

Luke 24:1-12 – Surprised by What we Already Know

- 1) Today we begin the final chapter of the Gospel of Luke
 - a) All four Gospels describe the events of this day – each in its own way, based on the unique audience of each and the focus of the Gospel writer
 - b) Luke focuses on the inability of people to see or understand what is right in front of them
 - i) Pharisees ask for a sign even after seeing a miracle
 - ii) The disciples are surprised by things Jesus has already told them about
 - iii) This illustrates the need to view life through faith (see 2 Corinthians 4:18), a sense developed as we mature in faith
- 2) 24:1: This was a duty of women relatives (see Mark 14:8)
- 3) 24:2-3: Jesus' body is gone from the tomb
- 4) 24:4: Two 'men' (John calls them 'angels') – obviously they didn't have wings! (see Hebrews 13:2)
- 5) 24:5 The fear the women feel is a common reaction in the Bible when in the presence of an angel
- 6) 24:5-7: "Angel" means "messenger"
 - a) Their 'message' says what Jesus had already told them
 - b) Like the apostles, though they heard Jesus say these things, they did not understand them or take them seriously *
 - c) What 'messages' might God have for you in your daily life?
- 7) 24:8-9: Luke condenses the events of this day
 - a) Initially, the women did not believe, but were frightened and 'fled from the tomb,' telling no one (Mark 16:8)
 - b) How far they went we do not know – probably not far
 - c) Returning to the tomb, they again saw the angels, who told them to tell the disciples Jesus would meet them in Galilee
 - d) They then reported the events "to the eleven (apostles) and to the others (other disciples, men and women both)"
- 8) 24:10: Luke identifies the women – compare this verse with 8:2-3
 - a) Mary Magdalene
 - b) Joanna, wife of C(h)uza (Herod's household manager)
 - c) Mary the mother of James and Joses; we know nothing else of this woman, unless it is a reference to Jesus' mother
 - i) Jesus had given oversight of his mother to one of the disciples (probably John)
 - ii) It could be that James was next oldest after Jesus, since Jesus was no longer her care-taker
 - iii) See James 1:1 and Jude 1:1 to see how even Jesus' brothers would not refer to themselves as His brothers but as His servant (or 'slave')
 - iv) Compare Mark 15:40 with Mark 6:3
 - v) Some think this Mary was the mother of James and John, but others think Salome was their mother (compare this verse and Mark 15:40 with Matthew 27:56)
- 9) 24:11: Just as the women initially did not believe in spite of seeing with their own eyes the empty tomb and hearing the angels' report and being reminded of Jesus' own words, so the disciples thought the women's report was "pure nonsense"
 - a) This reaction of disbelief in the presence of the supernatural is common in Luke's Gospel – see 1:12, 18-20, 34; 7:29-30; 11:15-16; also 1b above
 - b) It may seem amazing to us that, even after Jesus had specifically said on at least three occasions, that "on the third day I will rise again", none even of His closest followers expected His resurrection or believed when they were told – but is it surprising when it involves matters that require faith?
 - c) Even Mary Magdalene, who is often hailed as the first to believe, needed Jesus' own presence to convince her, and even that was almost not enough (see John 20:14-15)
- 10) 24:12:
 - a) Luke reports Peter (but not John – see John 20:1-10) going to the tomb himself to investigate the claims of the women **
 - b) As a result of what he saw, Peter was not sure what to think, yet he did not dismiss it but 'wondered' ***
- 11) Three thoughts to ponder
 - a) * How many of Jesus' (or God's) words do WE take seriously or even begin to fully understand and appreciate?
 - b) ** How eager are WE to pursue further any sayings from the Bible that we don't understand? Do we continue to "wonder" about (or 'struggle with') them, or simply dismiss them? (see Luke 1:66; 2:19, 51, 9:44; Genesis 37:11, Daniel 7:28)
 - c) *** Often, wonder and confusion are simply the beginning of a deeper understanding of God (the 'embryo of faith' as it were) – provided we aren't quick to dismiss what we do not understand