

Sermons
New Testament
all four Gospels
post-resurrection accounts

Date written: April 23, 1949

Theme: Jesus' post-resurrection earthly life

Proposition: The total effect of the varying gospel accounts of Jesus post-resurrection earthly life is the important aspect of these accounts, and assures us that He is capable of saving us.

Places preached:

1 Huntington, Ark. (April 29, 1949 A.M.)
Crawston, Miss., April 9, 1950 (A.M.)
"Wyoming State Hosp.," " (P.M.)

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Introduction:

1. Have you ever heard several people describing the same play, or the same accident; or telling the same joke? Several different versions, with different details are put around the same incident.

2. Reading the 4 accounts of Jesus on earth following the resurrection is a matter of similar nature. The basic truth, or conviction, is there, upon which all agree; but the 4 writers vary in reporting the incidents which took place.

3. A brief survey of these reports will help us better in getting at the truth concerning what Jesus was like after the resurrection, and the significance of these facts for us today.

I. His appearances after the resurrection.

In Matthew

1. To Mary Magdalene and the other Mary
2. On a mountain in Galilee to the disciples, at which time he gave the Great Commission.

In Mark

1. To Mary Magdalene.
2. To 2 of the disciples walking in the country.
3. To the 11 sitting at meat.

Luke

1. To 2 men on the road to Emmaus
2. To the 11 and the former 2 at Jerusalem, and then He led them to Bethany from where He ascended.

John

1. To Mary Magdalene in the garden of the sepulchre.
2. To the 11 in a shut room; except Thomas was absent.
3. To the 11 in the same room when Thomas was present and was convinced.
4. To Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, sons of Zebedee and 2 other disciples while they were fishing. At His appearance Jesus told Peter 3 times to feed His sheep.

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II. There are 7 separate appearances, according to my count and interpretation, in these accounts.

1. To Mary Magdalene (and other women).
2. To the disciples on a mountain in Galilee.
3. To 2 disciples walking in the country.
4. To 2 men on the road to Emmaus.
5. To the 11 sitting at meat or in a shut room.
6. To the 11 when Thomas was convinced.
7. To Peter, Thomas, sons of Zebedee, Nathaneal, and 2 others who were fishing.

III. How He was recognized in these appearances.

1. In Matthew there is no problem of recognition. He was immediately recognized.

2. In Mark those who saw Him knew Him on sight, but those who only heard were slow to believe.

3. In Luke there was slow recognition by those to whom He appeared in both cases.

4. In John recognition was slow or first proof was demanded that this was He. The proof He gave was of the wounds; and this proof convinced.

IV. Was it actually His physical body that appeared?

His disciples thought so. He gave Thomas physical proof that it was.

However, His goings and comings so quickly and mysteriously would indicate not.

Many say we must accept the fact that it was on simple faith, or not believe in Him.

We have to say, in all honesty, that we don't know whether or not it was His physical body, insofar as the record from the four gospels is concerned. But whatever the substance of the body, it was without doubt Jesus who appeared.

V. How He acted in these 7 recorded appearances.

Bodily recognition was the clinching proof in each case, but was not most used by Him.

Rather, He made Himself known by familiarity with them and their predicted place of meeting Him;

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by His knowledge of prophetic scripture and how it applied to Him;

by His reference to things He had done while on earth;

by expert practical advice on fishing;

by concern that His "sheep" should be fed;

by giving a commission of mission work with strange powers (Mark) to His disciples;

by His prophesied ascension.

VI. The significance of these resurrection appearances for us.

1. He can prove to us that "he lives," as He did to Thomas.

The chorus of the hymn "He Lives" has in it:

He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life's
narrow way.

He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!

You ask me how I know He lives?

He lives within my heart.

If we give Him a chance to prove it to us, as Thomas did, He'll prove He lives.

2. He is familiar with us and with our spiritual problems. As He proved to the disciples He was their Master by knowing the places he had told them he'd meet them; so He proves to us He lives by being in our midst whenever we gather together truly in His memory; by assuring us He is familiar with our problems.

3. He will give us good practical advice to follow here on earth, as He gave it to the disciples concerning their fishing. How? By setting an example of love and compassion; of diligence and sincerity. Salesmen often do no business at all on a day; and then on their last call get the order. Jesus sets the example of perseverance in right. That as our guiding principle is the best practical advice.

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4. He has people of shepherd-like ability who are constantly endeavoring to bring to His presence the sinful and the lost. That has or does include us all, and gives us all a hope in hopelessness; a spark of eternity amid time.

Conclusion:

The details of Jesus' earthly life after the resurrection as presented in the gospels give different viewpoints of His life; but they are all of value to us in the ways mentioned. It is not the details that is valuable but the total effect: the effect that He is Jesus the Savior.

Finally ^{again} the great significance is that He lives, and promises eternal life to the faithful. If He could do the before-hand work of overcoming death Himself, surely He can as well give to us life eternal also.

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