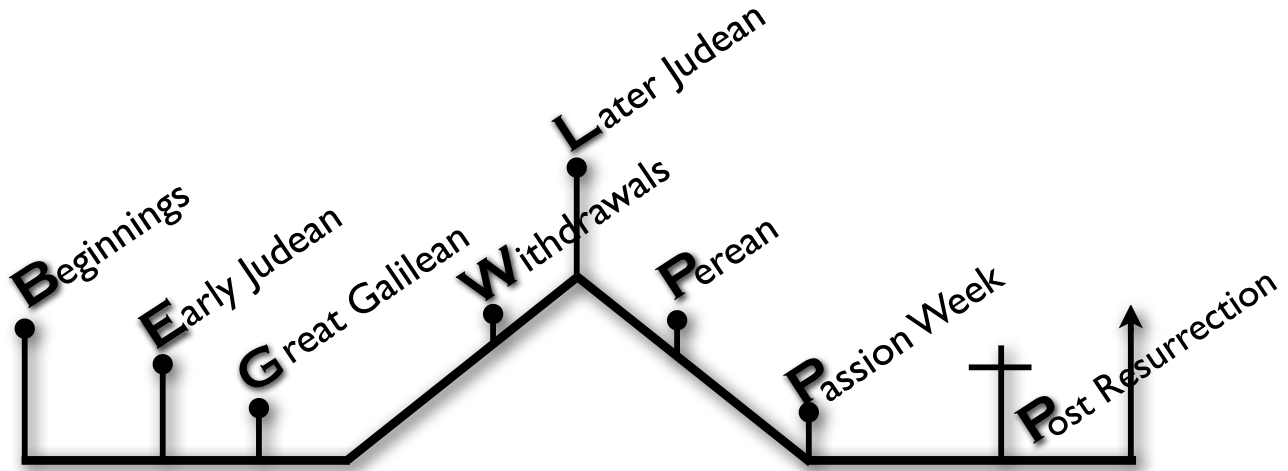


UNIT 16: “He is Not Here”

I. LOOKING BACK — LOOKING AHEAD



II. “HE IS NOT HERE!” — THE RESURRECTION

- A. Our Greatest Hope: A Stumbling Block to Jews and Foolishness to Gentiles
1. The resurrection narratives are a critic’s “goldmine”!
 2. There is no account in the Bible that has greater difficulties associated with it than that which is at the heart of the Christian faith.
 3. Our information comes from five New Testament books, and five historical accounts, none of which give *all* the information, *and* whose accounts contain serious apparent difficulties :
 - a. **Books:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, 1 Corinthians
 - b. **Accounts:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts
 4. A summary of the difficulties:
 - a. **Number of women:** Luke at least 5, Mark 3, Matthew 2, John 1, Paul 0
 - b. **Time of the visit:** John still dark, Mark sun had risen
 - c. **Number and nature of messengers:** Mark one man, Luke two men, Matthew one angel, John two angels.

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- d. **Location of messengers:** Mark, Luke, and John inside; Matthew out then in (sitting/standing)
 - e. **Telling the disciples:** Matthew and Luke yes; Mark no (also translation, maybe “over-awed”)
 - f. **Appearance of Christ:** John at the tomb, Matthew after tomb visit
 - g. **Holding of Christ by woman(en):** Matthew unrebuked, John rebuked
5. Crafting a solution
- a. What I bring *to* these accounts will determine what I take away from them.
 - b. The apparent disagreement lends itself to authenticity more than duplicity or ignorance.
 - (1) The fact that all the accounts record women as the initial visitors, and Mary Magdalene as the first eye-witness go against everything we know about Jewish legal culture.
 - (2) We know clearly that it is *our ignorance* of details and cultural values that is more to blame than error, when it comes to misperception and misunderstanding of Scripture.
 - c. John Wenham, in his book, *Easter Enigma*, has compiled an amazing, yet believable attempt to reconcile all the accounts (a summary of it is at the end of this unit).
- B. The World *Behind* the Text: The Resurrection and the Early Church
- 1. It was the centerpiece of apostolic preaching:
 - a. Peter’s first four sermons were built around the resurrection of Jesus
 - (1) Peter preached the resurrection to Jews of every ethnicity at Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2:14-41).
 - (2) Peter’ preached the resurrection on at least two occasions to the leading religious minds of his day (Acts 4:1-22; 5:27-42).
 - (3) Peter’s preached the resurrection to Cornelius, the Gentile at Joppa (Acts 10:25-42).
 - (4) Paul’s makes *four* references to the resurrection, preaching to foreign Jews in a synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:14-41).
 - (5) Paul preached the resurrection on the Areopogus in Athens, to pagan philosophers (Acts 17:22-33).
 - 2. Luke’s account of Pentecost in Acts 2 is more about the *resurrection* than the Holy Spirit (402 words vs. 379 words).
 - 3. Paul was more concerned about the *implications* of the resurrection than the verification of it:
 - a. He only uses the word “resurrection” 9x in his writings, 6 of which are in debate with the authorities involving theology! (Acts 23:6-24:21).

