

Episode: Three Gospels Series No. 12

Narrator: Thomas

Primary Scriptures: Matthew 28:16-20, John 20:19-21:25, Acts 1:1-12, 1 Corinthians 15:5-7

Story Summary: The forty days after Jesus was resurrected

Location: Kingdom of Judea (Israel)

Time: Circa 30 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Matthew 28:18-20. John 20:25, 27, 29, 30-31; 21:22, 25

Some of the most important information about the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus is not found in *Matthew*, *Mark*, or *John*. *Luke* has the most detailed account of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, as well as an account of the first encounter with the apostles and a brief description of his ascension. Meanwhile, *Acts*, a continuation of *Luke*, notes Jesus was on earth forty days after his suffering and gives an account of some of his activities during that time. *Acts* also gives more details on his ascension. In 1 Corinthians 15:6, Paul says that Jesus appeared to more than 500 people at the same time, most of who were still living at the time (about twenty-five years after Jesus' death), and to James and the apostles.

Considering that Jesus was on earth for about forty days after his resurrection, the Bible gives us precious little information and timing. Here is one possibility of Jesus' appearances and activities: appears to Mary Magdalene and the women, appears to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, appears to ten apostles, appears to all eleven apostles, meets with seven apostles at the Sea of Galilee, meets with eleven apostles in Galilee on the mountain, appears to the five hundred, appears to James, meets with apostles in Jerusalem, and ascends into Heaven.

It is a bit curious that Jesus met with the women and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus before meeting with the apostles. When he finally appeared to ten of the apostles, it seems he mildly castigates them for not believing the reports of his resurrection before immediately offering them peace and fellowship. In a critical moment, Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit to them. In a meeting with all eleven apostles, Jesus reconciles with Thomas, too.

Three huge events are detailed, fortunately. Jesus' appearance to some of the apostles on the Sea of Galilee includes a long conversation between Peter and Jesus. Jesus gives Peter the opportunity to affirm his love three times offsetting Peter's three denials.

Matthew gives an account of a meeting on the mountain in Galilee. It is at this meeting Jesus gives the Great Commission, a mission that has been accepted by Christians through the centuries. Matthew does say that after his resurrection appearances, "some doubted."

In *Luke* and *Acts*, Luke tells about the ascension of Jesus. With the exception of a small portion of *Mark*, these are all the accounts we have in the Gospels about that.

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you learn everything about Jesus' post-resurrection appearances in the four Gospels?
 2. How long was Jesus on earth after his resurrection, and how many people saw him?
 3. How did the resurrected Jesus first prove his true identity to his apostles?
 4. Did John write about all of Jesus' miracles? Why or why not?
 5. While the apostles were waiting in Galilee, what is one of the things they did? What did Jesus tell them to do that he had once told Peter to do?
1. No. You have to read Acts 1:1-12 and 1 Corinthians 15:5-7, too. 2. At least forty days, and more than 500 people saw him. 3. He had them touch him, showed them his hands and feet, and ate a piece of fish. Thomas touched his hands and put his hand into Jesus' side where the spear had pierced him. He talked to them. 4. No, he did more. John wrote about enough of them to convince his readers to believe in Jesus. John 20:30-31, 21:25. 5. They went fishing. After not catching anything, Jesus told them to cast their net again. Luke 5:4, John 21:6.

Applications Questions:

1. What is a scriptural characteristic of God or Jesus you have a hard time believing? Is your struggle related to personal experience, intellectual thoughts, or something else?
2. It is hard to catch the nuance in English, but in Peter's conversation with Jesus on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, it appears Peter is unwilling to fully commit to Jesus. Rather than giving Peter a lecture, Jesus told Peter to act: feed his sheep and follow him. In your life, what does it look like to feed his sheep and follow him?
3. Matthew 28:18-20 is the Great Commission. Jesus tells the apostles to make disciples. Do you think that commandment applies to you? Do you obey this commandment? How could you follow it better?

Application Questions for Teens

1. The apostles doubted Jesus came back from the dead until they saw him. Even after being with him, some of the apostles doubted... but they still believed (Matthew 28:17). It is very possible you have learned to believe only things that can be proved scientifically, so you may doubt many things about Jesus. Can you believe in Jesus and still have doubt? Would it surprise you to find out that most people have some level of doubt about many things?
2. Luke 24:44 says that Jesus fulfilled everything that was written about him in the Old Testament. Is that important to you? Should it be? Why or why not?