're moping around and Jesus wakes em up! "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? Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." There's no doubt in my mind He went to Isaiah 53 like we looked at Good Friday. Probably went to the Psalms. Genesis 3? The Law with the sacrifices? Jonah and his three nights in the great fish? The snake on the pole for the Israelites in the wilderness? I mean He could've turned anywhere! The whole of Scriptures points to Christ! It's all about Jesus Christ! From beginning to end, A-Z, Alpha to Omega, He is it. He is the Living Word of God and the Word of God points to the Living Word of God. The Old Testament says Christ is coming. The gospels say Christ is here. The New Testament says Christ came

and is coming again. Spurgeon said, “From every text in the Bible there is a road to Jesus Christ.” Warren Wiersbe said, “The key to understanding the Bible is to see Jesus Christ on every page.”ⁱⁱⁱ Think about Paul. Whenever Paul entered a synagogue to evangelize, he reasoned with them from the Scriptures like Christ. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Want someone you know to believe? Take them to the Scriptures. They don’t return void. The Scriptures are alive and active and penetrate men’s being. To point men to Christ, we take them Scriptures. Let the Word of God do the work.

Why couldn’t the disciples understand what Jesus said at times? The key lies in verse 49.

❖ **The Holy Spirit is required to understand the Scriptures and things of God.**

You need the promise of the Father. You need God’s help – God’s Helper, the Holy Spirit – to understand God’s things. He tells them in verse 49, “And 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.” The promise of the Father is the Spirit who gives us power from on high to live the Christian life, understand His Word and have an effective ministry. You have to be born again by the Spirit of God. Jesus said, “Unless a man is born again He cannot see the kingdom of God.” Not only can you not enter it to dwell there forever, you can’t even see it here and now. Natural man doesn’t have spiritual eyes to see the kingdom of God in the world and to see the battle taking place for men’s souls. He doesn’t have the capacity; can’t see it; can’t behold it; can’t experience it without the aid of the Spirit. Can’t weed out the lies from the truth. All the natural man sees is what he thinks is truth and the ways of the world – doing whatever seems right to him, but in the end leads to death. Man, in his natural born state does not have the Spirit of God and is dead spiritually. In order to be born again spiritually you must be baptized by the Holy Spirit of God who comes to indwell the person who has put their faith in Christ. We are born again by faith in Christ.

And the resurrection is tied in with the Spirit, like it is in everything for us it seems. Romans 8:11 says, “If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.” So the Spirit of God will a key agent in our resurrection life now and our physical resurrection to come. If the resurrection didn’t happen, we wouldn’t have the Spirit.

The third observation about the resurrection is that...

III. THE RESURRECTION IS GOOD NEWS FOR THE NATIONS. (vv. 46-53)

A. Take the good news to the nations! (vv. 46-48)

It is good news to be taken to all the world! Every tribe and tongue and nation. “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance [changing your mind about your sinfulness and turning to trust Christ] for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.” The disciples witnessed Christ first-hand. They saw Christ with their eyes, alive, then dead, and buried, and alive again! That’s what they preached. And there is life-giving power in the message. Christ and Him crucified and raised again – believe it. We preach the same thing because we’ve all witnessed the life-changing power of God through faith in Christ. We all know the power of the Gospel message. **Our message is a message of resurrection! God can take your life and resurrect it! And He’ll resurrect you to live with Him, the resurrected Savior, forever.**

There has never been a greater message than the one we carry! We carry the good news that the greatest enemies of man have been defeated! Satan, sin, and death. **Satan's head has been crushed. Sin has lost its power. Death has lost its sting.** We no longer have to fear death. Christ has been raised. **The resurrection drives out fear!** Look at the fear the disciples have before the resurrection – then look at them after. They become powerful witness for Him. We don't grieve as those who have no hope. We have hope. Not a wishful thinking kind of hope but an assured and confident hope. When we bury someone, it's only temporary. It's like planting a seed in the ground. It's buried, yes, but it will be sprout and grow into something beautiful in God's timing. What's great about Easter is that everything is coming to life in the Spring. The resurrection is seen everywhere in Spring. Luther said that, "The Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone, in every leaf in springtime." The dead trees come back to life by the power of God.

I'd say the dead coming back to life is pretty good news in a world where every other answer to what's on "the other side" is mere speculation. There's a lot of weird stuff out there that has nothing to do with restoration or resurrection, which has been God's purpose since the beginning of the Fall. Our message is not vague or speculative. It is precise. It is Christ – who died buried and rose again. Our message is simple too. Jesus Christ. Nothing added, nothing taken away. In fact if you add to Christ, you take away from Him. It's just Christ. Do you want to be free from Satan? Christ. Tired of living a life of sin? Christ. Want freedom from the fear of death? Christ. To die is gain. Want to go to heaven? Christ. Want to live, I mean really live? To live is Christ. Want purpose? Christ. Want hope? Christ. Want peace? Christ. Want contentment? Christ. Want joy? Christ. Want to know truth? Christ. Want to know God? Christ. **The world needs the good news of Christ.** Take it across the street. Take across town. Take it across the States. Take it across the globe if God calls you too. Take it to the nations. Be Spirit-filled witnesses of Christ.

B. Rejoice over the good news continually! (vv. 50-53)

After Jesus blessed them and ascended into heaven, the disciples were continually praising God and worshipping Him! And how can we not do that too after what's been done for us? We need to worship continually from the time we get up to the time we go to bed, we praise His name out loud and in our hearts. Praise Him for what He's done for us. Let the good news sink in every day. Refuse to let it become some commonplace thing to you or become stale in your heart. It's like the illustration I shared on Friday. While I was living in an airport a week ago, I noticed people have lost the wonder of flying. All except the kids! In today's airplanes, we get to soar above the clouds! You know how many people who walked this earth before us would've loved to soar above the clouds? Yet most who fly today are so used to it that they shut the windows, close their eyes, and put their headphones on. They've lost the wonder of flying. If you told someone from 100 years ago that in 100 years you could fly half way around the world in half a day, they wouldn't have believed you. That in order to get from Rapid City to Illinois, you would go to Dallas or to get from Illinois to Denver you would go to Atlanta, and to do it in just a few hours, they'd call you crazy. If you took someone from 100 years in to the here and now of airline travel, they would be on the edge of their seat looking like a dog with his head out the window. They'd appreciate economy class seats. My point being, don't let that happen with the death and resurrection of Jesus! Refuse to let it grow stale in your hearts! Refuse to let the resurrection become commonplace. It's a marvelous thing! The Lord has done it and it's marvelous in our eyes. Wonder over it. Rejoice and praise God! We have hope. He is risen! He is seated at the right hand of the Father. And He is coming back again.

ⁱ Charles C. Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 1430.

ⁱⁱ Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Luke: 2019 Edition*, accessed 20 April 2019, www.planobiblechapel.org

ⁱⁱⁱ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), 224.