

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon November 28, 2021

Luke 24:36-43 "The Resurrected Flesh and Bones of Jesus Himself"

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. 28 Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. 29 But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. 30 Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. 32 And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" 33 So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" 35 And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." 40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. 43 And He took it and ate in their presence.

44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. 46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things. 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

I. Introduction

a. Have you ever seen a ghost? Do you believe in ghosts?

1. Webster's 1828 Apparition: A ghost; a specter; a visible spirit.
2. Ghost stories abound throughout history and many stories, plays and movies include disembodied spirits as part of the plot. From the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD plays of Seneca, to Shakespeare's ghost of Julius Caesar, to modern Ghostbusters, this world's cultural tides and stories overflow with ghosts, spirits, and apparitions. What about a ghost in the Bible?

b. 1 Sam 28:3-20 "3 Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land. 4 Then the Philistines gathered together, and came and encamped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa. 5 When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. 6 And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets. 7 Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor." 8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please conduct a seance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you." 9 Then the woman said to him, "Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" 10 And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, "As the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." 11 Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." 12 When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice. And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul!" 13 And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth." 14 So he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is covered with a mantle." And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down. 15 Now Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do." 16 Then Samuel said: "Why then do you ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from you and has become your enemy? 17 And the Lord has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. 18 Because you did not obey the voice of the Lord nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the Lord has done this thing to you this day. 19 Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." 20 Then immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel."

1. Henry "If there were really no spirits, or apparitions of spirits (as by this and other instances it is plain that the disciples did believe there were), this had been a proper time for Christ to have undeceived them, by telling them there were no such things; but he seems to take it for granted that there have been and may be apparitions of spirits, else what need was there of so much pains to prove that he was not one?"

There were many heretics in the primitive times, atheists I rather think they were, who said that Christ had never any substantial body, but that it was a mere phantasm, which was neither really born nor truly suffered. Such wild notions as these, we are told, the Valentinians and Manichees had, and the followers of Simon Magus; they were called *Dokētai* and *Phantysiastai*. Blessed be God, these heresies have long since been *buried*; and we know and are sure that Jesus Christ was no *spirit* or *apparition*, but had a true and real body, even after his resurrection.”<sup>1</sup>

- c. So, in today’s text, when we see the disciples terrified, supposing Jesus to be a disembodied spirit, this should not be a big surprise to us. Their past experience and knowledge created a grid of interpretation that did not allow them to see Jesus Himself as flesh and bones. Without faith, they could only see Him as a spirit. Do you have any inaccurate prior beliefs/knowledge that keep you from seeing Jesus for Who He Is. Do you need to handle Him and see Him anew today? Do you need more heavenly evidence of Christ eating and drinking with you today? Also, what happens when we don’t believe accurately about Christ Himself? How does this impact how we live our lives? Our motives? Our goals? Our ethics?
  - d. Today: Luke 24:36-43 “The Resurrected Flesh and Bones of Jesus Himself”
    - 1. Setting: v33-36a
    - 2. V36: Jesus Himself appears and speaks Peace
    - 3. V37: Terrified, supposing Jesus a ghost
    - 4. V38: Jesus questions them about their fear and doubts
    - 5. V39,40: “Handle Me and see”
    - 6. V41a: Persistent unbelief, yet joy & marveling
    - 7. V41b-43: Jesus ate in their presence
- II. Setting: v33-36a
- a. “So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” 35 And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. 36 Now as they said these things...”
  - b. So, Cleopas and the other Emmaus road disciple have just completed retelling the Emmaus story, right after the eleven had told their story of Christ resurrected, including that Christ had appeared to Simon Peter. Recall that Christ had handled the bread, broken it and given it to the two Emmaus disciples. Christ’s physical Body had broken physical bread, in their presence. Yet, He had vanished from their sight suddenly. So, they must have been wondering about His resurrection existence: spirit only? Or fully man with soul, flesh and bones?
  - c. This is still on the first Christian Sabbath Day, the resurrection Day

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<sup>1</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

1. Henry "Five times Christ was seen the same day that he rose: by Mary Magdalene alone in the garden (Jn. 20:14), by the women as they were going to tell the disciples (Mt. 28:9), by Peter alone, by the two disciples going to Emmaus, and now at night by the eleven, of which we have an account in these verses, as also Jn. 20:19."<sup>2</sup>

