

## Luke 24:36 - 43 Irrefutable Evidence the Jesus is Raised from the Dead

*33 And they arose that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, 34 saying, "The Lord has really risen, and has appeared to Simon." 35 And they began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread. 36 And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst. 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 "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." 40 [And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.] 41 And while they still could not believe it for joy and were marveling, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; 43 and He took it and ate it before them.*

I want you to think of your Bibles this morning in terms of thesis, antithesis. and ultimately synthesis. Here's a simplified explanation of this lofty idea from an on-line encyclopedia;

Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis

**A dialectic method of historical and philosophical progress that postulates (1) a beginning proposition called a thesis, (2) a negation of that thesis called the antithesis, and (3) a synthesis whereby the two conflicting ideas are reconciled to form a new proposition.**

This little exercise will, I hope, make your Bibles the most stunningly believable true truth that nothing else can compare to it.

Our thesis is written down for us in the first chapters of the first book of Moses. A whole ton of information that Moses could not have known or even dreamed up, no matter how brilliant his gifts were, and I'm quite sure he was exceptional. He couldn't speak very well without stuttering, but I'm

sure he was brilliant. Not brilliant enough though to have written what he did.

Our thesis is simple. God created everything. Out of nothing. It was perfect. He rested. Creation gets under way. God gives His son Adam title to the earth and all that is in it. It's Adam's job to give names to all of the creatures. Adam weilds authority over the earth and all that is in it, save one thing.

God warns Adam not to eat of the fruit of a single tree, or else death will ensue. Eve is Adams help mate, and fun mate I'm very sure, and Satan comes along and tells Eve God was lieing about that tree. God is withholding someting good from you by dis-allowing that fruit. And not only that, but God knows that if you do eat it, you'll be equal to Him.

God says eat it and die. Satan says eat it and super-live above and beyond your present experience, you not only won't die, but you'll be equal to God Himself.

So they dis-obey God and eat, and what happens, they don't die physically right away, they rather are cast out of God's presence, His garden, and begin a physical process of death over time. Removed from God and decay begins. But that isn't all.

Something else happens that we learn about over time as God reveals this book to us. They forfeited their rule over God's creation to Satan. He now reigns over this fallen planet. Death reigns. Sin reigns. Satan rules. That's our thesis.

Jesus is our antithesis. Adam was God's first son. He sinned and death reigned and we are all Adam's sons born into sin, ruled by Satan in a world condemned to destruction.

Jesus is God's Son, literally. Born of the woman without a man involved. Born of a virgin. Born outside of the curse and condemnation of sin. Born

of God.

He lives the life Adam failed at. Jesus does not sin. Jesus is crucified on a cross to pay the penalty for our sins. But the death that was the promised result of sin, cannot hold Jesus in the grave. He rises again to life on the third day. He is the antithesis. The reversal of the thesis of Genesis 3.

Sin and death reigned until Jesus. He undid the curse. He is the acceptable sacrifice for all of our sins. He undid death. He rose from the grave.

The final synthesis is still unfolding beloved. He reversed sin and death for those who belong to Him, who have believed and looked to Him as the children of Israel looked to the bronze serpent lifted up to deliver them.

For the chosen, the elect, He has reversed sin and death, but the synthesis is incomplete until ALL of the prophecies are complete. He has risen. He has returned to heaven. He reigns over all, even though Satan still is currently ruler of this world.

The final synthesis of everything is when Jesus returns, with all of the saints who have believed. He will return to His people Israel and their eyes will be opened to believe. And then fierce and final judgement will ensue on this earth and Satan and all of his evil will be deposed, judged, punished in hell, and Satan himself will be bound in a prison for 1000 years, while Jesus rules over a world that is returned to pre-fall, garden of eden like perfections.

That's the synthesis. But even that is finalized in a new heavens and a new earth after the millennial reign, and Satan himself will be cast into hell along with all of the other rebellious sinners who hated God.

What makes this book different from all other books is that no human mind could have conceived of such a thesis and antithesis and final synthesis, and the proof is that the revelation of all of this took 2500 years to unfold, and 40 authors but it's obvious to those of us who believe and are thrilled

by it, that there is a single author with a mind far above our minds.

Where we are at in all of that grand sweeping picture in our passage this morning is how God designed and proved that Jesus rose up from the dead. Jesus beat death. Jesus is the firstborn of many who will also, in Him, beat death. Adam's curse is undone by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The curse is reversed by Jesus coming out of the grave.

