



The Effects of Resurrection Truth

Luke 24:8-12

September 21, 2025

Well, you can turn to the final chapter in, in Luke's Gospel, Luke chapter 24. We're going to continue the section we started last week. So Luke 24, I'm going to start reading in verse 1. And I trust what we covered today in Luke's, in this section of Luke's Gospel will prepare us for the celebration of our Lord's Supper as we celebrate that together as a church at the end of the service. Luke 24:1, I'm going to start by reading the first seven verses and we will continue in this sermon through the 12th verse.

Luke 24, verse 1, "Now on the first day of the week at early dawn, they," that is the women, "came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared, and they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. But when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. That happened," with, "while

they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing. And when the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and the third day, rise again.'

We learned last time, there's this group of really exhausted women. They have had quite the weekend, very little sleep and so they are weary in their souls with sorrow, but weary in their bodies with lack of rest. And they come to the tomb early on this morning, the first day after the Sabbath, our Sunday. And they are coming intending to prepare Jesus body for resting in peace, as it were, in this place of memorial, in this tomb. They expected that the greatest obstacle that they would face would be the massive stone blocking the entrance to the tomb. How's a group of women going to move this one or two ton obstacle away?

That stone was not the greatest obstacle that they faced. In fact, the stone itself had already been rolled away as if to invite them into the tomb. That's where they discovered their greatest obstacle to all their intentions and their hard work and their preparation, no body. They're tired, sorrowful eyes, maybe their shoulders sagged as they were deflated and frustrated in their best efforts to honor the Lord Jesus and prepare his body for his entombment. At that moment, suddenly they, they're overwhelmed with this dazzling, brilliant light. They're suddenly overwhelmed with a, with the appearance of angels in the dazzling, brilliant light of their appearance and these angels appear and they announce the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ to them.

As we've been through, in the account, the angelic messengers that go on to remind the believing women of what they had forgotten. And what they had forgotten are those most essential words of Jesus. The teaching that he gave prior to the cross, a year or two prior, and he'd said it several times. He taught them about the cross. He taught them about the resurrection. He had predicted everything that they had just seen and had just heard. Everything that they had witnessed,

he'd already told them about. He taught them to interpret it. He told them to expect it. And this is well before any of it had ever happened.

We see in our text in verses 8 and 9, that the women remembered his words, and then they leave the tomb to go and tell the others. We also know from Matthew and Mark's account, their accounts, that the angels commanded the women to go tell the disciples, Jesus is risen from the dead, and they gave further instructions, passed through the women to the disciples to go and meet him in Galilee; there you'll see him. Luke doesn't relate any of that; what Matthew and Mark tell us about.

Luke keeps all of our focus on this scene. He kind of keeps everything in and around Jerusalem. He's got reasons for that, but he also wants us to keep our attention on these particular words that Jesus had spoken. He portrays the women here as really custodians, so to speak, custodians of Jesus' words, that they would take those words as it were, as a treasure, as something they're to guard and they would take them to the

people that they are to speak them to and deliver them, pass them on faithfully, which they did.

The question is how will those words be received? Take a look at verse 9. While verse 8 says, "They remembered his words. And when they returned from the tomb, they reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James, and the rest of the women with them were there, and they were telling these things to the apostles. But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they were not believing them. But Peter stood up and ran to the tomb, and stooping to look in, he saw the linen wrappings only. He went away by himself, marveling at what had happened."

What we're seeing in this account is the effect of resurrection truth. It's not merely the historical facts of the resurrection or the evidences about the resurrection, pointing to the resurrection. What we're seeing here is the teaching of Jesus that predicted the resurrection. His teaching that interpreted the meaning of the resurrection. As we're seeing all around us, we know that it's one thing to affirm the reality of

the resurrection, as a historical fact, to defend it historically, use as an apologetic evidence. Is that what just happened?

It's quite another thing entirely to believe in the meaning of the resurrection, to receive the truth of the resurrection in faith, and to be converted by this doctrine, and forever transformed, changed. That is what we're beginning to see here in the beginning of this chapter. It's the effect of resurrection truth and its effect on the believing. All are affected in this account. All are affected by the resurrection. They're all stirred internally. They react to the truth, and then they're moved into action. We see that.

It's worth considering though, for yourself, as each one of us really stands on the brink of eternity, never knowing if this is the day that will be my last. It's worth considering whether you see the effect of resurrection truth in your own life, whether you see it actually changing you, whether it's actually doing something. What, does it have power in your life at all?



Is it transforming you deeply? Is it making you new from the inside out?

We'll kind of work through the account here, just seeing the effect of the resurrection truth, and we'll kind of walk through with a few points; just little things for your notes, if you want to hang your thoughts on. Number one: receiving the truth leads to action. Receiving the truth leads to action. It's down in verse 10 that Luke identifies the women by name. He gives them a special honor by recording their names in his Gospel and this is not the first time he's done it. It's actually, Luke 8:2 and 3, where he gives their names first and we see them repeated here.

Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the rest of the women with them were there. He's identified these women before, as I said back in Luke 8:2 and 3. They are those who had followed Jesus faithfully ever since Galilee. These are faithful women, believing women, who'd supported Jesus' ministry, supported the other apostles as well. So evidently

these are women who had access to means, and they use that means no longer to serve themselves, but to serve the cause of Christ.

