

Please open your Bibles this morning to Luke chapter 22 and follow along as I read, beginning with verse 54. I will be skipping from verse to verse, so follow closely.

### Luke Chapter 22



**54** Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance. **55** Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. **56** And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him." **57** But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." **58** And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!"

**59** Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." **60** But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. **61** And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." **62** So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Let us pray.

The Gospel of Luke tells us that after Peter's denial, Jesus was taken before Pilate, who questioned him as to who he was.

### Luke Chapter 23

**3** Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say." **4** So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

Later in the chapter, Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, who wants Jesus to perform a miracle for him. Herod questions Jesus, and although he finds no fault in him, he orders his soldiers to whip Him.

**11** Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate.

Pilate then brought out Barabbas and Jesus as he had a custom of releasing one prisoner per year. In this way, he carried political favor with the people. He gave them a choice as to whom they wanted to release. **18** And they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas"— **19** who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder. **20** Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. **21** But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

At this point, Luke tells us that Jesus was led away and Simon, a Cyrenian (northeast Libya), helped carry his cross. There was a huge company that followed as Jesus made His way to Calvary, where He turned to them as they were weeping, and said that it is He himself who weeps for

them because of the judgment that is to come upon them. Two criminals were walking along with him to be crucified, one on his right hand and the other on his left. And there, as He hung from the cross, He looked down as the soldiers cast lots to divide His clothes because they had stripped Him naked. As He looked on, the soldiers came up to Him mocking Him, saying, "He saved others, why can't He save Himself." A sign was put above Him saying in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew as follows:

**ΙΗΣΟΥΣ Ο ΝΑΖΩΡΑΙΟΣ Ο ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΤΩΝ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΩΝ**

*Iēsous ho Nazōraios ho basileus tōn Ioudaiōn*

**IESVS NAZARENVS REX IVDÆORVM**

*Heek est Jeysus Rex Yudee-orum*

**ישוע הנצרי מלך היהודים**

*"Yeshua ha-Natzri ve-melech ha-Yehudim".*

As Jesus hung there dying on the cross, He exchanged words with the criminals. One of them mocked Him, but Luke 23 records some of the most beautiful words written in the New Testament. It is the interchange between Jesus and the other criminal. **42** *Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."* **43** *And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."* These are beautiful words because they strip down the requirements for salvation to their bare essentials. The penitent criminal confessed Jesus as Lord and believed in His heart that God would raise Him from the dead (see Romans 10:9-10).

We then read that Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus down from the cross and laid Him in his own tomb. **55** *And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.* **56** *Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.*

## Luke Chapter 24

### He Is Risen



**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.* **2** *But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.* **3** *Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.* **4** *And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.* **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?"* **6** *He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,* **7** *saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'* "

**8** And they remembered His words. **9** Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. **10** It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. **11** And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. **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.

What was the reaction of the eleven disciples when they heard the testimony of the women who had heard the words and believed? “Their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them!” BUT PETER AROSE AND RAN TO THE TOMB! It is interesting to hear the reactions of people when they first heard, saw, or experienced the reality that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Jesus is still in the business of having encounters with people. In celebration of the resurrection, it is easy to miss a profound spiritual reality. God didn’t use an angel to go tell the world what had just happened. He used a series of personal encounters where Jesus met person after person at the point of their specific need. And you know what? He’s still doing that today. Have you had an encounter with Jesus? Let’s look at several encounters that He had.

### **MARY MAGDALENE**

First, He met Mary Magdalene in the garden. The other gospel accounts tell us that she was bent over, mourning and weeping the loss of her Lord, whom she loved. She mistook Him for the cemetery gardener. With her eyes blurring from crying, she begged the gardener, saying, “Sir, tell me where they’ve taken Him.” Then the resurrected Jesus made His first encounter when He said nothing to her but her name. He didn’t call her “woman.” He didn’t call her “my disciple.” He just said, “Mary.” And with that one-syllable word, everything was made right in Mary’s world. Some of you reading this sermon or sitting in this room know exactly what this feels like. At some point in your life, you were or are presently at the end of your rope. Perhaps you’re in a hospital room or in the middle of a horrific illness. This is an illness that you’ve been plagued with. Sometimes you’re too embarrassed to even share with others. But Jesus has made a way for you. He is calling you by name. He is saying, “I rose from the grave, and you too can rise from whatever condition you find yourself in.” Call out to Him and in one way or another, He’ll make His presence known to you. Let’s now look at the second instance Luke gives us of an encounter with Jesus after the resurrection. Look now at verse 13 of Luke 24.

### **THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**



**13** Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. **14** And they talked together of all these things which had happened. **15** So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. **16** But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. **17** And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” **18** Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?” **19** And He said to them, “What things?”

