

Readings from the Word of God

4 April 2021

Luke 24 (NKJV, modified)

¹ Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ³ Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "

⁸ And they remembered His words. ⁹ Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. ¹¹ And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter, standing up, ran up to the tomb, and stooping down, he saw the cloths lying by themselves; and he came away, marveling to himself at what had come to pass.

¹³ Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was sixty stadia from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

17 And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”

18 Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”

19 And He said to them, “What things?”

So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.”

²⁵ Then He said to them, “O thoughtless, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”

²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.

³⁰ And it came to pass, as He reclined with them, taking bread, He blessed it; and breaking, gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He became invisible to them.

³² And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?” ³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

³⁶ Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” ³⁷ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

⁴⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” ⁴² So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. ⁴³ And He took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴ Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” ⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

⁴⁶ Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ And you are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I send the

promise of My Father upon you; but you sit in the city of Jerusalem, until you put on power from on high.”

⁵⁰ And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they, having worshiped Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

True Christianity §356

We are able to acquire faith for ourselves. This is... clear from the fact that faith in its essence is truth and any of us can acquire truths for ourselves from the Word. As we acquire truths and love them, we begin to acquire faith.

Furthermore, if we were unable to acquire faith for ourselves, all the passages in the Word that command faith would be pointless.

Secrets of Heaven §5684

[R]eflecting is turning one’s attention, which is the sight of one’s understanding, to observe whether something is true, and having done this to observe that it is indeed so.

True Christianity §347

As for the manner in which faith is formed, this happens by our turning to the Lord, learning truths from the Word, and living by those truths.

First of all, faith is formed by our turning to the Lord, because faith that is real, that is, faith that brings salvation, is faith from the Lord and faith in the Lord.

Second, faith is formed by our learning truths from the Word, because faith in its essence is truth. All the elements that constitute faith are truths. Faith, then, is nothing but an array of truths shining in our mind. Truths teach not only that we need to have beliefs but also in whom to believe and what to believe.

Third, faith is formed by our living by those truths, because a spiritual life is a life that follows truths. Truths are not actually alive before they exist in actions. Truths dissociated from actions are just thoughts. The Lord says, “If you know these things, you are happy if you do them” (John 13:17).

Recommended Reading

Read the chapter on Faith from *True Christianity*. Download it for free from <https://swedenborg.com/product/true-christianity-1-nce/>