Back in Luke 8, Luke says, he refers to Mary called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out. Imagine seven demons inhabiting you, corrupting you, making your body do things you don't want to do, your mind think things that you find abhorrent. She'd been delivered from seven demons by the ministry of Christ. The next woman just referenced, also in our text, Joanna. Joanna is the wife of Huza, Herod's household manager, a steward in Herod's household. So Mary was possessed by demons. Joanna's husband worked for one. He is working for a dreadful man. She's married to him and in that household. Susanna, many others, all who provided for them out of their means.

I'm not gonna preach the sermon I've preached on that passage. You can find that on the website if you'd like to. But each of these women has a story of redemption. Each of these women has been affected by the truth. Each of these women has been changed by Christ, forever changed. Each of these women

known to the apostles, known to the early believing community, and most importantly, each and every one of these women is precious to the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows them by name. Their names are written and recorded in the Scripture and always in a good light.

The world has scoffed that the first resurrection witnesses were women, and I love that God takes pleasure in subverting the expectations of scoffers. I love it that he loves to favor those who are overlooked and dismissed, that he delights to reward the faithful with these kinds of special gifts. In God's economy, it's fitting, isn't it, that these faithful women would be the first to see the empty tomb, to see the risen Lord Jesus Christ. When they came to the cross, they did not run, they believed.

Jesus said if anyone come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. They took up the cross, they went to the cross and they believed through the cross, right to the tomb, to the resurrection. Here they are, all three synoptic accounts, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they tell us that the group

of women set out the first thing on the morning after the Sabbath, first day of the week, Sunday.

John tells us, he kind of isolates Mary Magdalene in his Gospel, he tells us Mary was the very first to arrive at the tomb ahead of the group of women, and she discovered the stone was rolled away. It says, "now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb while it was still dark and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb." So she's part of this group, but Matthew, Luke, they both summarize, and Luke, in summarizing his account, you see that there's more to the story.

When you put together all the Gospel accounts and you harmonize them, when you piece together these accounts, sometimes it can be hard to see how everything kind of fits together, and the sequence of who was at the tomb when, and who first saw Jesus, and how all the details fit together. It's a very dynamic situation, as human events are; various individuals, acting, coordinated, individual natures, groups moving together, people coming and going, saying this thing,

saying that thing, different things recorded, but it all harmonizes. It all comes together.

Clearly, as John reports, Mary arrived before anyone else. And some surmise that Mary Magdalene, maybe being a bit younger and physically stronger than the other women, moved a little bit faster than the the group of older women. So Mary is the one who having been forgiven much, having been delivered of seven demons, she was dramatically saved. Mary is the one who loved much. I think that propelled her to get to the tomb first.

So she hurries and scurries to the tomb. She finds the stone rolled away and then John 20 verse 2 says, "so she left the tomb and she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and said to them," they've taken away the Lord. "'They've taken away the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they've laid him.'" So she doesn't interpret correctly what she sees and you can hear a heart of great concern, devoted heart, loving heart.

In the meantime, as the other synoptic gospel accounts record, while she's discovering and then running back to tell Simon Peter, the other women arrive, and they arrive and discover what Mary found out. Luke 24:2 and 3, "They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus." And then this, "happened while they're perplexed, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing, and when the women were terrified, bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He's not here, but he has risen. Remember how He spoke to you.'"

So the angels are reminding these women, this group of women, of Jesus teaching and the interest of Luke, as I said, is different from that of John, different from that of Matthew and Mark. His interest is to trace Jesus' words starting there in verse 7. He wants us to see the effect of Jesus words on these believing women because his words are powerful. They're life giving. They are soul transforming words, words that have the power to generate and resuscitate faith.

Maybe there are some among you here who do not yet know God as your Savior. You don't know him as your father. You've not been reconciled to him. You still have sins that haunt you and darken you, and you're ashamed of. You feel guilty and stuck in your guilt, and you're stuck in the same pattern of sinning and feeling guilty and then you suppress it and try to turn away and distract yourself with something else. The words of Jesus can generate true saving faith in you, so that you put your eyes on Jesus Christ and see him as your Savior. And his death counts for your death, the death that you should die for those sins. And God takes away your sins and removes the burden of your guilt, and removes the shame, and clears your conscience, and restores you in a relationship with his father, who now becomes your father by adoption by the Spirit.

His words have power to generate faith. Words also have power to resuscitate faith, a faith that is there, and is true, and is believing, but sometimes is overcome with weakness, weakness of the flesh, weakness through affliction, weakness through temptation, weakness of sin. Even the believing can become subdued and overcome, hurt. That's these women and so the angels say, they deliver the only elixir, the only salve to

dress the wounds, and the only elixir, the only thing they can take in, that will actually resuscitate and regenerate and revive, it's the words of Jesus. "Remember how he spoke to you while he was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and the third day, rise again." Remember that?

Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, was obedient in suffering and then in dying for the sins of sinners. In his own body on the cross, he took their sins, he suffered injustice for their injustices, delivered blows delivered at the hands of sinful man. He absorbed God's wrath in their place and died the death that they deserved and don't fail to remember that infinite value of that final phrase of verse 7, "and the third day he rose again."

