



## “Understanding Our Biblical Purpose”

*Luke 24:45-49*

**Theme:** Jesus’ resurrection gives purpose to those who follow Him.

### **I. Our Purpose Commences through Grace – 24:45**

#### **A. THE INITIATIVE OF GRACE**

1. Throughout Luke’s account of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ Jesus he has emphasized the dependency the disciples had on the illuminating work of God’s Spirit.
2. Jesus continued to point the disciples back to the Word of God as the foundation for their faith – cp. *24:6-8, 27, 44.*
3. On numerous occasions, the disciples were unable to comprehend the truth of God’s Word, struggling without the grace of illumination – cp. *18:31-34, 24:16.*
4. Standing in their presence, explaining the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures, Jesus *“then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”*
5. It is at the sovereign purpose of God not only when He opens *“the mind to understand the Scriptures,”* but for whom He opens the mind.
6. To the casual observer and especially to the lost, it seems like God is arbitrary, whimsical, and capricious in His selection of those who receive grace.
7. Nevertheless, it is deliberate, purposeful, and planned – *Ephesians 1:4-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.*
8. This is something that is accomplished through the power of God’s Spirit whereby He illumines the blind eyes to see the truth – cp. *1 Corinthians 2:12-14.*

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9. No one can initiate this insight – it is something God initiates as He chooses us, the ones who will bring glory to Him through our comprehension of the truth.

### B. THE INSIGHTS THROUGH GRACE

1. Such Spirit-led insight is always connected directly to the Word of God and is not independent from it – cp. **vv. 27, 44.**
2. Such understanding of Scriptures always directs us to the glory of Jesus Christ – so that we might continually sanctify Him as Lord – cp. **1 John 5:20; Ephesians 1:18-21.**
3. Hence, the Spirit of God “*open[ing] our minds to understand the Scriptures*” does not focus on moralism, historical facts, or academic truths but life-changing realizations, the comprehension of the spiritual realities of life in Jesus Christ to His glory.
4. A person for whom the Spirit of God “*opens [the] mind to understand the Scriptures*” grasps the depths of the problem of their sinful offenses against God, the condemnation that is deserved, the righteousness found in the life of Christ and the desire for the escape from the power of sin through the work of Christ – **Ephesians 3:16-19.**

## II. Our Purpose Concentrates on the Gospel – **24:46-47**

### A. THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF CHRIST – **v. 46**

1. This is exactly what Jesus points to “*... and He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day.’*”
2. The truth the Spirit of God wants to insure we understand is the power of the Gospel – which is the power of God – cp. **Romans 1:16.**
3. This message is the same as had been contained throughout the Old Testament Scriptures – cp. **Genesis 3:15; Numbers 21:6-9; Psalm 16:10-11; Daniel 9:26.**

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4. The fulfillment of these passages provided the grounds by which the Father is able to view those who turn to Christ Jesus as righteous – cp. [2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:30](#).

### **B. THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST – v. 47**

1. We who are enabled to understand and by grace are quickened to believe are charged to spread the word about what Jesus Christ has the power to do in the lives of sinners.
2. Jesus states “... *that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*”
3. The key provision Jesus has the authority to grant is the “*forgiveness of sins*” – cp. [Luke 5:24; Matthew 28:18-19; Colossians 1:14](#).
4. The work of grace that immediately follows the opening of the mind to the Scriptures is the desire to gain forgiveness, and this is through the further gift of grace through repentance – cp. [2 Timothy 2:24-25](#).
5. “*Forgiveness of sins*” is available only to those who repent – cp. [Acts 11:18](#).
6. Independently of Jesus Christ, and the repentance that understanding who He is causes, a person cannot know the forgiveness of sins: it is strictly and solely “*in His name*” – cp. [Acts 4:12; 10:43](#).
7. Jesus’ authority to forgive sin is not local or even regional, but worldwide – “... *to all nations*” – cp. [Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:18](#).

## **III. Our Purpose Compels Us as Witnesses – 24:48**

### **A. THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING WITNESSES**

1. Jesus identifies those who observed His resurrected body as

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those who were the immediate witnesses – *“You are witnesses of these things.”*

2. *“witnesses”* [μάρτυρος] – describes a person who testifies to the truth of a matter – cp. ***Hebrews 2:3-4***.
3. The intention of Jesus is that more than simply those who were alive when He was raised, but all who would believe after them; experiencing the same benefits of opened minds, repentance and faith, and the forgiveness of sins – cp. ***John 20:29; 1 Peter 1:8-9***.

### B. THE PROMISE OF BEING WITNESSES

1. Jesus acknowledges their unsteady faith as they are introduced to this obligation and indicates that He promises that they will be witnesses.
2. In this text Jesus uses the present tense *“You are witnesses”* but in Acts 1:8 He states “... you shall be My witnesses” when “the Holy Spirit has come upon you.”
3. Regeneration, faith, repentance, and the forgiveness of sins causes a person to forever thereafter testify about what Jesus has done and can do others around you – ***Matthew 4:19***.

## **IV. Our Purpose Counts on God’s Spirit – v. 49**

### A. THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT’S PRESENCE

1. This is what we noted above – Jesus promises them the fulfillment of the gift of God’s Spirit – *“And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you.”*
2. This *“promise of My Father”* refers to the Holy Spirit – cp. ***Ezekiel 36:26-27***.
3. Jesus Himself promised that the Holy Spirit would come –

## B. THE PROVISION OF THE SPIRIT'S POWER

1. Jesus indicates that when the Holy Spirit comes, they would find the power they needed to fulfill their mission as witnesses – “... *but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*”
2. This indicates that the gospel witness Jesus expects all His followers to provide is not advanced by human resources, but by “*power from on high*” through the Holy Spirit.
3. Like the warning of Israel not to attempt to conquer the Promised Land without the assistance of God's Spirit, believers are warned to not attempt to proclaim the gospel in their own strength – cp. [Numbers 14:42; Acts 1:4](#).
4. Without the “*power from on high*” believers would be defeated, but with the “*power from on high*” through the Holy Spirit believers are unbeatable, the very gates of hell cannot prevail against us.

### So What?

1. **Forgiveness of sin is impossible without Christ – sinners must come to Him in faith and repentance for forgiveness.**
2. **Proclaiming forgiveness of sin through Christ is possible only when we've known such forgiveness and unavoidable after we've known such forgiveness.**
3. **The Holy Spirit is given to us for the purpose of empowering us to proclaim Christ.**
4. **Our purpose is to tell others that Jesus lives to grant them forgiveness of sins.**

**Jesus' resurrection gives purpose to those who follow Him.**

<sup>1</sup> Since gestu

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