

# Easter 2025

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“He has risen indeed!” is the expected response to “He has risen!”

To think about what this means to us, we need to start in Genesis to identify the problem.

Genesis 3:7 **Then the eyes of both of them were opened**, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Genesis 3:10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and **I was afraid** because I was naked; so I hid.”

Genesis 3:23 So the Lord God **banished** him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he **drove** the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life

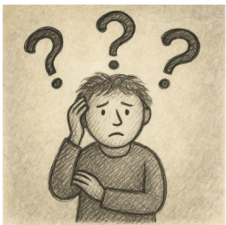


God put Adam and Eve in the garden and told them not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

The Genesis story is about the Garden and God...then the rest of the story comes about because of their shame. “Then the eyes of both of them were open” is the key part to remember.

Gen 3:10: the condition that we live in: we are afraid and hiding which manifests in many different ways.

Finally, the consequence of disobedience is that they are banished from the Garden; in fact, God must drive them out. If Eden represents all that is good (Eden = peace), to be driven out is walking away from peace with our anxiety and shame.



2000 years later, the resurrection was relatively ridiculous. Dead people don't rise from the dead. You can't find a person who has experienced this. When I come to this as a pastor, I still have to wrestle with this with faith: it's spectacular! If it isn't true, we are to be pitied. I want you to be honest: if this is true, this changes everything!

**Luke 24:9** When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But they did not believe the women, **because their words seemed to them like nonsense**. 12 Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, **wondering to himself what had happened**.



The followers of Jesus had a hard time with this as well!

Notice the highlighted words: did something really happen? These are the people who walked with Jesus and saw his miracles yet when he dies and lays

in a tomb for 3 days, they think it's nonsense that he rose from the dead. Let's settle on this: the resurrection requires faith for us today as it did for those closest to Jesus 2000 years ago.



Roads: When Adam and Eve left the Garden, they walked away from peace. Traveling gives a person time to think. For example, once I was driving home from Phoenix and I suddenly saw flashing lights. There were two policemen with guns on either side of me who said they had been following me for 20 minutes. I had to unpack my car...this is an example of being deep in thought. My brain was somewhere else.

Luke tells a story like this as well: Luke interviews tons of people and comes across this story about two people walking away from Jerusalem. This was the same day that they found the empty tomb and Jesus shows up and they don't recognize him. It's a seven mile walk that Jesus could walk with his crucified feet, no less!



Luke 24:13

Now that same day **two** of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about **seven miles** from Jerusalem. 14 They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. 15 As they talked and discussed these things with each other, **Jesus himself came up and walked along with them;** 16 but they were kept from recognizing him. 17 He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. 18 One of them, named Cleopas (John 19:25), asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

One of the travelers was Cleopas who had a wife named Mary. In the garden, Adam and Eve have a conversation with a snake. Here we also have a man and woman talking to Jesus.

I love how the resurrected Jesus is still very human.



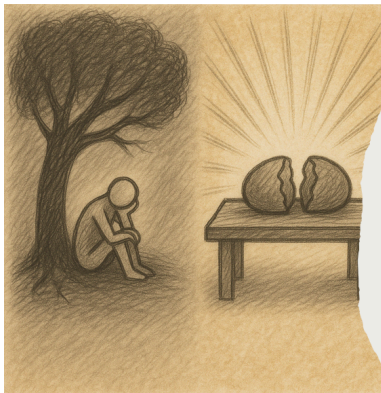
Luke 24:19 "**What things?**" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 **In addition, some of our women amazed us.** They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

He says "Use your brain" and think about what happened.



Luke 24:25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. 28 As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. 29 But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

First-century hospitality says you should pretend you aren't going to stay and then the host insists. Jesus still fits in with this culture and his Jewishness. He never intended NOT to stay with them.



Luke 24:30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Verse 31 is from the Septuagint (Greek translation for OT). Something is being reversed from the Genesis story and Luke wants to highlight this. Notice how Jesus broke the bread: the breaking of his body opens our eyes. As soon as this happens, they realize who he is! They returned to Jerusalem, a city of peace, at once, 7 miles!

Luke wants us to know our eyes will be opened and we will know. Jesus opens our eyes in a way that we will find life.



Luke 24:33 They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together 34 and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." 35 Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

What does Jesus do? He is in their midst and says "Peace be with you." He eats food: he is fleshly!

When I wondered about if my life has meaning, I realized every time I take communion my eyes are opened and I have peace. The invitation of Luke in this story is for us to join Cleopas and Mary and walk toward restoration with Jesus. In the midst of chaos, Jesus returns and offers peace.

The invitation today is to embrace this. This is life-changing peace in the midst of a world in which you still feel afraid and are trying to hide. We are to step out of the bushes and have an honest conversation with Jesus.





HE HAS RISEN

