

Weekly Bible Study for Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

“Jesus strengthens His Church” Luke 24: 36-49 by Kathy Mathew, 2nd May 2021

Read the passage together. Behind the doors in Jerusalem, the disciples were talking about what the Emmaus disciples were saying about Jesus appearing to them on the way. When Jesus suddenly appeared among them, they must have been frightened and startled. They must have asked themselves how this could be. He must be a ghost! It was clear that their “belief” in His resurrection was insufficient so Jesus’s words to them were, “Peace be with you.” They remained troubled probably because they had been “caught off guard.”

Q 1. Jesus’ words “ Peace be with you!” can be more than a greeting to Christians. Peace is a gift. What does it mean to have peace with God? How do we receive peace? How does having peace with God produce having the peace of God?

In response to their fears and doubts Jesus makes things as concrete as He can for them. They really want to believe him but they just don’t know if they really dare and they find themselves in a strange combination of joy, disbelief and uncertainty. Jesus seeks to offer them further reassurance.

Q 2. What does it mean that the disciples “disbelieved for joy“ Has this happened to you?

Q 3. To dispel their doubts, what did Jesus ask them to do?

Q 4. Imagine yourself suddenly face-to-face with Jesus. What one question would you want to ask him?

The text tells us that Jesus opened the minds of the disciples by referring to the Scriptures and why the events of the past days had to unfold the way that they had, through His suffering and death and now the resurrection. His entire ministry is the fulfilment of the Old Testament Scriptures. We could say that the Old Testament is the promise and the New Testament is the fulfilment of that promise.

Q 5. What did Jesus teach them from the Scriptures about himself? How does He fulfil Old Testament prophecy? Can you think of some of the references in the Old Testament? (e.g. Psalm 16:8-11, Psalm 22:14-18 and Isaiah 53:5-9)

Jesus concluded by giving His followers a command and a promise. Their task is to preach to all the nations, witnessing to all they have seen and heard. “You are witnesses of these things.” This is an awesome assignment but along with this comes the promise that the disciples will be “clothed with power from on high.” The book of Acts (also written by Luke) tells the story of how the Holy Spirit empowered them to go out with the gospel.

Q 6. Jesus calls the disciples “witnesses.” What do witnesses do? How can we individually be better witnesses for Jesus today?

Jesus really became alive again and when He appeared to His disciples it was hard for them to believe at first. He calmed their doubts. Before He left them, He promised that the Holy Spirit would strengthen them and give them power and issued the ‘Great Commission.’ He commissions us today to be witnesses and speak of the gospel message throughout the world. As a church, we are strengthened and empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim this message and be agents for Him in the secular world in which we live.