Likewise, if the resurrection of Jesus did not happen, the entire antithesis of the original thesis comes unraveled. That's why Satan spends so much time and energy at this single point. Resurrection. Satan wants to make the resurrection somehow un-proved. Somehow false. Everything revolves around the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is the antithesis of the original thesis of death through sin.

If Jesus didn't come out of His grave, then He is a liar. He said He would. If He didn't He's a liar. If He didn't rise from the dead, we're locked down in the original thesis. Sin. Death. Cursed planet. Condemned to be destroyed by God. All of it, if Jesus is a liar and He did not come out of the grave.

Also the whole Old testament can be condemned as rubbish if Jesus didn't come out of the grave. The prophecies are false. IF Jesus has not risen, the entire christian church of 2000 years has been built on a fabrication and is worthless. It's all lies. It all comes unravelled. We have been pitifully duped by silly lies. We are as Paul said, of all men most to be pitied. A bunch of duped fools.

So how does God design the evidence of the resurrection of Jesus so that it is irrefutable. Let's look at that question this morning, because that's exactly what Luke, along with the other 3 gospel writers is doing for us.

God selects 4 gospel writers, independent of each other, they weren't all in a room together, hammering this stuff out, 4 writers who give 4 accounts of all of the events and witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead

that combine to be so irrefutable that when God holds court on those who dis-believed, the evidence will be so overwhelming that He will judge them on willful disbelief.

You didn't not believe because of insufficient evidence. You disbelieved because you loved sin and darkness and actually chose sin over God. That will be the judgement. Choice. The evidence is overwhelming, to not believe is to choose darkness and sin because that's what you love instead of God. Pretty damning stuff. You'll be in hell because you chose sin. You chose darkness. The evidence of light would stand up in any courtroom, including God's courtroom. He has seen to that. Let's look at some evidences of the resurrection.

Evidence: We'll begin with the soldiers who were sent to guard the tomb. This is so perfect in the providence of God that it's laughable. Roman soldiers. Foolproof. No one is more motivated to mission success than a Roman soldier. To fail is to perish. And they were proud of their abilities and success. They were professional soldiers.

So the pharisee's are going to have a failsafe argument against any further Jesus nonsense by posting a Roman guard detail at His tomb just in case someone decides to tamper with Jesus body. Foolproof. No one is more motivated for success than Roman soldiers. Until an angel comes and rolls away the stone.

They were panicked and when their collective knees stopped slapping together and they regained enough air to flee, they did.

The pharisees never argued with them for a minute. They knew very well that what the soldiers reported actually happened. How much temple treasury money did it take to pay off the soldiers so that they would concoct a story about being asleep at the post while the disciples stole the body.

It must have been a lot, because it's counterintuitive to the point of disgraceful. We were asleep! The disciples stole the body while we were

asleep. OTOH we'll take your money because whoever that angel was, we're not about to mess with him. Take the money and the disgrace before you go back and argue with that angel. He won. We lost. Sure we'll take your money.

It's so ridiculous that it becomes a solid evidence of the resurrection. The world's best professionals were completely outflanked at that tomb. An angel appeared. They fled. The tomb was opened. Jesus rose from the dead. I like whoever it was that said, the angel didn't roll the stone away to let Jesus out, he did that so we could go in and see that there was no one there.

Evidence: The tomb is empty. The grave linens are neatly folded. Jesus is gone. The angel speaks to the women and tells them He has risen. Many witnesses of the empty tomb. Some see the angel, others do not. Peter and John enter the empty tomb and witness the grave linens folded.

Evidence: Jesus begins to appear to reliable witnesses. Mary Magdalene. Peter. Or as it were, Simon, since Peter hasn't proved to be very Rock like in the previous hours.

Evidence: Jesus appears on the road to Emmaus and gives Cleopas and the other disciple a tour of the scriptures beginning at Moses and including the prophets about the need of His sacrificial death to precede His glory.

Redemption is the antithesis of the fall. And redemption is dependent on someone who is worthy to be a sacrifice for sinners. Jesus is that single sacrificial lamb that is worthy to die in our place. But death cannot hold onto Jesus and He rises from the dead on the third day.

Cleopas and the other disciple's hearts burn with love and longing for Jesus and then suddenly, the veil is lifted and they recognize Him. Alive from the dead. And with unspeakable joy they head 7 miles, in the dark, back to Jerusalem to find the cowering frightened dis-believing apostles and disciples.