Taken together, these words are the message of forgiven sin, of atonement provided, of redemption won, of sin and death conquered. And the women witnessed Christ accomplishing this redemption. They saw it happen on the cross right before them, but they didn't remember the words, and so they were not

interpreting in real time. Now they're here to be witnesses of Christ's victory over death, over the grave, over sin. They had failed to connect the actual events, the facts, to Jesus words that they might interpret the meaning, that they might even find encouragement and comfort.

How often we do that, go through life and we stumble through facts, stumble through events, stumble through activities. Things happen to us. We do things. People do things with us, to us, around us, and it's as if the Bible that we read on Sundays doesn't apply on Tuesdays. We all can be like that. But if we're saturated in the Word and the Word of Christ is dwelling in us richly, you know what? We take that Bible into Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday.

We interpret everything around us in the light of his truth, his providence, his working, his acting, knowing that "God causes all things to work together for those," for those, "who are called according to his purpose," for those who love God, and so that even if bad things seem to happen to us, we interpreted them through the light of his eternal truth. We're

not flustered, we're not worried, we're not anxious, we're not doubtful, but we're always hopeful, grateful, joyful. That's the power of these words they had forgotten and we sympathize because we can see, we do that too.

They'd forgotten and that means that the brute facts before them had had no power to change them, no power on their own to affect them. The brute facts are just facts, but now in verse 8, now that they remembered his words, that makes all the difference in the world. Now they are thinking, contemplating, it's starting to dawn on them, starting to settle into them, and they spring into action. Over in Matthew and Mark's Gospel, in fact, I'll give you an option. You can either turn to Matthew 28:5 to 7 or Mark 16:6 and 7. They both record the same thing, but from two different authors, and you can choose either one. Choose one, though.

Follow along as I read, because what I'll do is I'll read, but I'll kind of give my own harmonization of the two accounts and I'll trust it'll make sense as you follow along. But the women, the women arrive and Mark and Matthew give kind of a, a

different angle or a part of what the angels said. So they tell us more than what Luke has told us. Women arrive and the angel said to the startled, astonished women, do not be afraid. Don't be amazed, for I know that you're looking for Jesus the Nazarene who's been crucified. He's not here, for he has risen just as he said. Come see the place where they laid him, where he was lying. And then go quickly and tell his disciples and Peter that he has risen from the dead. Behold, he's going before you into Galilee, and there you will see him, just as he said to you, behold, I have told you.

Luke is not looking at Matthew and Mark as he writes his gospel and kind of choosing and piecing out what he's going to say. It's just, notice in what I read and maybe what you see in your own text, in verse sixish, around there, "he is not here, for he has risen," and notice those words, "just as he said, Behold, he's going for you into Galilee. There you'll see him." Just as he said to you, just as he said, that's what Luke wants us to focus on. What did he say and why is that so important?

We realize from Matthew and Mark, in their accounts, the impetus for leaving the tomb was the angels commanding, sending them forth. But as we go back and you can go back to Luke 24:7, now. We go back there, Luke wants us to see the, it's the angelic reminder of Jesus teaching, what predicted the suffering of the cross, and the resurrection glory, what not only predicted all that, but it also interpreted the cross and promised resurrection.

Luke wants us to see the truth that has affected them, that's gripped them, that's gotten a hold of them. We know that when they first left the tomb, as they're on their way, they're still quite flustered, as you would be, as I would be. Even though they remember Jesus words, Luke 24:8, it hadn't fully settled into their minds. It was starting to, but it hadn't fully settled in their minds and so Mark 16:8 kind of captures their frame of mind as they're leaving the tomb. "They went out, fled from the tomb for trembling and astonishment had gripped them. They said nothing to anyone for they were afraid."

They said nothing to anyone. Okay, So is that a contradiction with what we see in Luke 24, that they did say something to somebody? No, it's not a contradiction and there are those who scoff at the scripture and try to make that into a contradiction, but it's easy to resolve. We're not to suppose, as Alfred Plummer says, "that the women remain silent about it for the rest of their lives, but only so far as fear kept them silent. And when the fear passed away, they told their tale to the disciples." That's how to read this.

So once the shock had subsided, once the astonishment had dissipated and they kind of came to their senses, they remember the truth that the angels reminded them of. They remembered the report that they were to take to the disciples and that's settled into their hearts. In fact, Matthew 28:8, kind of combines these ideas and says "they departed quickly from the tomb with fear," and then adds, "and great joy and they ran to report it to his disciples."

So at first, yes, the women were gripped with trembling astonishment. They're silenced in the shock, their feelings and

emotions of fear and dread. But another emotion is there as well, great joy starting to well up within these believing women. It's always the case with believers, isn't it, that great joy overcomes crippling fear. It's always the case. Their hearts here are starting to burst with joy. They cannot keep it down. They come, open their mouths, start talking about what they've seen and heard. They remembered his words, Luke 24:8, "And they returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and all the rest."

Again, Luke is just summarizing. No doubt we understand that Mary Magdalene, having come to the tomb first, also returned first, as John 2:1 and 2 say, "She spoke first, and upon their arrival, the other women spoke up after her." They join her testimony. We can imagine they're all very excited. All of them trying to talk at once, all talking over each other. Different parts of the story come out in different times. At first, it would probably be a bit confusing to the men listening as those things happen to be.

Women, you need to understand that if you're talking and several of you are talking at once and just one guy listening, we cannot do what moms do. We're not moms. Moms can hear all the little voices around them and see the cat getting into something and the dog over there and they can do every. Men are very one-dimensional, one track. Please be merciful with us. So all these men listening to all these voices, but eventually all this settles in to a cohesive, consistent testimony.

