

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"THE KING IS IN THE MIDDLE" | LUKE 24:36-53 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

If you were there when Jesus to the group of followers after he rose from the dead, how would you have reacted?

"A Confident Assurance" (Luke 24: 36-43)

Jesus appears to his followers, and they are afraid. So, he lets them touch him and eats some food to show he's not a ghost. **What does this show about Jesus? What does that mean for believers today?**

"A Clear Mission" (Luke 24: 44-49)

Jesus opens his followers' minds to understand how all of Scripture points to Him and now that He had suffered and risen from the dead to forgive sins, they needed to proclaim this good news to all ethnic groups. **What does this show about the purpose of Scripture? How well do believers today proclaim the good news of Jesus?**

"A Contagious Joy" (Luke 24: 50-53)

Jesus leads his followers to a hill and then is carried up to heaven, and his followers return to Jerusalem rejoicing. **Why did Jesus' leaving produce joy in his followers? What does Jesus' presence in heaven mean to you?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

This last chapter of Luke starts with the disciples having skepticism and sadness, yet it ends with them experiencing joyful worship. That's what happens when Jesus opens your mind to what really happened on the cross. **What doubts and fears do you need to share with Jesus? What are ways you can share the good news of forgiveness with others? Pray that God would give you contagious joy that comes from a confidence in His plan.**

The King is in the Middle

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-8 AP: Kosovo. REAL. Men's Disk Golf. HT. @Risk. HS Camp. Fel Night.
- B. Prayer: Sidlow Baxter said, *What God chooses he cleanses, what God cleanses he molds, what God molds He fills, what God fills he uses.* God please: *choose, cleanse, mold, fill, & use us.*

II. Slide9 Intro: The King is in the Middle

- A. We started this book a year and a half ago (Jan. 2022). A man named Theophilus *hires, supports, and funds Luke to go find the truth and the facts for him.* He wanted an *educated, objective, scholarly, and academic* historian.
1. Go find out ... *Did a virgin have a baby? Did Jesus walk on water? Did He take a little boys lunchable & feed a stadium of people? Did He yell at nature and it listened? Did He cast demons out of people? Did He really die, then rise, and 500 people really saw it? Luke go find out!*
 2. *Christianity is much more than a philosophical system, it is a historical reality.*
- B. Outline: *A Confident Assurance. A Clear Mission. A Contagious Joy.*

III. Slide10,11a A CONFIDENT ASSURANCE (36-43) READ 1st re-read vs.30-35

- A. *Shalom Alechem* – Peace to you.
- B. Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? *Uhh, no reason!*
1. *Actually*, They were **troubled** *fearing persecution* from the authorities. They were **terrified** meeting behind locked doors. They were **frightened** believing He is a ghost/*spirit* (37,39).
 2. *What we take by faith the disciples took by fear.*
- C. Slide11b Jesus offers a 2-fold proof, showing He's *not a ghost but* has *a real body.*
1. 1st proof: shows his wounds (holes in *hands/feet*) w/the invite to *touch & see*

2. **2nd proof:** He shows He was capable of eating food.

D. **Why did He keep appearing & disappearing from them?** (12 x's in 40 days).

1. It seems *He was getting them accustomed to* the fact that even when He was *not visible to the eyes*, **He was still present & available!**

E. **Slide12** Paul said in 1 Cor.15:40-44 *NLT*, *There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. 42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.* (And what a body it shall be, perfect!)

1. *"I'm not suffering from anything a good resurrection can't fix."*

IV. **Slide13a A CLEAR MISSION (44-49)**

A. **Slide13b The Law of Moses** (the **Torah**), **the Prophets** (N'vi'im), **and the Psalms** standing for the Wisdom books or (**K'tuvim**), in other words, the entire **Tanakh** (T-N-KH)

1. **It's all about Christ!** (*everything written about Me*) - Vaughan Roberts in his book, **God's Big Picture**, uses this illustration: *Two boys are bored on a rainy summer day and decide to do a puzzle. They weren't making any progress on it until they turned over the lid and saw the picture that they were trying to create. It was a medieval court scene with the king surrounded by Royal Advisers. Then one of the boys said, "I see it, the king is in the middle!"* Once they saw the king was in the middle they were able to put the rest of the puzzle together. **And so it is** when we read **the Scriptures**. Always remember that King is in the middle. **Jesus is central in it, and must be central in our lives.**

B. (45) **He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures** (it is like a picture blurred, out of focus, finally coming into sharp focus).