Evidence: The lack of belief of the apostles and disciples actually becomes evidence. Because Satan will later spread lies about how the disciples robbed the body and designed this whole false religion around a dead guy.

The truth is, the disciples were cowering locked in an upper room, afraid they would be next in line on roman crosses. They were the exact opposite of bold liars creating a new false religion. They were huddled together with the doors bolted shut in confused disbelief.

Listen to Mark's account about Cleopas and the other man: Actually we'll back up and include all of Mark's post resurrection evidence account.

*Mark 15:9 Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons. 10 She went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping. 11 And when they heard that He was alive, and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it. 12 And after that, He appeared in a different form to two of them, while they were walking along on their way to the country. 13 And they went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either. 14 And afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen.*

This is the group that's going to boldly concoct a false religion about a dead guy? They don't even believe in Him with good rock solid evidence. Finally He himself appears and reproaches their hardness of heart and unbelief. It's like, come on guys! Get with the program! You still won't believe when rock solid people report the truth!

That pretty well brings us to our passage we're considering this morning in Luke's gospel. All of the previous evidence has precluded this final overwhelming evidence we have before us this morning.

But to set the stage, let's look just for a moment at John's account of this appearance; John 20:

*19 When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw the Lord.*

They were all huddled together in a room some place and the doors were shut for fear of the jews. The apostles and the disciples are still in confusion and dis-belief at this juncture. They don't believe the witnesses so far. It's too fantastic to believe. Too impossible.

Mary and Peter first, and then late in the evening, Cleopas and the unnamed disciple with Cleopas on the road have all given testimony that they have seen Him, but the rest are in dis-belief. It's simply a bridge too far for their senses and they can't get there.

And that's where we'll pick up Luke's narrative for us this morning;

*36 And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst. 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit.*

Who is the "they" in vs. 36? While they were telling these things; Cleopas and the other disciple are re-counting their experience, walking with Jesus for 2+ hours, listening to His teaching about a much more comprehensive version of Messiah and His kingdom authority to reign in glory than the stunted version of their contemporary false religion.

Messiah had to die and rise from the dead to enter His glory. A political victory over Rome is not the antithesis of Adams fall and Satan's reign. For that antithesis of the fall, Jesus must undo the death and destruction Satan caused. That's what Jesus explained from the scriptures on the road to

Emmaus.

Cleopas and his friend who's eyes had been veiled but were then opened to recognize the risen Jesus and believe. They are recounting all of it, but they don't get to finish. They are trying to convince unbelievers that Jesus has really risen from the dead, but they didn't finish.

*And while they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst.*

Cleopas and friend are doing their best to convince these hard heads that Jesus has really risen, when suddenly, with doors safely bolted shut, there aren't 2 men speaking to the group, there are three. Just let that sink in for a minute.

*37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit.*

This is persistent unbelief. It can't possibly be Jesus, risen from the dead, like He told them several times to expect and they rejected it then. At least they're consistent. They are so locked down in their unbelief that they reject the obvious in front of their eyes and decide this third person must be a ghost.

I think it must be at this point that Mark tells us that Jesus reproached them for their unbelief!

*12 And after that, He appeared in a different form to two of them, while they were walking along on their way to the country. 13 And they went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either. 14 And afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen.*

It's like; What's it gonna take boys?? I told you I would die and rise from

the dead. Several times. Then it happens like I said. Then there are multiple credible witnesses that it has happened. What's it going to take?

At this point you have rejected the direct word of God spoken to you BY God. I mean, all we get is words on a page and we're expected to believe the words to the point of death if necessary. These men got the Word of God from the very mouth of God incarnate. They don't believe that.

Then they have multiple credible witnesses. Folks, that's what we're going on here this morning. Pinch yourselves, here we are. And we are here because of multiple credible witnesses writing down these truths. That's what we have based our faith in. Words in a book!

These men are rejecting Words from the mouth of God plus multiple credible living witnesses. It can't be Jesus. It must be a ghost. Come on! I'm glad Mark tells us that Jesus reproached them. He should have!

John recounts to us the story of Thomas. Doubting Thomas. But Thomas is no worse in his unbelief than these disciples are. Let's look at Thomas so we can visualize Jesus reproach. I think it's the same reproach, just repeated for Thomas benefit because he missed out the first time;

*John 20:24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." 26 And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."*

Blessed are we who have not yet seen with our eyes, and yet we believed. God intentionally set up credible testimony in the old testament. Two or three witnesses, credible witnesses, are to be believed. God did that because He knows that after His departure, the rest of us who are the called aren't going to get the privilege of first hand live witness that He has risen.

