

Commissioned with Peace, Proof, and Power

Luke 24:36–49

Have you ever had one of those mornings where nothing works? You go to make coffee, hit the button on the machine—nothing. No hum, no drip, no aroma. You check the switch, bang the side, maybe you even think about taking it apart convinced that it's broken. You're frustrated, troubleshooting everything, until finally you look behind it and realize: it's not plugged in. The power was right there the whole time, but the connection was missing.

We've all been there—not just with appliances, but with life. Something feels off, stuck, powerless. We try working harder, reading more, studying longer, but nothing changes. We break our heads trying to figure out why, only to discover the source of real power was disconnected all along.

A.W. Tozer once said something piercing about churches in his day:

“If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference.”

If that was true in Tozer's day, it's certainly true today: We can run programs, sing songs, preach sermons, hold meetings—and miss the one thing that makes it all alive: the living presence, the living proof, and the living power of the risen Christ through His Spirit.

Today in Luke 24:36–49, after the resurrection reports, we see the disciples locked in fear and confusion. But Jesus appears, speaks peace, gives proof, promises power, and commissions them to take the gospel to the world. He doesn't leave them in the dark—He equips them with everything they need, and everything we need, to live as His witnesses.

Sermon in a Sentence: The risen Christ commissions us with three essential gifts: peace from His living presence, proof from His living Word, and power from His living Spirit—equipping us to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth.

This morning we will see how these three gifts prepare and propel us to fulfill His mission with resurrection power.

1. Commissioned with Peace – The Gift of His Living Presence

To begin, Jesus commissions His disciples with peace—the gift of His living presence. Suddenly He stands among them in the locked room and says, “Peace be with you” (v. 36). But they’re terrified, their hearts are racing, their minds spinning—convinced they’re seeing a ghost. Fear has them barricaded behind closed doors, while doubts swirl in their heads.

But Jesus sees their alarm and doesn’t leave them there. He addresses the fear head-on: “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?” (v. 38). Then He offers the solution: “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have” (v. 39).

The **question** exposes the problem—**fear** that confuses the mind and isolates the heart—while the **command** that follows reveals the remedy: **come close**, touch me, see for yourselves that He, the Prince of Peace, is alive and right in their midst.

His presence alone shatters the isolation of doubt and restores wholeness.

Jesus doesn’t just pronounce peace; **He is our peace** (Ephesians 2:14)—the living embodiment of shalom that reconciles us to God and to one another, breaking down every barrier fear tries to build.

Let me share a true story to illustrate this:

My grandson Adrian is 6 now, but when he was 4, we went to an indoor play place with trampolines, bounce houses, and a huge three-story maze of tubes, tunnels, and slides. He was excited but a little hesitant about going into the maze alone, so he asked me to come with him. I encouraged him: “You can do this, bubba. Papa will be right here waiting for you at the bottom of the slide. I’m not going anywhere.”

He took off bravely at first. But a few minutes later I heard a loud, scared cry—“Papa! Papa!”—that cut right through the noise. I knew it was him instantly. Looking up from the outside, I spotted him on the second floor, pressed against the netting, tears streaming down his face. He was lost in the twisting tunnels, disoriented, and terrified he couldn’t find his way back down or out.

So I quickly ducked into that maze and made my way up to him. The second he saw me coming toward him, his whole body relaxed. He jumped into my arms, clinging tight, and in that moment his fear turned to perfect peace. Just knowing Papa was there changed everything.

With me holding him, he suddenly had the confidence to keep going. He even wanted to explore more of the maze! So, there I was, hunched over, shuffling through those tunnels—leaning forward the whole time because I was too tall for the space. But he was fearless now, laughing, pointing the way, full of joy—because he knew I was with him and I wasn’t letting go.

That’s a small glimpse of the peace Jesus gives us. Life has its own mazes—grief, confusion, fear, uncertainty—that can leave us feeling lost and crying out. But Jesus doesn’t just shout encouragement from a distance. He enters the maze Himself. He comes right to where we are, makes Himself known, and His presence instantly turns terror into trust, panic into peace.

In Matthew’s parallel account we learn that the very moment Jesus commissions His followers to go into all the world with the good news, He seals that peace with this unbreakable promise in Matthew 28:20:

“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20

This is not a fragile peace that depends on everything going smoothly. It's the deep, steady peace of Christ's own presence—the peace that comes because the tomb is empty, He is alive, and He is with us always. And because His living presence is with us, we don't just survive the maze—we gain the courage to keep moving forward, even exploring boldly, on mission for Him.