1. *Many can bring the Scripture to the mind, but the Lord alone can prepare the mind to receive the Scriptures.*

2. **Slide14** We need divine illumination. We need *Saving Illumination and Interpretive Illumination*.

a) *Saving Illumination*, we need God to take the veil off our eyes.

b) *Interpretive Illumination*, then the rest of our lives were asking, like the Psalmist, *Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions*. Ps.119:18 *NLT*

3. Jesus first opened their **eyes** (31), **and** then their **minds** (45). **So** when he opens **the Scriptures** (32) **we may** open our **mouths** and tell others about **Him** (47).

C. **Jesus now Previews their Future Ministry** (46-49)

1. vs.46 was **God's part** (suffer & rise). **Now** vs.47 is **our part** (proclamation).

D. The call to **repentance** **and** the priceless offer of **forgiveness** must be proclaimed **to whom?** **To all the nations/peoples/ethne** (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη).

1. Not just geo-political countries or nation-states, **but think ethnic linguistic groupings** (language groups, people groups, ethnic clusters). [eg. Kurdish people, 30-45 million, w/no sov nation]

a) They have a *distinct language & culture*, that makes the gospel difficult to spread naturally from one to the other.

2. **Slide15 Illustration: Pancakes & Waffles.**

a) **Pancake**: If you start slowly pouring the syrup (the gospel) in the middle of the pancake (**the world**) **eventually/hopefully** it will saturate the whole pancake.

(1) If the goal of the great commission was just to **win as many people to Christ as possible** ... this will be a fitting analogy.

b) **But**, our *Marching Orders* are **to all the nations**, a more fitting illustration is a **waffle**. Start slowly pouring the syrup (the gospel) in the middle of the waffle (**the world**) where **every square** represents **each people group**. **But what about the outer squares? They may not receive the syrup?** [the *unreached people groups* are the outer edges]

- E. **The church** was not left to live in the upper room, it was sent out into **all the world**.
1. After the upper room came *the worldwide mission of the church*. The days of **sorrow** were past, and the **tidings of joy** must be taken to all mankind
- F. Wait, how can we accomplish this? (2 answers in vs. 49)
1. The **filling** with the Holy Spirit.
 2. The **empowering** of the Holy Spirit.
 - a) See it's **His message**, **His commission**, and **His power**.

V. Slide16 **A CONTAGIOUS JOY (50-53)**

- A. His Blessing (50,51)
- B. Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed them - this is reminiscent of the priestly blessing of Numbers 6:24-26, *The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*
- C. Their Blessing (52,53)
- D. They were finally able to **rejoice** even though He had **departed** from them.
1. Look at the difference made by their **confidence** in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. [1st time He left **sad**. This time **great joy**]
- E. Slide17 Why, the Ascension is so Significant? 5 reasons:
1. **Completeness** - it shows us the *completeness* of Jesus' victory. He is the exalted King, and the ascension shows that.
 2. **Forgiveness** - it relates to the *forgiveness* of sin. He not only ascended, **but now advocates for us** at the father's throne.
 3. **Effectiveness** - it touched our *effectiveness* in Evangelism. Jesus, because He ascended, poured out the Holy Spirit, **and** we are now His witnesses, with power.
 4. **Nearness** - it touches on the *nearness* of Jesus. He said *it's to your advantage that I leave*. His presence **then** was **localized** but is **now universalized** by the Spirit of Christ. Jesus is a friend, not only on earth,

but in heaven also, meaning ... we are now linked to someone who is forever independent of *space and time*, to help us in time of need.

5. **Hopefulness** - something is about to happen, now that he has ascended. We're waiting for *the last act of redemptive history* to take place. The One who has ascended into heaven *will come the same way*. We are waiting on Him with expectation.

F. **Slide18 Read - Acts 1:1-11** (Luke's sequel)

G. Think about how Luke 24 began and now ends. It **began** with *skepticism & sadness*, and **ends** with *joy and worship*. (*why?* because of the **resurrection**. because **all the Scriptures** point to Him. because of the **ascension**, because he **promised to come again**)

H. **Prayer:** God, you've given us **Peace not fear. Belief not doubt. Sharing not silence. And Worship, Joy, and Blessing.**

I. Keywords: Ascension, joy, assurance.