What I want you to see here before we move on, these women have received the truth, and receiving the truth has led them to take action. They've received the truth, and the truth is settling in their minds, and their joy is overcoming their fear. So something is transforming inside of them, and now they're bursting forth and they're taking action. This is not an emotion driven activism of the moment. It's a settled conviction, anchored in the truth that Jesus spoke.

That's why the angels were insistent to give them and remind them of the truth Jesus spoke, anchoring them to a place in their emotions and in their memory, where there's an

unhurried teaching. It's a proclamation. It's an explanation, "while they were still in Galilee." They can go back there in their minds and remember, in an unhurried moment, maybe while walking along the way, they hear their Master speak and teach. They understand his words. It settles in and it overcomes all fear and all anxiety, anchors them in the truth, takes deep root, informs the mind, grips their affections, grips their emotions, and channels them, and directs the will to godly, faithful, lasting action. These women are not overcome with an immediate impulse to just act quickly, do something. No, they do the right thing and they do that right thing from that point forward, for the rest of their lives.

These women, remember how they started the morning; discouraged, sorrowful, physically exhausted, emotionally shattered. They just wanted to get over to the tomb, prepare the corpse of their beloved Jesus properly, offload all these spices and all the things that they prepared, the ointments and all that that they prepared, and stumble back home to find some measure of rest. Now all that is forgotten. Tired. Who's tired? Weary bodies suddenly come awake and are energized, trembling with excitement, hearts pumping, adrenaline flowing as they're

astonished by what they've seen and heard. They run to the apostles. They run back to the disciples. Parting quickly from the tomb, they leave with reverence and great joy. They don't saunter back. They don't stroll leisurely to their homes. They run to report the news to the disciples of Jesus.

In fact, Luke uses the imperfect tense in verse 10, continuous action here, in the past. They were telling these things to the apostles, as in repeatedly telling them over and over. Telling them. Excitedly telling them. So not only have these women remembered what Jesus taught them, they have received his teaching as truth. They've remembered it and they call it to mind and they say, Oh yeah, that's the fact, that's the interpretation, that's the meaning. And now they obey the angelic command with haste. They understand why the command is important. They run with profound zeal, and it results in a lasting excitement and joy.

Now, I hate to pause here because there's a lot more to tell about these women, more to see how the Lord honored them to be the first ones to see him alive. I'll just reference this.

Maybe we'll come back to it in a subsequent sermon, but Mary Magdalene is going to be the first to see the risen Lord Jesus. And if you want to read ahead or do some augmenting reading, John 20:11 to 18, records Mary Magdalene seeing the risen Lord. The other women who are also named here in the group of women that are not known to us, they too are going to see Jesus before Peter or any of the apostles according to Matthew 28:8 to 10.

But Luke, interestingly, doesn't show us all that. Not yet. He wants to. He doesn't even show the risen Lord yet. He's waiting for the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Two disciples that we really don't know much about. What he wants us to see here is the effect of receiving the truth in these women, that leads to immediate action and then next, he wants to see what the, what the men do with it. This leads to a second point: Dismissing the truth leads to confusion.

Dismissing the truth leads to confusion. I mentioned earlier that Luke is tracing the effect of Jesus words here. We see the angels cite his words in verse 7. The believing women react in verse 8, they remembered. Followed by the neuter plural

object of the verb, they remembered. What neuter plural object? His words. It's a neuter word. The word *logos* is a typical word for word and it's a masculine word. But this is not the word *logos*, *ho logos*. It's the word *rhēma*, *hē rhēma*. *Hē*, is the definite article. So *hē rhēma* and that's a neuter word, neuter gender. So it's, *tōn rhēmatōn autou*; the words of him, to be more specific.

The word, *rhēma* is broader than just, *logos*. It refers to the sayings of Jesus, the teachings of Jesus. You could even kind of put the gloss on it, of the doctrine of Jesus, about his redemption; delivered over into the hands of men, rejected, crucified, dead, buried, resurrected. Doctrine of the Gospel, it's what he taught about that. It's a broader word here. So these sayings or teachings of Jesus, Luke then tracks what happens with those words, those sayings, those teachings of Jesus, as he moves through the account.

He uses pronouns in the verses, that come at, kind of as a callback referring back to those sayings or teachings of Jesus, summarized by the angels, in verse 7, remembered by the women in

verse 8, and then notice in verse 9, the women returned from the tomb, verse 9, and "they reported all these things." What things? Again, the phrase, all these things, each word in the neuter plural referring specifically back to the teachings of Jesus, what he taught, the prediction of verse 7.

We see it again in verse 10, "These things", end of the verse, "they were telling these things to the apostles." Again, neuter plural, calling back to the prediction of verse 7. Come to verse 11, Luke throws us a huge breadcrumb there. No mistaking what he's talking about, even if it casts the apostles in a poor light, which it does. But these words, ta rhemata tauta, these sayings, these sayings and teachings just relate to them. These sayings appeared to the apostles as nonsense. They, the disciples, the apostles, they were not believing them.

