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Sunday School Lesson

April 7, 2024

Subject: **THE APPEARANCES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST AFTER HIS RESURRECTION AND BEFORE HIS ACCENSION**

Acts 1: 3 tells us that after the resurrection there was a period of forty days in which Jesus appeared to His disciples. We see three things that was his focus during that time.

1. Jesus restored His disciples' faith and gave them hope.

Jesus' crucifixion devastated His followers. In Matthew 19:27 Peter said to Jesus, "We have left everything to follow you." And in John 6:68 he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." In John 20:9 we also learn that they "did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead." From the perspective of His followers, while Jesus was being crucified, everything they had hoped in and believed in was dying before their eyes. Luke 24: 21 tells us that they had hoped that He would redeem Israel.

So after His resurrection Jesus set out to restore their hope. We see Him appear to a sobbing Mary Magdalene in John 20:15-18. With one simple word, "Mary" Jesus restores her faith and gave her hope. Then in John 20:19-30 Jesus appears to the apostles and showed them his hands and side, which had been pierced for our sins. Then we're told the apostles were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. They had misunderstood. What the world had meant for evil, God meant for good.

2. Jesus taught His disciples how the scriptures pointed toward Him

Matthew 16:21-23 tells us that Jesus' followers did not understand what the Scriptures said about Him. That's why once their faith was restored Jesus moved to ground their faith through Scripture. We see this in Acts 1:2-3 where we find Jesus giving the apostles commandments and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Again in Luke 24:27 we see Jesus, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, explaining to His disciples what was said in the Scriptures concerning himself. And again in Luke 24:32 where the disciples' hearts burned as Jesus opened the Scripture to them. They once were blind to the truth of the Bible, but Jesus gave them spiritual sight.

3. Jesus sent His followers out to share the good news

With their faith restored and strengthened through scripture, Jesus' final instructions to the Apostles in Matthew 28:19 was to "go and make disciples of all nations" by sharing with the world the great things that Jesus has done. Acts 1:8 tells us of Jesus' words before departing to heaven, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samarian, and unto the utter-most part of the earth. John 21:25 tells us "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

- Mary Magdalene – Mark 16:9-11, John 20:11-18
- The other women at the tomb – Matthew 28:8-10 (Matthew 28:11-15 the soldiers saw)
- Peter in Jerusalem – Luke 24:34, 1 Corinthians 15:5
- The two traveling the road to Emmaus – Mark 16:12-13
- Ten disciples behind closed doors – Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-25
- All disciples with Thomas – John 20:26-31, 1 Corinthians 15:5
- Seven disciples while fishing – John 21:1-14
- Eleven disciples on the mountain – Matthew 28:16-20 (verse 17 but some doubted)
- A crowd of 500 – 1 Corinthians 15:6
- Jesus' brother James – 1 Corinthians 15:7 (note: John 7:5 his brethren did not believe)
- Those who watched Jesus ascend to heaven – Luke 24:44-49, Acts 1:3-12
- Least of all the Apostle Paul – 1 Corinthians 15:8-9, Acts 9:1-8, Acts 22:1-11, Galatians 1:13-16, 1 Corinthians 9:1