For us today, after Pentecost, the Holy Spirit manifests this living presence of Christ in us (John 14:16–18). He calms our fears, frees us from anxiety through prayer and worship (Philippians 4:6) and sends us out with confidence. Fear locks doors; His peace unlocks them for His mission.

But how do we let His Spirit bring that peace so we are not paralyzed by fear? The disciples had Jesus standing right there in the room, yet they were still terrified. His physical presence wasn't enough—they needed to let Him into their hearts, they needed to surrender their fear and confusion to Him. The same is true for us. The risen Christ still comes close and says, “Peace be with you.” But peace floods in when we stop hiding behind locked doors and open every part of our lives to His living presence.

Where is fear locking you in today? A relationship? A decision? A failure? The risen Christ comes to you and says, “Peace be with you” —even when your heart is shut tight. But His peace doesn't force its way in. We must open the door: surrender every fear, every doubt, every locked area to Him. Only then can His presence truly calm us and send us out.

And once that peace takes hold, we're ready for what comes next: not just calmed hearts, but opened minds. Because the same risen Lord who speaks peace also opens our eyes to see Him and His mission clearly in His Word.

2. Commissioned with Proof – The Gift of His Living Word

Notice next that Jesus Commissioned His disciples with Proof—The Gift of His Living Word. Jesus doesn't stop with peace. He gives them proof—undeniable evidence that He is truly alive, not a ghost, not a vision, but the same crucified Savior now risen in the flesh. Again, He invites them: *“See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have”* (v. 39). To drive the point home, He shows them His wounds. Then, still seeing their amazement mixed with lingering doubt, He asks for something to eat, takes a piece of broiled fish, and eats it right in front of them (v. 43). This is raw, physical reality—flesh and bones, capable of touch and taste. This is no mere vision. The resurrection is not spiritual symbolism; it is historical reality—a literal, bodily triumph over death itself.

Furthermore, as we saw in last week's message, the breaking of bread and eating of fish was a deeply familiar and intimate experience the disciples had shared with Jesus before the cross. Why does the risen Lord keep returning to the table?

Because this is what we were saved for: to sit at the table with Jesus, the living Bread of Life, and enjoy intimate fellowship with Him forever. The empty tomb doesn't just prove He rose; it restores the relationship sin and death tried to destroy. He eats with them to say, “I am alive, I am here, and the table is open—now and for all eternity.”

And notice that Jesus doesn't leave the proof at the physical level. He goes deeper—into the realm of spiritual understanding and divine revelation. Luke tells us: *“Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures”* (v. 45). He explains everything written about Him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms (v. 44). Suddenly, the Old Testament they had known all their lives comes alive in a new way. Passages they had read hundreds of times now come into focus: the suffering servant in Isaiah, the pierced one in Zechariah, the promised seed in Genesis—all pointing unmistakably to Him.

Think of working on a massive jigsaw puzzle: you have all the pieces—colors, shapes, edges—but without the box-top picture, it's just a

frustrating mess. You might spot bits here and there, but the story never comes together. Then someone sets the box top in front of you and says, “Look—this is what it’s supposed to be.” Instantly everything clicks. The random fragments now have meaning. You see the whole picture—and you can’t unsee it.

That’s exactly what Jesus did for the disciples. He became their “box top.” He didn’t just hand them more pieces; He opened their minds so they could see how every part of Scripture pointed to His suffering, death, and resurrection. What had been hidden in plain sight was now revealed. Their confusion turned to clarity, and their doubt to wonder.

Again, this was not just true for the disciples back then, but for us today: The same risen Jesus who gave physical proof to those first witnesses now gives us spiritual proof through His living Word, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

They needed His direct touch in that moment. We have something even better—the indwelling Spirit who continues that work. As 2 Peter 1:21 reminds us, the Scriptures came not by human will but by men carried along by the Holy Spirit. And that same Spirit now opens our minds, makes the Word come alive, and lets us taste God’s glory in Christ.

This isn’t dry intellectual insight; it’s supernatural illumination. When the Spirit opens our eyes, the Bible stops being ancient history and becomes a living encounter with the risen Lord. We see Jesus on every page—not as a distant figure, but as the fulfillment of every promise. That proof sets our hearts on fire (like the disciples on the Emmaus road, whose hearts “burned within them” as He opened the Scriptures—Luke 24:32). It moves from head knowledge to heart conviction, from intellectual assent to joyful certainty.

