

APRIL 18, 2021

TEXT: LUKE 24:36-49

THEME: RESURRECTION REALITIES

36 As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" **37** But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. **38** And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? **39** 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." **40** And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. **41** And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" **42** They gave him a piece of broiled fish, **43** and he took it and ate before them. **44** Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." **45** Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, **46** and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, **47** and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. **48** You are witnesses of these things. **49** And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

In the name of Jesus!

Amy Kugler, a 39 year old communications specialist from Seattle Washington, was tired of being locked down and locked in. She had spent over a year being away from the people she worked with, and the people she loved. She hadn't seen her parents in over a year, and she lost her job at the

beginning of the Pandemic and had to build a new career. Her grandma had died and she had to attend the funeral on Facebook. Amy has high blood pressure as well as asthma. She thought that getting a vaccine for Covid was hopeless, a pipedream. She figured that she would be one of the last in her family to get vaccinated.

But late in March, she got a text from the city government telling her that she was eligible. She didn't believe it at first. She said that she kept looking at the text in shock, handing the phone to her husband, and asking, "is this legit?"

When she went to the Event Center to get her shot, she felt energy and hope in the air as she entered the site. She burst into tears as she sat down as she received her vaccine, and she kept crying as she sat in a chair for her 15 minute waiting period. It was all so hard to believe that it was happening, but it was, and did. And she will now get on with living. Thankful and filled with hope.

Maybe you have felt the same way. I have heard from many who have received the vaccine that it was hard to believe that they were getting the vaccine after all of this time. It is hard to believe all that has transpired in the past year. If someone would have told anyone of us that all this would take

place before the event, we would have told them that they were crazy. It would have been thought that this idea would have been far fetched.

The disciples thought that what they were seeing on Easter was far fetched. First news that Mary saw Jesus at the empty tomb, and then, as Luke records in the verses before ours today, Jesus walking on the road to Emmaus with two disciples. And then we come to our text: **“36** As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!””

But note the response of the disciples: “they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.” That isn’t Good News, now is it? There isn’t much Good News if the disciples thought that they saw a ghost or were imagining things when they saw Jesus. Luke tells us that the disciples were troubled, they were afraid and they had their doubts about whether or not they had actually seen Jesus, and if Jesus really truly did rise from the grave.

But Jesus has Good News for them and for you and me. Just listen to what Jesus says: **“39** 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.” **40** And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. **41** And

while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” **42** They gave him a piece of broiled fish, **43** and he took it and ate before them” The resurrection of Jesus was real, very real. The Jesus that they encountered, well, He wasn’t a figment of an active imagination. This Jesus that they saw wasn’t a spirit, He was real, He was flesh and blood! And how do we know! Because Jesus appeared to His disciples as One who had flesh and bones. Jesus had a physical body after His resurrection. His disciples noticed that Jesus had hands and feet. Now, back in Jesus’ day, the common belief was that spirits or ghosts didn’t have feet. That is why Jesus tells them to look at His hands and feet, for Jesus was no ghost!

Now they began to understand, now they began to see, and the Bible says that the disciples disbelieved for joy. Their hearts were joyful but they still could not believe, that is what disbelief means, the disciples had an inability to believe. So Jesus inquires if they had anything there to eat. Someone gave Him a fish, and He ate it before their eyes.

We have a hard time believing in things today, now, don’t we? It is one thing to be skeptical, to have your doubts about something and to seek answers to the questions you have. The disciples had their doubts about the resurrection of Jesus. That is why Jesus presented to them proofs, telling

them to see His hands and feet, and asking for something to eat, then eating in front of them. Jesus had flesh and bones, He answered the questions and satisfied their doubts. But most importantly, Jesus rose from the grave for you!

You see, Jesus' resurrection is only the beginning. Jesus is the first to be raised from the grave. Just listen to what the Apostle Paul says about Jesus' resurrection: "Christ in fact has been raised from the grave, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." (1 Cor. 15: 20, 23). "And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent," or first place in everything. (Col. 1: 18). Jesus is only the first to rise from the grave, then when He comes again in glory, all who belong to Him will rise with Him to be with Him, as He is, in glory. Not as spirits or ghosts, but as physically alive, perfect, sinless, and holy human beings, never to die again. Or, as the Apostle John plainly puts it, when Jesus returns, "we will be like Him." (1 John 3: 2).

What fantastic, Good News this is for you and me and all who believe in Jesus. On the Last Day, you and I and all who believe in Jesus will physically rise from the grave, just like Jesus. And, to repeat, we will be like Him. This is why we share the Good News of Jesus with those who do not yet believe, so that they will have this same physical eternal life with Christ. This is our

Christian hope, and it isn't based on a vaccine or on herd immunity. It isn't subject to variants or medicine, instead, it is the medicine that everyone needs, that Jesus saves sinners by His suffering, death, and physical resurrection!

As the vaccine continues to be placed into the arms of people today, the response of Amy Kugler, who cried when she got inoculated, is a common response of many today. Many people today have happy hearts because they have been vaccinated. And that is great. I don't want to disparage or minimize these emotions. I will admit, I felt the very same way once I got my final vaccine. It was like a weight was lifted in my life. But, dear brother and sister in Christ, as Christians we have something so much greater given to us by our risen Lord Jesus Christ. Our hope and certainty is not based on vaccines or herd immunity. For in the end, each one of us, whether we are vaccinated or not, will die because as the Bible says, sin pays off with death. We will all die at some point in time, that is the reality of life. But the **RESURRECTION REALITY OF EASTER IS THIS:** because Jesus lives, all who are in Christ shall live with Him as well. And this fact gives us certainty for the days ahead. Because now we can live in the confidence of a Savior who lives for us today. We can be confident that nothing will separate us from His love, care and protection. And we can live not for ourselves, but for one another, seeking to show the love and life of Christ by helping and befriending others

who are in need. For we have Good News, indeed, Great News to share with everyone, that Christ has risen from the grave, and that by believing in Him others might also have life by His name.

Amen.