III. V36: Jesus Himself appears and speaks Peace

- a. 36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."
- b. Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them. The text does not mention Christ arriving at the door, knocking and seeking entrance. How did Jesus enter that room? Did He appear supernaturally, like He had supernaturally vanished at Emmaus? That is the most natural reading of this text.
  1. Calvin "He does not, indeed, say that Christ, by his divine power, opened for himself *the doors which were shut*, (John 20:26;) but something of this sort is indirectly suggested by the phrase which he employs, *Jesus stood*. For how could our Lord suddenly, during the night, *stand in the midst of them*, if he had not entered in a miraculous manner?"<sup>3</sup>
- c. Jesus immediately speaks to the assembled disciples, and He says, "Peace to you." The manner of His arrival being quite unsettling, Jesus speaks peace to settle them. Recall, Christ's disciples had deserted and/or denied Him during His trials and crucifixion, except for John. His appearance to them would have been doubly unsettling.
  1. Henry "This intimates in general that it was a kind visit which Christ now paid them, a visit of love and friendship. Though they had very unkindly deserted him in his sufferings, yet he takes the first opportunity of seeing them together; for he deals not with us as we deserve. ...Thus Christ would at the first word intimate to them that he did not come to quarrel with Peter for *denying* him and the rest for *running away* from him; no, he *came peaceably*, to signify to them that he had forgiven them, and was reconciled to them."<sup>4</sup>
- d. "Jesus Himself" – this phrase emphasizes the full humanity of Jesus Christ at this moment. He is not spirit-only. He is 100% man: heart, soul, mind, strength (flesh and bones).

IV. V37: Terrified, supposing Jesus a ghost

- a. 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

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<sup>2</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

<sup>3</sup> Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [\*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke\*](#) (Vol. 3, p. 368). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>4</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- b. Here we see the disciples had yet to have full faith in the total resurrection of Jesus Christ Himself. Their first inclination is to believe they are seeing a disembodied spirit, rather than a fully resurrected human being. Still, the idea of Christ's Body being brought back to life is impossible for them to believe. So, instead of being filled with joy and gladness, they are terrified and frightened. How often do God's blessings terrify us because of our lack of knowledge and faith?
1. Bock "Jesus' appearance startles (πτοέω, *ptoeō*; BAGD 727; BAA 1456; elsewhere in the NT only at 21:9) and frightens (ἐμφοβος, *emphobos*; BAGD 257; BAA 520; elsewhere in the NT at Luke 24:5; Acts 10:4; 24:25; Rev. 11:13) the group. The disciples think they are seeing a "spirit" (πνεῦμα, *pneuma*), a disembodied person (cf. Luke 24:39; Acts 23:8–9; Heb. 12:23; 1 Pet. 3:19; Dan. 8:17; Tob. 12:16; on possible cultural expectations about someone called back from the dead, see 1 Sam. 28:3–19; Isa. 8:19; 19:3; 29:4; Nolland 1993b: 1213). Their fear is understandable since the group does not initially recognize Jesus and they are not expecting another appearance. The disciples are not operating with expectations of the miraculous."<sup>5</sup>
- V. V38: Jesus questions them about their fear and doubts
- a. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"
    1. Troubled: inward commotion, fear and dread. Opposite of peace.
    2. Doubts: They thought Jesus was a spirit, so they were doubting His total resurrection. They doubted His Body had been brought back to life.
  - b. Jesus Himself speaks again. His lungs move air through His vocal cords as His mouth and tongue shape the sound waves that travel through the shared air into their ears, where sound becomes hearing. His questions begins to shake them out of their fear and doubts.
    1. Henry "That many of the troublesome thoughts with which our minds are disquieted arise from our mistakes concerning Christ. They here thought that they had *seen a spirit*, when they saw Christ, and that put them into this fright. We forget that Christ is our *elder brother*, and look upon him to be at as great a distance from us as the world of spirits is from this world, and therewith terrify ourselves. When Christ is by his Spirit convincing and humbling us, when he is by his providence trying and converting us, we *mistake him*, as if he designed our hurt, and this troubles us."<sup>6</sup>
- VI. V39,40: "Handle Me and see"