It's tragic, isn't it? I mean, you'd like to see something else written there. Mighty apostles spent three years with Jesus, walked with him, talked with him. All of his words had to be like, just like a familiar voice, a comfort. Nonsense, don't believe. They were hearing the truth, but here they somehow, for

some reason, are not receiving the truth. They're dismissing the truth and they're cast into, because of it, cast into confusion and unbelief. They remain in their unbelief. They remain in their confusion. They remain in the darkness and discouragement of their souls. What these women witnessed at the tomb, the stone rolled away, empty tomb, angelic presence, the teaching of Jesus that, they were, the angels reminded them of, interprets the empty tomb, interprets the cross as well. These men dismissed it all.

Look, if you want to start a new religious movement, and I don't recommend it, but if you want to and you intend to build it on the foundation of a made-up story about a resurrected Messiah, knowing this story to be false or at least mistaken, yet wanting it to be true, let me give you a couple tips. Don't do it like this. First, don't portray the leaders of your movement like this, as rejecting what they later claim is true, what they live for and then seemingly in stubbornness, died for. Don't write this into the record of your testimony. Don't put this in the written record that the leaders regarded the report of the women, a report that they would one day preach as gospel truth, but they initially received it as nonsense. This is a

really bad look. They're going to be able to recall this video. Even better, they're going to be able to point to it in the black and white of Scripture.

Instead, if you're going to start this new movement built on a lie, second, you got to put your key leaders in the best light possible. They got to be early adapters, steadfast believers. Instill confidence in the followers of your movement that this these Apostolic leaders are the first ones to get it right. They see what no one else can see. They see inside people. They understand, they get it. First ones to embrace the resurrection, they remember Jesus' predictions, always believed, never doubted, never forgot. These guys are impeccable. And thirdly, certainly do not, do not base the validity of your entire movement on those who in society are prone to be disregarded by everyone as being unreliable witnesses. To put a fine point on it, don't record that the first witnesses to the empty tomb, the first to hear the angelic announcement, the first to witness the resurrection, don't record that the first witnesses were women.

It's John Nolan who writes, "in the cultural stereotypes of the day, these are only women, not to be believed in matters of deep importance." End Quote. And you get that sense, don't you, that that's how the apostles and the other disciples, that's how they think. They dismiss them. Whether it's then or now, I believe there's almost nothing more hurtful to the heart of a woman that she not be believed, but that she be disregarded, dismissed, especially when a woman is in earnest and not only that, but she's right, telling the truth, wholly sincere, and her passion and joy over the truth is dismissed as mere enthusiasm of a hysterics of a woman.

It's the most hurtful thing for her to be set aside, to be disbelieved, but it was common in that day that the female testimony, especially like in the courtroom, was to be avoided. Josephus advises this, "Let not the testimony of women be admitted on account of the levity and boldness of their sex." Those words, levity and boldness, kouphótēs and thrásos; another way to translate those words is giddiness and impetuosity, or even, on the one hand, frivolous inanity, for the first word and bold audacity for the second word. That's the cultural

stereotype of women in that day, but not only in the days of Josephus, in the days of Jesus, but in the centuries since then.

In fact, I'd wager good money that even today, in the hearts of many, that stereotype of women persists. Their enthusiasm and their emotion is often misinterpreted, disregarded, dismissed. I'm not saying, I'm not trying to say defend every emotion of a woman, even for a man, that's all emotions. Good. You just believe it out of hand. I'm not trying to say that, trust would verify everything, but certainly don't dismiss it out of hand.

Listen, consider in the third century, in his apologetic treatise against Celsus, that's the name of the treatise against Celsus, Origin quotes, "This Pagan critic who scoffed at Christianity is based merely on the testimony of a [quote] 'half frantic woman' in a system of delusion who had dreamed up the resurrection." And this is his [quote] "owing to a peculiar state of mind" or under, "under the influence of a wandering imagination." That's Christianity. That's what explains the whole thing to Celsus.

The charge is that Christianity rests on the delusion of half frantic women, and it's the Gospels that seem to suggest that to them. Fantastic tales rooted in giddiness and impetuosity to the frivolous, inanity, and inanity of several bewildered women who nonetheless were boldly audacious in their report and insistent. And these disciples, these apostles, these fools are stupid enough to believe the unreliable testimony of a woman, and worse, to stake their lives on that testimony. How stupid. How foolish. That's how it's being presented.

And remarkably, it's the Gospel writer Luke who beats Celsus to the punch. He records the reaction of the men quite plainly. Verse 11, "These words appeared to them as nonsense." The word translated nonsense is *lēros*, comes from a word *lálōs*, which comes from the verb *laléō*. *Laléō* means to say or to speak, but *lálōs* means to be loquacious, talkative, overly talkative. It can be cute in a child, but it becomes kind of annoying, the older people get, right. *Lēros*, this word built from those other words, most certainly is not a compliment. *Lēros* refers to idle talk, nonsense, frivolous tales, the stuff of sheer fantasy.

In fact, the word is found in, it's a, it's a Hapax Legomenon here. It's meaning, meaning, Hapax Legomenon. Meaning it's the only use of it in the Scripture, but it's used in medical texts at the time. In the Greek, Greek medical texts to describe the crazy talk of those who are in a delirium or hysteria due to a fever. So it's a fevered talk, don't pay any attention to it.

