

Jesus' Post-Resurrection Appearances

Jesus appears to His Disciples – John 20:19-23

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples were together. They had locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jews. Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, "May peace be with you!" ²⁰ Then he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were very happy when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Again Jesus said, "May peace be with you! The Father has sent me. So now I am sending you." ²² He then breathed on them. He said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Questions:

1. Why were the doors locked? What does this tell us about the followers of Jesus?
2. How did Jesus get in? What did he say to them?
3. Why does Jesus show them his hands and side? What was their response to seeing Jesus?

Jesus appears to Thomas – John 20:24-29

²⁴ Thomas was one of the Twelve. He was called Didymus. He was not with the other disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So they told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "First I must see the nail marks in his hands. I must put my finger where the nails were. I must put my hand into his side. Only then will I believe what you say."

²⁶ A week later, Jesus' disciples were in the house again. Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, "May peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here. See my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen me but still have believed."

Questions:

1. Why would Thomas not believe the words of the other disciples? Do you think that Thomas did not want to believe? What does this tell us about Thomas?
2. What do Jesus' words to Thomas tell us about his knowledge about Thomas? How is Thomas a good witness to us today?

3. What does Jesus promise those who have not seen him, yet believe?

Jesus Ascends into Heaven: Acts 1: 1-11

¹ Theophilus, I wrote about Jesus in my earlier book. I wrote about all he did and taught ² until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before Jesus left, he gave orders to the apostles he had chosen. He did this through the Holy Spirit. ³ After his suffering and death, he appeared to them. In many ways he proved that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of 40 days. During that time he spoke about God's kingdom.

⁴ One day Jesus was eating with them. He gave them a command. "Do not leave Jerusalem," he said. "Wait for the gift my Father promised. You have heard me talk about it. ⁵ John baptized with water. But in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶ When the apostles met together, they asked Jesus a question. "Lord," they said, "are you going to give the kingdom back to Israel now?" ⁷ He said to them, "You should not be concerned about times or dates. The Father has set them by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem. You will be my witnesses in all Judea and Samaria. And you will be my witnesses from one end of the earth to the other."

⁹ After Jesus said this, he was taken up to heaven. They watched until a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰ While he was going up, they kept on looking at the sky. Suddenly two men dressed in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking at the sky? Jesus has been taken away from you into heaven. But he will come back in the same way you saw him go."

Questions:

1. After Jesus rose from the dead, over how many days did he appear to his followers? Why did he appear to them? What did he do with them? (*See verse 4.*)
2. What do you think the followers were thinking when they asked Jesus the question in verse 6?
3. How did Jesus answer their question? Why do you think he wasn't more specific?
4. What happens when Jesus is taken up to heaven? What do you think the followers were thinking then?

5. Instead of looking up into the sky, what did God want the disciples to be doing? (*See verse 8.*) What would they be witnesses of?

Summary of Jesus Resurrection – 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

³ What I received I passed on to you. And it is the most important of all. Here is what it is. Christ died for our sins, just as Scripture said he would. ⁴ He was buried. He was raised from the dead on the third day, just as Scripture said he would be. ⁵ He appeared to Peter. Then he appeared to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than 500 believers at the same time. Most of them are still living. But some have died. ⁷ He appeared to James. Then he appeared to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, he also appeared to me. I was like someone who wasn't born at the right time or in a normal way.

Questions:

1. This is the first letter written by Paul to the church in Corinth, Greece. What is "of first importance?" (*See verses 3-4.*)
2. Is it important that most of the witnesses were still living when this was written?
3. Why do you think Jesus made so many appearances?
4. Do you think Jesus is alive today and if so, how should that effect our lives?