<sup>5</sup> Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1932). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

<sup>6</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- a. 39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." 40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.
- b. Our Lord in His compassion and tenderness knows His disciples have here been stretched beyond their faith. They are in the transition from doubt to faith, and He comes to them in that tender transformation and helps them. "Handle Me and see" – "Behold... that it is Myself". He alludes to His crucifixion "My hands and My feet" – this is the same Body, now glorified, that endured the cross. He still has the marks of the cross upon His Body.
  1. Henry "He shows them his body, particularly *his hands and his feet*. They saw that he had the shape, and features, and exact resemblance, of their Master; but is it not his ghost? "No," saith Christ, "*behold my hands and my feet; you see I have hands and feet, and therefore have a true body; you see I can move these hands and feet, and therefore have a living body; and you see the marks of the nails in my hands and feet, and therefore it is my own body, the same that you saw crucified, and not a borrowed one.*"<sup>7</sup>
- c. "spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have" – Jesus explicitly declares that He is not just a spirit, AND that He is fully human in His resurrected Body, not just with His unseen humanity, but also with His visible humanity, both united together in "Himself", "Myself". This is the Body that belongs to the unseen humanity of Jesus, united in One glorified, eternal Man.
- d. "Behold"
  1. He appeals to their *sight, shows them his hands and his feet*, which were pierced with the nails. Christ retained the marks of them in his glorified body, that they might be proofs that it was he himself; and he was willing that they should be *seen*. He afterwards showed them to Thomas, for he is not ashamed of his sufferings for us; little reason then have we to be ashamed of them, or of ours for him. As he showed his wounds here to his disciples, for the enforcing of his instructions to them, so he showed them to his Father, for the enforcing of his intercessions with him. He appears in heaven *as a Lamb that had been slain*<sup>8</sup>
- e. "Handle Me"
  1. Henry "He appeals to their *touch: Handle me, and see*. He would not let Mary Magdalene touch him at that time, Jn. 20:17. But the disciples here are entrusted to do it, that they who were to preach his resurrection, and to suffer for doing so, might be themselves

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<sup>7</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

<sup>8</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

abundantly satisfied concerning it. He bade them *handle him*, that they might be convinced that he was not a *spirit*.”<sup>9</sup>

- VII. V41a: Persistent unbelief, yet joy & marveling
- a. “But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled”
  - b. Their transition from unbelief to faith is almost complete. The fear and dread are gone, replaced with joy and marveling, the happy forms of unbelief as it is replaced with faith.
- VIII. V41b-43: Jesus ate in their presence
- a. He said to them, "Have you any food here?" 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. 43 And He took it and ate in their presence.
  - b. So, Jesus Himself, goes on to provide the final proof. They have seen His Body. They have heard His Voice. They have touched His Body. They have seen and handled His cross-wounds. Now, He eats in front of them. Eating. A meal. Here it is again.
    1. Henry “He *eats* with them, to show that he had a real and true body, and that he was willing to converse freely and familiarly with his disciples, as one friend with another. Peter lays a great stress upon this (Acts 10:41): *We did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.*”<sup>10</sup>
  - c. Broiled fish and honeycomb. Think upon the simplicity of this moment. So real. So mundane. It’s what they had at that moment, and they shared it with Jesus Himself, watching Him chew it, swallow it, enjoy it. Imagine that scene!
    1. Henry “They gave him a *piece of a broiled fish, and of a honey-comb*, v. 42. The honey-comb, perhaps, was used as sauce to the broiled fish, for Canaan was a land *flowing with honey*. This was mean fare; yet, if it be the fare of the disciples, their Master will fare as they do, because in the kingdom of our Father they shall fare as he does, shall eat and drink with him in his kingdom.”<sup>11</sup>
- IX. Questions to know, love and obey God
- a. 1646 WCF 8.2 "The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon Him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof; yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or

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<sup>9</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

<sup>10</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

<sup>11</sup> Henry, M. (1994). [\*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume\*](#) (p. 1913). Peabody: Hendrickson.

confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man."

- b. 451 Definition of Chalcedon "Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us."