It's the same charge, isn't it, that Celsus would later make and, on the basis, reject this resurrection report. Turns out the earliest disciples of Jesus, the eleven apostles chosen by the Lord himself, they shared Celsus view, at first. Luke says, these words seemed to them as nonsense. They appeared that way, aorist tense, refers to their initial judgement, how that report struck them at that point in time. And I'm thankful, it's just at that point in time, aren't you? But then, it was on the basis of that judgement, it kind of framed their thinking.

It says here that they were not believing them, that's the imperfect tense, refers to their ongoing state of mind, for a

while they continued not believing them. The verb that's translated there, appear. These words appeared to them as nonsense, or in some translations seemed as nonsense. It's the verb phaino. Phaino means to shine, to give light, to reveal; make something visible, apparent, clear. That's certainly the intent of the angels to the women, make it clear. Certainly, the intent of the women to the disciples, make it clear.

Angels remind the women of Jesus' teachings to illuminate their mind, help them with clarity, help them rightly interpreted what they're seeing in front of them and the women brought that same report to the men with the same intent. What happened? What subverted the good intentions of the first witnesses deeply encouraging words of the angels in the exciting news reported by the women. For whatever reason, his disciples were disinclined to accept their report. What was it? Did discouragement darken their minds, too? Were they distraught, as the women had been, with hopelessness, despair, disappointed expectations, dashed hopes and dreams?

I mean, these men left their jobs, their families behind, their homes behind. They could have spent the last year three years building on their wealth, building their businesses, investing, making relationships in Galilee, furthering their own interests. What did they do for three years? Followed this man around? What's, what's happened to him? Dead in a tomb, buried. Might have been also, that they were dismissive of these women because, because they were women. They knew that the women had gotten up early that morning and they were exhausted. Now it seems they're delusional. And don't try to, don't try to build me up or encourage me with some report of his body being gone, resurrection. I've heard it before. It's ended in disappointment. I got to go back and either wait for him to come again or maybe he's not the Messiah, there's another Messiah coming.

The apostles, the rest of the disciples and by the way, the rest of the disciples, this is not just a male female thing, because the rest of the disciples had a mix of men and women there. But they're stuck here in a state of unbelief. They haven't trusted the report. They've dismissed these women and what they've said. They're not believing. They've treated these

faithful, believing women who they know, who have supported their entire cause the entire time, they've forgotten all that and they treated these precious women, whom God has chosen for this special honor, with a stereotypical dismissiveness.

Beautiful irony, isn't it though, that God has chosen these precious women and marked them out for a special honor to be the first witnesses of the resurrection truth. The most important confirmation of all that Jesus said and did, of all that he taught, and all that he accomplished, the resurrection from the dead, is that confirmation. And God chose these women, these women to be the earliest believers, the earliest receivers, the earliest witnesses. I think that's just beautiful, don't you?

The point here is not to say women are better than men. It's not that, it's to say that faith is better than unbelief, that believing and receiving the truth is way better than disbelieving and dismissing it. By faith we understand, we reason correctly, we, we reflect well on the words and the teachings of Jesus, but apart from faith, if we're not focused on his words and thinking about them and reflecting on them,

we're stuck in a spin cycle, darkened in our understanding. We're lost in the recesses and labyrinths of our hearts and all the philosophical conundrums and everything that we've chased down. It's Alice in Wonderland diving into a rabbit hole, and we're gone.

When we're not believing but doubting, we're the ones that are delusional, not the early witnesses. We're the ones that believe our darkness is light, that our truth is error, that our judgments are impeccable, that our reasons for rejection are reasonable, that our resistance is noble. In reality, we're lost in confusion. We're nothing but fools when we dismiss truth, when we don't believe, but just live in doubt. Rejecting the truth, dismissing the truth, always and only, leads to confusion, and darkness, and futility, and discouragement, and despair, and if that is never lifted by faith in the truth, that despair will turn into an eternal despair in the pit of hell.

Sobering reminder that these things matter. There are consequences to what you choose to believe and how you choose to live your life. Don't neglect it. Don't disregard it. That is the proclivity of the fallen condition, isn't it? It's only by God's grace that any of us come to see anything. So what is it

that breaks through the, this proclivity of the fallen heart? Only the mercy and grace of God and it's a grace that's powerful, that has effective, results in the obedience of the faith and that's how this segment ends, which I think is so hopeful. I'm grateful for it.

Number three: seeking the truth leads to contemplation. Seeking the truth leads to contemplation. I can't say full, you know, full throated belief at this point, or embracing, or awakening for Peter. All I can talk about right now is contemplation because that's where Luke leaves us. So I got to go where the text goes. Seeking the truth leads to contemplation. He'll come to believe fully later, but at this point, just he's contemplating. He's pondering. We'll see it in a minute.

But it took a, it took a little bit, but one among their number, the number of these disciples, the apostles, he started to stir, started to awaken. His ears perked up at the sound of his master's voice and the report of the women. His heart began to beat. He responded, verse 12, in a characteristically Peter

way, "But Peter stood up and ran." He's sitting there on the couch and not anymore. He's getting up and immediately runs to the tomb. Typical Peter. He is not going to die wondering, this guy, the spark of faith has lit his engine and got him up and got him moving, propelled.

He arrived at the tomb, then verse 12, stooping to look in, he stoops down, looks in, peers in, and he sees the linen wrappings only. The verb tense changes there as Luke brings us into the scene, "stooping to look in", past tense, "but he sees" that's present tense. It's like you're looking over his shoulder. He sees the linen wrappings only. We see what Peter sees there; so there's a focus, linen wrappings only. Draws our attention to something important.