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- b. However, he uses the word, “raised” (Gk = *egeirō*) 39x in his writings to refer to the resurrection in the plan and purposes of God:
 - (1) 26 are in reference to what God did to Jesus.
 - (2) 13 refer to the implications of the resurrection for believers.
- 4. Paul makes it clear that Jesus’ resurrection was *not* simply a “coming back from the dead” like the widow’s son, Jairus’ daughter, and Lazarus (Lk 7:11-15; Mk 5:21-24; Jn 11:1-44).
 - a. “*The resurrection from the dead*” was a key element of Jewish theology (cf. Lk 20:35; Acts 4:2; 26:23; Rom 1:4).
 - b. He refers to Jesus as the “*first fruits*” of the “resurrection from the dead.” (1 Cor 15:20,23).
- 5. The resurrection of Jesus provided the foundation for many New Testament doctrines:
 - a. The total transformation of the cowardly apostles (cf. Jn 20:19 and Acts 4:13-30).
 - b. The total reversal of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-5).
 - c. Jesus’ abiding presence in the Church’s missionary activity (Matt 28:19-20).
 - d. Their confidence in addressing Jesus in prayer (Acts 7:59)
 - e. Jesus’ Second Coming (Acts 1:11; Col 3:1-4; Phil 3:10, 20-21).
 - f. Their own resurrection (1 Cor 15:12-23).
 - g. The physical (perfect) nature of their eternal state (2 Pet 3:13; Rom 8:21).
- C. The World Of the Text: A Sampling of Resurrection Texts
 - 1. **John 20:22** — *And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.”*
 - a. “**breathed**” – (Gk = *emphuasō*); This word is only used twice in the LXX, in Genesis 2:7 for the creation of Adam, and Ezekiel 37:9 for God “breathing” into the valley of dry bones!
 - b. “**forgive...withhold**” – both of these verbs are plural, speaking of the new community of faith, the Church.
 - c. “**forgiven...withheld**” – the verbs referring to the condition of the sins themselves are both in the Perfect tense.
 - the verbs have the idea of “letting go” and “hanging onto”
 - the is an excellent portrait of forgiveness within the covenant community.

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2. **John 20:1-23** — ...*He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep....Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!”*
- a. **“love”**
 - Jesus questions Peter the same number of times he denied Him.
 - Jesus switches words for “love” the 3rd time.
 - this question caused Peter great “grief.”
 - Peter switched his words for “know” from mere certainty to experience in his last response.
 - b. **“grieved”**
 - same word used for Jesus in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37).
 - used for the apostles’ response to hearing of their own betrayal (Matt. 26:22).
 - c. **“follow me”**
 - command with no end (present imperative; on-going).
 - comes from a word for “road”; *“Get on my road and stay on it!”*

D. The World *Before* the Text: Resurrection and the Christian

1. It is the basis of my own spiritual rebirth:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, —1 Peter 1:3

2. It is the basis of my progressive victory over the power of sin in my life:

...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, (Philippians 3:10)

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. —Romans 6:4, 11, 14

3. The certainty of my resurrection is to be the basis of my hope in ministry:

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. —1 Corinthians 15:58

4. The certainty of my resurrection is to be the basis of my value system as a believer:

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. —Colossians 3:1-4

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5. The resurrection of Jesus touches every facet of my redemption:
 - a. It is meaningless without Golgotha, which accomplished my justification.
 - b. The power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to me for my sanctification.
 - c. The body Jesus assumed is the “first fruits” of my glorification.
6. A Christian who is *not* growing, or engaged in redemptive ministry is denying the resurrection of Jesus.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. — John 16:7-15

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” — Acts 1:8

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

— Colossians 1:28, 29

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

— 2 Corinthians 3:17, 18

The Post-Resurrection Appearances of Jesus*

A P P E A R A N C E	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	Acts	1 Corinth.
Mary Magdalene (after Peter and John had left)	—	16:9	—	20:16-18	—	—
“The women” (Salome and Mary of Clopas)	28:5-10	—	—	—	—	—
Simon Peter (Cephas)	—	—	24:34	—	—	15:5
Cleopas and one other on the road to Emmaus	—	—	24:31	—	—	—
“The Eleven” (without Thomas)	—	16:14	24:33-39	20:19	—	—
“The Eleven” (with Thomas) a week later	—	—	—	20:26	—	—
“The seven” on the sea of Galilee; Peter reinstated	—	—	—	21:1	—	—
“more than 500 brethren” (most likely in Galilee)	—	—	—	—	—	15:6
James, the half-brother of Jesus	—	—	—	—	—	15:7
“The Eleven” in Galilee	28:16-17	—	—	—	—	—
“The Eleven” in Jerusalem (debatable passage in Mark)	—	16:14-15	—	—	—	—
Possible separate meeting of “The Eleven”	—	—	24:44	—	1:4	—
“The Eleven” throughout a forty day period	—	—	—	—	1:1-5	—
At his ascension from the Mount of Olives	—	—	24:50	—	1:9-12	—

*Using the chronology of John Wenham, from *Easter Enigma*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books. ©1992

The Post-Ascension Appearances of Jesus

A P P E A R A N C E	Acts	New Testament Letters	Revelation
To Stephen as he was being stoned	7:55	—	—
To Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus	9:5	1 Corinthians 15:8	—
To Paul in the Temple on his first visit to Jerusalem	22:17-21*	—	—
Paul is caught up into the “3rd heaven” and taught (14 years before writing 1 Corinthians)	—	2 Cor. 12:1-9 (cf. 1 Cor. 11:23; Gal. 1:11-12)	—
To Paul in Corinth in a night vision	18:8-11	—	—
To Paul in Roman barracks after his arrest in Jerus.	23:9-11	—	—
To Paul in Rome just prior to his execution (c. AD 67)	—	2 Timothy 4:16-18	—
To John on the island of Patmos (c. AD 92)	—	—	1:9-18
To the human race at his Second Coming (predictions)	1:11	Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 1:7-10; 4:15-17 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim 4:8; Titus 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:7	1:7

*This is a recollection in Paul's defense before the Sanhedrin 20 years later.