

“Flesh and Bones” (Luke 24)(4.4.2021 – Easter)

Luke 24 (NIV84) *The Resurrection*

24 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ ” ⁸ Then they remembered his words.

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.

On the Road to Emmaus

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, asked him, “Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

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 him they did not see.”

²⁵ He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Christ 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 acted 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.

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?”

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.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

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

³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

⁴⁴ He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ **You are witnesses** of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

The Ascension

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.

The word of God for the people of God.

LET US PRAY.

Title: “**Flesh and Bones**”

INTRODUCTION:

The Apostle Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 15:12–20 (NIV84)

¹² But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ **And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.** ¹⁵ More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ **And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.** ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

²⁰ **But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead,** the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

How do we know? Whether Jesus was resurrected is a pivotal question for human history.

BODY:

Our Tuesday night Bible Study just finished about three months with *Cold-Case Christianity, A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels* by James Warner Wallace. Wallace’s father was a police detective and Wallace’s son is a police detective. You might say it is in their DNA, in their blood, so to speak.

When Wallace started his investigation he was an atheist. For the sake of family harmony, he went to a church service with his wife. He heard the pastor say that Jesus was the smartest man who ever lived and somehow this sparked a desire in Wallace to find out if this was true.

As a detective, Wallace had been in the court room many, many times. In his cold-case murder investigations, he had to carefully review all the records and reports of the detectives originally assigned to the case. Meticulously, he would look at all the evidence on hand; read through all the witness statements; read all the detectives’ notes; and, read all the court documents. Sometimes, the key to solving a case was in a small detail that was previously glossed over. Sometimes a short statement would trigger a revelation needed to close the cold case.

So, Wallace went out and bought himself a Bible. He applied his decade’s long detective training to the reading of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. What he found surprised him. They read just like

many of his cold-cases that he had investigated. The gospels read like witness statements and investigative reporting.

Well, I knew the gospels were eye-witness accounts, but there is knowing and then there is knowing. Once you start reading them with that mindset, it is like the curtain has been torn apart and you can really see into the Holy of Holies. In effect, that happened for J. Warner Wallace and now he is very active in spreading the good news of Jesus. If you ask him why, Wallace will tell you, "Because Christianity is **TRUE**." True – all caps and bold!

Dr. Luke not only wrote the gospel that shares his name, but also the Book of Acts. Here are respective quotes from their beginnings:

Luke 1:1–4 (NIV84)

1 Many have undertaken to draw up **an account** of the things that have been fulfilled among us,² just as they were **handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses** and servants of the word.³ Therefore, since I myself have **carefully investigated everything from the beginning**, it seemed good also to me to write **an orderly account** for you, most excellent Theophilus,⁴ **so that you may know the certainty** of the things you have been taught.

Acts 1:3 (NIV84)

³ After his suffering, he **showed himself** to these men 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.

We see a similar thought process went into the writing of the Gospel of John, except he waits until the end to explain:

John 20:30–31 (NIV84)

³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs **in the presence of his disciples**, which are not recorded in this book.³¹ **But these are written that you may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 21:24 (NIV84)

²⁴ This is the disciple who **testifies** to these things and **who wrote them down**. We know that **his testimony** is true.

Of course, the Apostle John is consistent. Listen as he opens his letter in 1 John 1:1 (NIV84) *The Word of Life*

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen with our eyes**, which we have **looked at** and our **hands have touched**—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. In the Cold-Case Christianity Bible Study, we learned that the Apostle Peter was the primary source for the Gospel of Mark. In Peter's letters, he refers to himself as a witness:

1 Peter 5:1 (NIV84) To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, **a witness** of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed:

2 Peter 1:16–18 (NIV84)

¹⁶ We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we were eyewitnesses** of his majesty.¹⁷ For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."¹⁸ We ourselves **heard this voice** that came from heaven when we were **with him** on the sacred mountain.

Right before Pentecost and the birth of the Church, Peter addresses the faithful 120 in the Upper Room. It is time to replace Judas. Acts 1:21–22 (NIV84)

²¹ Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,²² *beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a **witness with us of his resurrection.***"

Yes, I have given you a lot of scriptural evidence; but, so did the Lord Jesus to help convince the disciples. On the Road to Emmaus: Luke 24:27 (NIV84) And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets,

he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. In the locked Upper Room that same night: Luke 24:45–46 (NIV84) ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,”

There has long been an argument that the disciples hallucinated the Risen Christ. In reading the Gospel accounts, it is very clear that they were not expecting Jesus to be resurrected. Jesus sought them out to give them proof, proof! It is simply not reasonable that there were many different hallucinations by many different people in a variety of circumstances. It is not reasonable that there was some type of mass hysteria across such a wide spectrum.

Jesus purposefully demonstrates that He is alive in His glorified body. He suddenly appears within this secure space. He knows they are troubled and doubtful. The solution? Jesus gave them evidence. Look at my hands and my feet. Touch me and see. You can see, I have flesh and bones. Then Jesus showed them his hands and feet. The King James Version says Luke 24:39 (KJV 1900) “handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” The Lord Jesus was willing to be handled to prove his bodily resurrection.

What were the condition of Jesus wounds? Many commentators and preachers think that the wounds were healed; but, I don’t see scriptural evidence of that supposition. There is no mention of scars. In the Gospel of John, Thomas says, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.” The King James says that Jesus offered to Thomas, “Thrust your hand into my side.”

Obviously, the wounds were not healed to the point of closing. If you could put your fingers where the nails were in the hands and feet of Jesus; if you could thrust your hand into Jesus’ side; then the wounds were still open. If so, might the wounds still have been somewhat fresh? Could it have been raw wounded flesh with bone exposed? Jesus says, look at my hands and feet, see my flesh and bones, and then shows them His hands and feet.

I don’t know the answer to my question; but, I don’t see anything in scripture that overrules the possibility. The thought of Jesus’ wounds being fresh to some degree came to me strongly as I read through this very familiar text of Luke 24. While the thought is off-putting, it certainly would provide a very convincing demonstration by the Lord Jesus.

The scriptures say by Jesus’ wounds we are healed in Isaiah 53:5 and in 1 Peter 2:24. They don’t say “by his scars we are healed.” They don’t say “by his healed wounds we are healed.” While I don’t want to be overly graphic, this thought of the flesh and bones of Jesus being visible in the open wounds is significantly impactful. Let that image take hold in your mind.

Luke goes on to say that many of the disciples still had trouble believing because it was too good to be true. To further convince them, Jesus asks them if they have food for him to eat. They have probably lost their appetite as they watch Him, with their mouths agape, eating the broiled fish.

CONCLUSION:

The close of the Gospel of Luke and the opening of the Book of Acts are connected by the Lord Jesus’ ascension into heaven. In Luke it says: he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Remember, these are the wounded hands. Jesus is holding them up to bless His followers. Everyone can see Jesus with His hands held aloft. It is in this exact position that Jesus is lifted into the heavens. This picture of the glorified Jesus in His glorified body is the lasting one for these witnesses for the rest of their lives.

Again, Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3–7 (NIV84)

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred

of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, They were all witnesses to the truth of the scriptures.
Jesus is alive!
Amen and amen. Let us pray.