You don't need to turn there now, just listen to this out of John 20 verse 3 and following, because he gives kind of the expanded account of what happened with Peter. John writes, "Peter," not only Peter, but John as well, "the other disciple, they went forth, and they were going to the tomb. And the two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster

than Peter and came to the tomb first." Just got to throw that in there. Always competing; men are. right?

"But stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in." At least he's honest about his victory. "Simon Peter also came, following him, and he entered the tomb and he saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the face cloth which had been on his head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself." What is it about these clothes? What is it about this fabric? Very curious this.

It's Matthew who recorded the guard that the Jews posted at the tomb on Friday, the guard that was meant to prevent some rash grave robbing plot by the disciples, Matthew 27:64. Disciples who might come, these weak and frail disciples, who'd all run and torn away, they're going to somehow muster the strength to come and make an attack at the grave and overpower the guard and the twelve of them or eleven of them going to roll this two-ton stone away? Not likely. But the story was meant to

try to fool the naive into believing Jesus rose from the dead,
as he'd said.

These same guards fled at the appearance of the Angel when he came to roll the stone away. And as Matthew goes on to tell us in Matthew 28:11 to 15, that some of these guards came into the city, they reported to the chief priests, all that had happened. So they, these chief priests gather all the rest of the Sanhedrin. They confer with one another. They decide on this course of action. So it says, "they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers," so bribe. And then they said, "You're to say, 'the disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.'" Man, there are so many violations of soldiering. These guys would be dead on a number of counts. So I want you to say that.

I want you to incriminate yourself, but here's enough money to make it worth your while and if this should ever come to the governor's ears, we'll win them over; keep you out of trouble. They're bribing for a lie. But it is this stupidity of sin, isn't it, that causes you to believe someone who has clearly

perjured themselves. We're going to win them over, keep you out of trouble. Yeah. "But they took the money, did as they have been instructed, and this story was widely spread among the Jews and is to this day."

That's what Matthew says. He's writing an evangelistic Gospel to his own people. He wants them to understand where this story started. Based on what Luke has written in verse 12, based on what John recorded in John 2:6 and 7. What is the key piece of evidence that undermines their stupid story? Some cloth, linen, laundry. What are the linen wrappings doing there? If the disciples came and stole the body, wouldn't they be in a bit of a hurry? Why would they unwrap the body and then take the dead body away without clothing? Wouldn't that be likely to draw attention? If you saw that walking through the streets of Greeley, what would you?

More curious than that, as John recounts, "Peter saw the linen wrappings lying there and the face cloth which had been on his head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself." Look at the meticulous care taken by the risen

Lord, so that Peter and his disciples will know that in leaving the tomb he was not leaving in any grave clothes, not walking out in this stuff. Grave clothes are unfitting and wholly unbecoming for the living one to wear. Changed his clothes before leaving the tomb, and then he neatly and triumphantly and orderly folded them up and rolled the trappings of death and set them aside.

Now, Peter does not know exactly what he's seeing here at the end of verse 12. He needs time and space to think. So verse 12, "he went away by himself marveling at what had happened." John explains that still, as yet, they did not understand the Scripture that Jesus must rise again from the dead, John 20, verse 9. It's an abbreviated version, by the way, of what the women reported to Peter and the others, "how he spoke to them while he was still in Galilee saying the Son of Man must be delivered in the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and on the third day arise." I just summarized right there in John 20, verse 9.

It all started when Peter received the truth, didn't dismiss these women, but he received what they were saying. He wasn't dismissive, he wasn't quick to be dismissive, to reject them. He listened. He didn't stereotypically set them aside. He wasn't impulsive, in this case, which admittedly is uncharacteristic of Peter. Here he's mindful, cautious, careful. Why? Something sparked his mind and he says, no, I'm not going to let that thought go. I'm going to take this out into the center of my attention. I'm going to think about it. So he seeks the truth. He runs to seek the truth. He runs to investigate the truth.

Yeah, he had faith, and it needed, it needed resuscitating like the women's did, but he had faith. He didn't, he did believe, but he did not understand at this point. He hadn't understood the Lord's teaching, when he delivered it back in Galilee; remember when Peter said, he took him aside privately and rebuked the Lord for saying he's going to be crucified and handed over, rejected. What did the Lord say to Peter? Hey, thanks for the tip. No, "get behind me Satan." He rebuked Peter.

Peter did not fully understand then, he doesn't understand fully now, but he does make the connection. He doesn't apprehend the meaning of their report, but in humility, he receives their report. And what struck the others as odd and as nonsense, Peter chose not to dismiss. In humility, Peter's heart is open, it's receptive, it's willing to consider. Is that the framing of your heart? Is that the framing of your heart when you come on a Sunday morning? Is that the framing of your heart when you listen to teaching in any other venue? Is the framing of your heart to be open, humble, receptive, and submissive? Or are you every time you sit down to listen to a sermon or listen to teaching, are you braced for impact? You have more of a mind that says, prove it to me, college boy.

Humility is the crack in the door of Peter's heart and it was through that small crack that faith barged in, took over and directed his life. As Peter's mulling over, considering their report, this fledgling faith sprung, to, his body into action. And faith, informed by the truth, fed a spiritual curiosity that led to further investigation. And that further investigation, having investigated all these things for himself, Peter now has

something to think about and better than that, end of verse 12, something to marvel at.

