



Easter

AT MOSAIC

EASTER 2021 - LOCKED DOORS & MINDS: LUKE 24:36-53

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE - WEEK OF APRIL 4, 2021

Introduction:

- In the past year we've heard more and more about lockdown and locks than ever.
- There are two basic reasons why we use locks: 1) To keep someone/something out and/or 2) to keep someone/something in.

1. Unbelieving (v36-37)

- Why did the disciples lock their doors when they were gathered on resurrection day? They were trying to keep danger out. They feared that the authorities might come to treat them as they treated Jesus. Even worse, they feared that the God Himself might pursue them after having abandoned Jesus in His hour of trial. Fear had replaced faith and locked the minds of the disciples. Fear also replaces faith in our lives.
- After walking with Jesus for so long, why did the disciples lock their minds in fear and struggle to believe that it was the resurrected Christ who was with them? They had a category of spirit, but did not have a category of a resurrected body. They, like us, began in disbelief while engaging the facts of the Christ's resurrection.
- Why is it so hard to believe in Christ's resurrection? We've believed the assumption that intelligence and faith are at odds with each other. Illustrations: Cicero quote. Quotation about Bertrand Russell.
- We need to be careful. The more intelligent one is, the greater is one's ability to manipulate the evidence for self-deception.
- What really gets in the way of people seeing and interpreting the evidence for Christ's resurrection properly is fear. We fear change, difficulty, losing what we love, losing control, standing out, and, most of all, punishment from God. Deep down, we all fear that God will expose our shame and punish us for our wrongdoing.
- But Jesus shows up to the disciples, and to us, and says, "Peace to you!"

2. Unbelievable (v38-43)

- In these verses, Jesus builds a case that His presence was unbelievable! He doesn't wield a sword, but shows them His wounds. He shows that He was really in His resurrected body, instead of being a vengeful spirit, by eating a fish. He emphasizes that, though they deserve punishment, He is there to offer forgiveness and new and free life in Him. The disciples transitioned from viewing Christ's presence as unbelievable to viewing His presence as UNBELIEVABLE!
- The transition in the disciples' beliefs and interpretations of the events took place when they were presented with new, unbelievable, evidence that made everything truly believable. They interpreted the new evidence presented by Christ with honesty, and openly accepted what accepting it meant for their lives.
- They were able to overcome the contradictions to their prior beliefs about life and God, worship on a new day, believe in a Triune God, face persecution, and become so believable in their witness of Christ in their ministries because of Christ's unbelievable appearance to them. What would have previously been unbelievable for them to believe and do became UNBELIEVABLE and possible because of Christ's appearance to them in their self-made prison.

3. Blessed to Bless (v44-53)

- By understanding that Christ appeared to them to bless them, the disciples understood that they were blessed by Him to bless Him and bless others.
- v44: Jesus didn't just tell the disciples to look at Him and touch Him in order to get them to believe Him, but He proved to them that He came back from the dead by opening up the Scriptures to them.
- v45: Jesus shows us how God primarily reveals Himself to His true children: the revealed word (Jesus Himself) opens up the written word to His followers. Salvation begins when God Himself unlocks our minds, and brings us out of a position of disbelief and fear.
- This was foretold on two occasions: Luke 9:45 and 18:34.
- As Jesus passed through the wall of the house that the disciples were in (despite the barriers and locks), He also passes through the walls in our minds and hearts. Fear locks minds; faith opens minds.
- On Easter, Christians should bless God for making their hearts burn for His voice and truth, and seek to be a blessing to others by proclaiming His word to them.
- Conclusion: We cannot lock Jesus out our hearts. We cannot lock the truths of the scriptures out. Jesus is the key that gives us freedom from our sin and the ability to look upon and engage Him, ourselves and the world with clarity and faith.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

To understand that fear locks minds and faith opens minds

Heart

To trust Jesus (and His word) when He breaks through the locks and barriers that we put up in our minds and hearts

Hands

To see that God has blessed us to be a blessing to others with all that we do in this life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We will start a Jesus in Genesis series this coming Sunday, April 11. We will begin our series in chapter 12 of Genesis.

We will resume **9:30** and **11:30 services** this coming Sunday, April 11.

Please go to <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/serve> to **sign up for a service team**.

We will hold baptisms at the end of the 11:30 service this Sunday.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Luke 24:36-53.

1. Based on their upbringing and religious training, why would it have been really difficult for the disciples to accept that Christ really rose from the dead?
2. Based on your upbringing and religious training, what made/makes it difficult for you to accept that Jesus rose from the dead?
3. Pastor Jan said, "Fear is the real reason why people struggle to believe that Jesus actually rose from the dead." How would you explain this comment to another person?
4. What steps does Jesus take to convince the disciples that it is truly Him in His resurrected body?
5. What message does Jesus send to the disciples by taking steps to address their fear and doubt? What is particularly significant about Jesus proclaiming "Peace to you!" to the disciples?
6. How would you respond to someone who said that they can't become Christian because there is not enough evidence to believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
7. **Read verses 44-47.** How do these verses reveal a pattern for the way God saves people?
8. In his analysis of verses 47-49, Pastor Jan talked about the "blessing of proclaiming the gospel." Why is it a blessing for a Christian to be on mission in life and to proclaim the gospel?
9. See verses 50-53. How is Jesus' ascension a source of hope for His followers?
10. See verses 50-53 again. What does it mean that the disciples blessed God?