Beloved, that burning in their hearts was no fleeting emotion—it was a foretaste of the risen Christ dwelling richly in them, revealing His love in a way that made everything else fade. They had glimpsed the fullness of God, and it left them hungry for more. That taste compelled

them to return to Jerusalem, unite in constant prayer, and wait for the promised Spirit.

And that same Spirit who ignited those hearts now longs to do His deeper work in us: not merely to inform our minds through Scripture, but to manifest the living Christ within us as Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:17, so we know—truly, consciously know—the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge (v. 19). When we experience this, we don't need to be persuaded externally; His presence becomes unmistakable, ravishing our hearts with wonder, love, and praise.

The degree may vary from moment to moment, but let us seek the utmost, namely a love so satisfying that we live to know Him more deeply and to make Him known boldly to the ends of the earth.

Again, don't just read Scripture to check a box. Read it meditatively—think upon it deeply. Read it Prayerfully—ask God to open the eyes of your heart. Read it Responsively—pray it back to God, obey it, and proclaim it.

That's how knowing about the risen Christ becomes tasting His living reality, arming us with the living proof we need to proclaim forgiveness to all nations.

That's what Jesus did for the disciples—opened their minds so they tasted the glories of Christ in Scripture. The Spirit does the same for us (1 Corinthians 2:10–16), turning dry reading into a living encounter.

3. Commissioned with Power – The Gift of His Living Spirit

Finally, Jesus commissioned His disciples with Power – The Gift of His Living Spirit. After opening their minds, Jesus summarizes the gospel: *“Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem”* (vv. 46–47). Then He says: *“You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you.*

But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” (vv. 48–49).

This is the Great Commission in Luke’s Gospel, namely proclaim Christ crucified and raised from the dead, repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations, starting from Jerusalem. But Jesus doesn’t send them empty-handed. He promises the “power from on high”—the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:8).

Imagine you’re a soldier on the front lines of a fierce battle. You’ve been given a rifle but with no ammunition. As you know, without ammunition, it’s useless. You can aim, you can shout orders, but when the moment comes to fire, nothing happens. The weapon stays silent and the enemy advances unchecked.

The Holy Spirit is the ammunition—the living power that sends the message of the gospel out with divine force. Without Him, our words may sound good, but they lack penetrating impact. With Him, ordinary testimony becomes a weapon that pierces hearts, shatters strongholds, and brings people from death to life. This is exactly what Scripture declares: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.” (Zechariah 4:6)

The disciples had the proof—they had seen, touched, and eaten with the risen Christ. They had the message. But Jesus told them, “*But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high*” (Luke 24:49). Why the wait? Because the greatest truth in the universe still needs divine power to break through. Because He’s teaching us that we can’t be credible witnesses without continuous waiting.

For us today, the promise was fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2, after the early believers waited in constant prayer for about 10 days following Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1:14).

But we are still called to wait in prayer—not because the Spirit hasn’t come, but because He has, and prayer is the vehicle the Spirit uses to draw us near, yield to Him, and lay hold of His power.

The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead now lives in us (Romans 8:11). He doesn't wait for us to manufacture power through effort or eloquence. Instead, He invites us to wait on God in prayer, surrender to His leading, and let Him fill us afresh so we can carry the gospel with courage and credibility—to our neighbors, our city, and the ends of the earth.

Conclusion

Beloved, the risen Christ steps into our fear, confusion, and weakness with three gifts we desperately need—and He gives them to us today.

- He gives peace—His living presence that calms our hearts when we open them to Him, freeing us of paralyzing fear.
- He gives proof—His living Word, which the Spirit opens to us, enabling us to touch, taste, and see for ourselves the goodness of the Lord.
- He gives power—His living Spirit that fills us, opens our mouths, and empowers us to fulfill the mission.

So, the question is not “Will you try harder?” The question is: Will you receive what He is giving?

- Will you open the locked doors of your heart and let His peace quiet your fears today?
- Will you let His Word be opened to you, so you taste the reality of the risen Christ?
- Will you wait on Him in prayer and yield to His Spirit to open your mouth and give you power to go?

Jesus is alive. He is reigning. And He is commissioning you—right now—to carry His name to the people around you, to your city, and to the ends of the earth. Let's go, trusting the risen Lord goes with us.