Do you still marvel over the truth? Do you still wonder at it? Does it astonish you? Does your Bible reading produce joy in your heart or are you dead to it? Are you sleeping through your Bible reading? When's the last time you picked up your Bible? Not Peter. He's investigated. He's making connections to what the women said and what he's seeing. He's interpreting his life and his thinking all through the truth and the grid of the truth. He's got to get along with his thoughts. So he goes home, gets to a place of solitude. He makes time in his schedule for meditation, reflection, contemplation. Commits himself to prayer and in the faith that God has given him, Christ by the Spirit and the word minister to Peter's heart, delivered him from unbelief to illuminate his mind and give him understanding.

Now it might not be obvious at this point in the narrative. Such dim small beginnings, majority of the Christian movement still choosing not to believe. Just a few women and, kind of a, the dimmer switch on the light in Peter's mind growing brighter

and brighter. At this moment, this is all you've got, but the dam is about to burst. Heavens are about to pour out blessing. The Holy Spirit is about to proceed forth from the Father and the Son to come upon his people and create the movement we are a part of now. Movement that has changed lives, forgiven sin, glorified God, helped us to see him well, worship Christ.

It's a gospel that many have died for, bled for, been persecuted for, lost their jobs for, been spurned and marginalized and scorned for. It's a gospel and a truth and a Christian faith that the enemy has tried to destroy, put down, imprison, make illegal. Christ said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." And here we are.

Listen in the hustle and bustle of your life, the myriad of distractions in the world, this scourge we call social media, all the binge worthy entertainment on offer free of charge to you. All the wonderful and interesting things for you to do, all that you can give your attention to, all you can spend your money on. You will never receive the truth if you do not seek the truth. You never seek the truth if you don't humble yourself

to be receptive to it, to receive the truth, if you're not intentional to get away from all that noise, and all that business and distraction, and contemplate the truth.

If you fill your schedules every single day with kids stuff and meetings and business and pleasure, and I'll say this too, and family. You know how many times family becomes the idol of a Christian's life? If you don't be intentional about giving yourself to the contemplation of the truth, you will live at best, a mediocre Christian life and you'll stand before God and his Christ. In the end, you have to explain yourself, and for some, maybe all, the mediocrity is to veil, for your lack of regeneration. You're not truly converted. You think you are, but you're about to find out a hard cold reality. It's going to turn into a hot and eternal reality because you've never been converted and you don't know him.

I prompted you at the beginning to consider for yourself as each of you stands on the brink of eternity, which you will spend in one place or another, in heaven or in hell, and think about your life. Think about your actions, think about your

priorities, think about your relationships, how you interact with people or don't. Consider what it is you really love, what you give your time and attention to. What you invest in are these precious doctrines of the gospel, the suffering of your Savior Jesus Christ, who suffered for your sins.

He took away the suffering for you, and he's taken it upon himself. He went to the cross to atone for your sins, to forgive you. Dying on the cross for you. Precious doctrine of the Gospel, the victory of Christ over death, to deliver you from sins eternal penalty, eternal death, and also to deliver you from sins power so that you live a holy, godly, pure, joyful, grateful life; fruitful to his glory. Are you feeding your spiritual curiosity by reading and studying and investigating the truth that you might grow by it? Not to prove a position, not to win a debate, not to solidify what you've always believed anyway. So that you change!

Are you feeding your curiosity spiritually or are you starving it? Are you feeding yourself instead with tasty junk food of the world's passing news and fads and movements and

interests? Is what you say you believe actually changing you, truly transforming you, or are you pretty much the same? I'd like you to ponder those things, reflect on them, do a little bit of Peter like contemplation as you sit in your seats, as we come to our time at the Lord's Table.

But ask yourself, am I characterized by an active faith, a fervent zeal for the truth? Am I characterized by a joyful, fruitful knowledge that is changed me and continues to change me? Does the gospel of Jesus Christ thrill my soul? Does it fill me with joy in believing? Does it prompt energetic service to him? Not just good stuff, not just activity, but service to him, to love and serve his Church, to love and serve his people, to love and serve his Gospel. Think about those things as we move through this time of remembering, reflecting, contemplating on the meaning of these elements. The bread, the broken body offered for you, the blood of the new covenant poured out for you, that you would be with him in his covenant, numbered among his people forever.

Bow with me as we ask the Lord's blessing on these common elements, bread and cup. Ask him to set them apart for holy use in remembrance of him. Our Father, we have a lot to think about coming out of Luke 24 and even our prior reading from Titus 2 and 3. We do want to contemplate the meaning of truth, yes, the historical facts of what you have done and accomplished, what Jesus said and did, but it's the meaning of what he said. It's the meaning of what he did, that he taught, that he interpreted for us, that his apostles throughout the writings of the New Testament have explained and helped us to understand and helped us to see the implications of them and to apply.

It all comes back to these, this remembrance at this table of these simple elements of a bread and a cup. So, Father, we ask you to bless these elements, take the common bread and the common cup, and let us set them apart from common use, to a holy and a sacred use, to represent the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, a body offered to you for us, a bloodshed to ratify your new covenant. Let us remember that now and contemplate in Christ's name, Amen.