Likewise, the world is guilty of dis-belief, because the evidence of credible witnesses is enough. God said it's enough! The world will be judged by the testimony of the witnesses who saw Him with their eyes and wrote their testimony down for the rest of us. That's enough!

*38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 "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."*

God is settling, once for all time, the evidence necessary to hold the whole world accountable. We don't get to see His wounds. We don't get to watch Him enjoy a piece of fish. What we get are these words penned for us by the credible witnesses who were present when this happened in reality.

Risen Jesus has a body, like unto ours, but not exactly. I've yet to enter a room where the doors are barred but I didn't need doors, I just appeared as a third person present with the others, inexplicably in scientific terms.

Resurrection bodies are the same but different. We will dine with Jesus at His table. Real bread. Real wine. Really good wine. Amazing bread. We'll enjoy that meal with Him in real resurrection bodies. With flesh and bones. But apparently walls won't be a problem if we want to enter.

His question to them is sensible; *Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?* You read Moses. You believed that God spoke the worlds and the stars into being out of nothing. Why would you not believe that I would rise from the dead, like I told you. Is that harder to believe than the earth beneath your feet that wasn't there until God spoke it into place?

Unbelief is unreasonable. Your difficulty and refusal to believe that this is ME is unreasonable. Really? It's easier to believe I'm a ghost than to believe this is Me, myself, fulfilling my own prophecy. That's unreasonable! Oh foolish men and slow of heart to believe! Somebody said that.

Last week I shared my mother's little lesson; *ignorance is no excuse for the law. The policeman doesn't care that you didn't know that was a rule.* On a much larger scale, ignorance and unbelief of God's revealed truth will not help you on judgment day. The evidence is set. Complete for all time. Creation is enough. But beyond creation, the revelation of God is available. More so for some cultures than for others, for sure.

Our passage that we read together this morning is enough to send you to hell if you don't believe. Creation and revelation is all there is folks. If that's not enough to make you believe and worship, then like we said earlier, you've made your choice. Jesus says This IS enough.

Think about everything Satan has put in place to discount the evidence of number (1) Creation, and number (2) God's revelation.

What's winning these days? Evolution, or Creation. Evolution is winning hands down, even though it's scientifically impossible, it wins hands down because evil men do not want a Holy God.

Then think about the myriad of false information, false religions, false books, non-sensical flights of fancy that claim to be equivalents to this book. If Satan can bury this book in a myriad of nonsense, if he can replace creation with nonsense, coupled with man's fallen nature and proclivity and love for sin, he can carry multitudes, the vast majority of men into hell.

The evidence that Jesus died and rose from the dead is set for all time in the words of this book. Jesus reproached these men for their hardness of heart

and dis-belief, but I love the patience of Jesus in these next couple of verses.

He meets us where we are. Like a tender mom or dad helping a little fellow with those first steps. OK, we'll do this at your speed.

*40 [And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.]  
41 And while they still could not believe it for joy and were marveling, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; 43 and He took it and ate it before them.*

Isaiah 42:3 is quoted verbatim in Matthew 12:20  
*A bruised reed He will not break and a smoldering wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.*

Jesus tenderly takes the bruised reed of belief that these poor faltering disciples have and He lovingly repairs it. Look at the nail holes. Look at the gash in my side. Touch me. Do what is necessary to fully realize and believe, because you are going to be my witnesses. Your testimony is going to be written down so that others will also believe.

Then he eats the fish, because everybody knows, ghosts don't eat fish. He has a real physical body of flesh and bones that eats fish just like you eat fish. Write it down.

Beloved, Satan has convinced the world that these simple proofs are not enough. Satan has provided nonsense to believe instead. Utter nonsense. But Satan has something else working in his favor. Men love their sin. They will believe utter disprovable nonsense so that they can enjoy the sin they love.

The infallible proofs of the undoing of the fall by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead are the testimony that God will use in His court on the day that He judges the sinful rebellion. Adam brought death. Jesus delivered us from death's hold on us. The resurrection is all the proof you

need. Believe it!

The **thesis** of the book is death caused by Adam's fall.

The **antithesis** of the book is life brought to us by Jesus conquering death and sin. He proved that by His resurrection.

The **synthesis** of the book is the return to Eden for a thousand years and then a new heaven and new earth. Jesus will reign forever.