

Focus on Luke 24:36b–48

WHAT is important to know?

—From “*Exegetical Perspective*,” Sarah S. Henrich

The opening scene is one of a noisy gathering of folks trying to put together their experiences, their memories of Jesus, and their hopes and fears. We can divide this passage into four acts in order to watch how Luke moves us toward the wonderful ending of this Gospel: (1) “Look at me”: First proof that Jesus is not a ghost/spirit; (2) “He ate [it] in their presence”: Second proof that Jesus is not a spirit/ghost; (3) “He opened their minds to understand the scriptures”: Third proof that Jesus’ death and resurrection are part of his lordship; (4) “You are witnesses”: Jesus’ description of and call to the group.

WHERE is God in these words?

—From “*Theological Perspective*,” Stephen A. Cooper

In this passage, Jesus’ visitation has a twofold agenda: to enlighten the disciples about the Christ and to commission them for the preaching of the gospel. The subject of this reading is nothing less than the sum of Easter week—Christ’s passion and resurrection—and the anticipation of Pentecost in the commission of the gospel to all nations. Thus Christ’s resurrected body is the object of the church’s faith, not simply as a miracle wrought by God, but as the centerpiece of the proclamation of the new life in Christ.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

—From “*Pastoral Perspective*,”

Nancy R. Blakely

Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of his early followers. He brought change to their lives as they moved from (1) fright and alarm to (2) joy mixed with disbelief to (3) open and understanding minds and hearts. That marked shift in the core of their beings led them forth to take great risks, witnessing to the risen Christ. Jesus did not bring them security. Rather, they risked all in following his call. For they had come to understand that Jesus had conquered the ultimate threat, death itself, and their fears were groundless. The challenge to twenty-first-century Christians is great. Are we able to let go of our desire to be secure?

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

—From “*Homiletical Perspective*,”

Barbara J. Essex

God and Jesus are in cahoots against the powers of the world. Wherever there is inhumanity, exploitation, discrimination, and hopelessness, Jesus shows up offering comfort, assurance, and a bit of fussing. He invites us to be witnesses that are all about God—God’s intention to bring peace, unity, harmony, love, compassion, grace, justice, and mercy to a world that is broken and sinful. Jesus commissions us to declare the presence and power of God in the midst of tragedy, despair, and death.