They went ahead and told Jesus everything that had transpired over the last couple of days. They mentioned to him, some of the circumstances concerning the resurrection, ... **“24 And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.” 25 Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**

Basically, Jesus took them through a Bible study in which he explained how the Messiah would come and what would happen to Him. What is crazy is that through all of this, although Jesus was in their presence, they did not see him. It wasn't until they sat down for dinner that their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. Jesus met these two men in the midst of their confusion and He gave them clarity. They didn't really know He was in their midst until they broke bread with Him. Maybe you met Jesus on the way while you're caught up in your own confusing mess, but you just don't see Him in it all. In fact, you can't even recognize that He is in your presence, but He is. It might be that you're listening to a sermon or you're in a Bible study, and you get a word that lets you know that He really is in your life and He really does care. And, that He really is who He says that He is.

### **DOUBTING THOMAS**

Our third example this morning is Thomas. I think there's a little (or maybe even a lot) of 'Doubting Thomas' in each of us. Thomas had missed out on the first appearance of Jesus, and he refused to hear what the others had to say. Defiantly, he had said, "I refuse to believe unless I see the nail marks.... unless I put my finger in His side." It's kind of fun to think that as he said these words, Jesus was listening, and he knew exactly how to meet Thomas at the point of his need. About a week later, Jesus shows up. Let's jump over to John 20:24.



**24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” 26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” 27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.” 28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”**

Notice that Jesus doesn't shame Thomas. He merely says, "Thomas, you asked for proof and here it is." Some of you are doubting Jesus this morning. You want to believe, but the evidence seems thin to you. You just aren't convinced. On one hand, you want to believe because you want it all to be true. But then, you talk yourself out of it again and again. You're sitting here in this pew thinking, "I want to believe but I just don't know if I can." Tell this to Jesus. He won't be offended.

He is listening to you as he listened to Thomas. I believe He will meet you at the point of your need. I have a couple of young adults in my ministry, and they want to believe, but they've haven't seen "the wounds in His hand and His side." If you open your heart, Jesus will say to you, "Touch my wounds. Touch my side. Don't be afraid to see me. I am here."

## PETER'S REDEMPTION



Perhaps, apart from Paul, Peter has the greatest redemption story. We started this morning reading about Peter's denial, and we'll end with His redemption. Peter had insisted three times that he didn't even know Jesus. He had caved to the pressure. He was the one who had said, "Oh no Lord, I'll NEVER leave you." We sure get into all kinds of problems when we tell God what we will or will not do.

I've heard one of our congregants say, "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plan for your life." Peter was now the person who had been burned, not so much by others, but by his own failures. He's hurt. He's confused. He's ashamed. He's had enough, and he's going back to do what He did before Jesus showed up. Peter's failure has gotten in the way of his future.

Jesus appears on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius, and most of us know the story. They had fished all night and caught nothing. Jesus tells them to fish on the other side of the boat, and they weren't even able to pull in the nets because they were so full of fish. I'm not sure they recognized that it was Jesus, but John (who records the incident in John 21:7b-19) said to Peter:

*"It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. **8** But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. **9** Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. **10** Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught."*

***11** Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken. **12** Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord. **13** Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. **14** This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.*

### **Jesus Restores Peter**

***15** So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." **16** He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." **17** He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You*

*know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep. 18 Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.” 19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.”*

Jesus showed up on the shore at dawn, and He didn't scold them. He didn't chew them out. He didn't preach to them. He cooked them breakfast. And then, He turned toward Peter. Jesus asks Peter three times if Peter loves Him. That's one time for each denial. And with each question, Jesus is absolving Peter of his failure and giving him a future. Brothers and sisters, that is what the Resurrection is all about. It takes us to the point of our greatest failures, shows us that Jesus has the power to forgive us and cleanse us, and gives us a future. Jesus will meet you at the point of your need.

He met grieving Mary, and He addressed her by name.

He met the two confused travelers who walked to Emmaus, and He gave them total clarity.

He met the doubter Thomas and proved Himself, answering his questions.

He met the failure Peter, and He gave him forgiveness and a future.

So, here is a challenge for each of you this morning. Are you ready to let Jesus turn His story into your story? Have you ever even met Him and invited Him into your life? Jesus says, “Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice and lets me in, I will dine with him and he with me.”

When has the resurrected Jesus shown up in your life, and yet you didn't recognize Him? You're looking for Him over there, and all the time He is right here. Maybe He showed up when you got some horrible news on the phone, and you immediately cried out, “Help me Jesus.” It's when you have that hidden, controlling sin that you're engaged in, when He says, “Give it to me. Be free.” He's there. It is when you're in more pain than you've ever been in in your life. Just say, “Help me Jesus to pass through this that I'm going through.” It is easy for us to miss seeing that He is present. When has Jesus shown up in your life in a remarkably personal way? Go back, and remember that time. Maybe it was when a stranger spoke amazingly comforting words to you. Maybe none of this has ever happened to you before, but ask God to reveal Himself to you, and He will. Oh, it won't be on your timetable, but the prophet Jeremiah (29:13) says, “Seek the Lord and you'll find Him.” That's a promise of God. Are you seeking Him with all of your heart?

He is risen. Christ has risen. He has risen indeed. Hallelujah!

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at [uniongrove362@gmail.com](mailto:uniongrove362@gmail.com) or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.