

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Sermon Title: Experiencing the Risen Lord, (Various Scriptures)

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INTRODUCTION: Last Sunday we celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus. He resurrected only once, just like he was born in Bethlehem only once. But, we celebrate both events every year. Most people, however, aren't taught about Jesus' appearances after he resurrected. My guess is the average person believes Jesus rose from the dead, met with his disciples, and ascended into heaven. But, Jesus did far more. For forty days following the Resurrection, he interacted with people.

Today I will be presenting to you a model I've never heard anyone teach. I want to look at all the scriptures about Jesus' post resurrection appearances, when they happened, with whom he talked, what he said, people's reactions, and what people said, if anything. I mentioned some of these before, but I've never put them together in this format.

Jesus' post resurrection appearances can be basically divided into three divisions of time. First is Resurrection Sunday, second is week 2 to day 40, and third is day 40.

1. Who did Jesus see on Resurrection Day?
2. Who did Jesus meet a week after the Resurrection?
3. Who did Jesus see on the last day—day 40?

First, WHO DID JESUS SEE ON RESURRECTION DAY?

I won't spend much time on it because I spoke about this topic last week.

In Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20, we find Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, Salome, JoAnna, and perhaps another unnamed woman.

- What were their reactions to seeing Jesus? At first, they did not recognize him, but when he called Mary by her name, she recognized his voice. The

Gospels give us a variety of emotions: fear, trembling, and joy. I like the way Matthew describes the scene in Chapter 28.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:9-10 ⁹ *Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.* ¹⁰ *Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”*

- What can we learn from this encounter? They heard his voice, they recognized it was him, they worshiped him, and then he gave them instructions. We can follow the same sequence: Hear his voice, recognize it’s him, worship him, and listen for instructions. I believe Jesus still works the same way today. If we hear his voice and worship him, then he’ll give us something to do. Listen to me...Jesus is the Lord of action. Jesus is not interested in having lazy disciples.

Jesus interacted with two more people on Resurrection Day: in Luke 24—Cleopas and another unnamed person. Cleopas is only mentioned here and nowhere else in the Bible, but it’s clear he knew the disciples. Like the women, they did not recognize him at first, but they witnessed to Jesus, telling him about himself. They invited him to join them for supper, and they recognized it was Jesus by the way he broke the bread. Then, Jesus disappeared.

- What were the reactions of these two men who encountered Jesus while they were walking? At first, they were sad, but when they recognized him, they were glad. Then, they immediately went to Jerusalem to tell the eleven disciples and people who were with them. An interesting note: earlier they had asked this man — who they did not know was Jesus — to stay with them because night time was coming. Yet, they left during the night to tell the disciples. I guess after seeing Jesus and then seeing him disappear, they were no longer afraid of traveling at night.
- What can we learn from this encounter? We can learn Jesus was for all believers, including this one man who is never mentioned in scripture again and the unnamed person with him. Jesus didn’t cater to favorites. Think how honored these men must have felt when they thought about it later. “Jesus appeared to us, and we are nobodies! Wow!”

Jesus also appeared to his disciples on Resurrection Day — yep, to those who abandoned him and hid. He wasn't in a hurry to see them, though. He saw others first, but he loved them, and he appeared among them in the locked room. This appearance happened the evening of the Resurrection. I read these scriptures last week, so I'll just paraphrase them today.

- How did they discover it was Jesus? He said, “Peace be with you.” He had them touch his scars, and he ate food.
- What were their reactions? Startled and frightened, they thought they'd seen a ghost. Then they were overjoyed.
- What did Jesus tell them? In John 20:23, he told them to forgive people.
- What can we learn from this encounter? Jesus is in the forgiving business. If he can forgive his disciples for abandoning him, then they should have been able to forgive others. Let's keep this in mind.

So, these are the people who saw Jesus on Resurrection Day. He interacted with people who came to see him, he interacted with people who were traveling, and he interacted with his disciples who were hiding. Jesus met people wherever they happened to be.

We have no specific record of what Jesus did for the next week. During the week of the crucifixion, we have a day-by-day schedule of events, except for Wednesday. But, we have no specific record of what he did the week following the Resurrection.

This brings me to the second of the three sections of time—

Second, WHO DID JESUS MEET A WEEK AFTER THE RESURRECTION?

He met Thomas and the other disciples. Thomas was not in the house with the locked doors when Jesus appeared, but he was with them a week later when Jesus showed up again. And, once again, the doors were locked.

- How did Thomas discover it was Jesus? He touched Jesus' hands and his side where he'd been wounded.
- What did Jesus tell him? Stop doubting and believe!
- What was Thomas' reaction? "My Lord and My God!"
- What can we learn from this encounter? I want to point out to you the other disciples already believed because they had been eye-witnesses to the risen Lord one week earlier. Thomas did not believe his own fellow disciples who were eye-witnesses! He wasted a week wandering around in doubt.

Who else did Jesus meet with between the second week and day 40? He met his disciples. And, all the questions I asked in the other examples are answered in the text.

In John 21, Jesus saw his disciples fishing. They had caught nothing, and he told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. He told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat, and the net was full.

SCRIPTURE: John 21:7-14 ⁷ *Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. ⁹ When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.*

¹⁰ *Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.*

After this, he reinstated Peter, who had denied him three times on the night of the Crucifixion.

And, Matthew 28 records a fourth appearance to the disciples at a mountain in Galilee. This is where he said to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And, then years later, the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth—

SCRIPTURE: [in] 1 Corinthians 15:6 [that Jesus] *appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.*

Third, AND ON THE LAST DAY, DAY 40—

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:50-53 ⁵⁰ *When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.* ⁵¹ *While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.* ⁵² *Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.* ⁵³ *And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.*

SCRIPTURE: Acts 1:3-11 ³ *After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.* ⁴ *On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.* ⁵ *For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”*

⁶ *Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”*

⁷ *He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.* ⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

⁹ *After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.*

¹⁰ *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.* ¹¹ *“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

CONCLUSION: Why did Jesus remain for 40 days? He remained in order to appear to too many people and in order to prepare his disciples for the work ahead of them. The dull disciples were now fully awake and ready for the future.

We have a few records, but what did he do the rest of the time? John tells us “Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book” (John 20:30).

The people I just told you about experienced the risen Lord. Won't you experience him today?

Let us learn from the eye-witnesses and the written record. Let us not doubt but have faith.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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