

• *Two kinds of knowledge – observation and faith*

• *Every Christian has to see in the Scriptures that He is the resurrected Lord Jesus*

• *Also a group of apostles would be 'eye-witnesses' of the resurrection*

There are at least two kinds of knowledge, and two ways of knowing things. You can know things by observation, and you can know things by faith in what God says. The two kinds of knowledge are quite different. When Jesus rose from the dead and first appeared to His disciples, He rebuked them for not believing in His resurrection before they saw Him with their own eyes. Jesus wanted them first to believe in resurrection without it being proved to them. He wanted them to know the resurrection first by faith in the Old Testament Scriptures and only second by seeing Him with their very eyes. The apostle John came to believe in the resurrection before he actually saw the risen Lord Jesus Christ^{□1}. The disciples on the road to Emmaus saw it in the Scriptures before they realised that they were seeing the risen Lord. Jesus wanted His disciples to be thoroughly convinced in both ways that He was alive from the dead. Every Christian has to see in the Scriptures that He is the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. And part of His plan was that there would also be a group of apostles who would be 'eye-witnesses of the resurrection'^{□2}. Luke 24:36–43 is about knowing the historical facts through having witnessed them visibly and tangibly. Luke 24:44–48 refers to their understanding the resurrection through the Scriptures. Luke 24:49–52 refers to the Spirit's sealing both their historical knowledge and their knowledge of the Scriptures.

□1 see John 20:8-9

□2 Acts 1:22; 1 Corinthians 9:1

The resurrected Lord Jesus Christ was full of graciousness

• *'Peace be with you'*

The resurrected Lord Jesus Christ was full of graciousness. Luke 24:36 records the first occasion when Jesus appeared to the ten disciples. Thomas was absent, and Judas was no longer alive. Suddenly Jesus appears to them. These very men had all disowned Jesus and had fled for their lives when He was arrested. Yet despite their weakness of faith and their cowardice there is not a single criticism of them from Jesus. 'Peace be with you,' He says. Jesus is a gracious Saviour. He has risen from the dead to bring us peace, not to condemn us.

The resurrection body of Jesus had new powers

The resurrection body of Jesus had new powers. At one point in the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus disappeared^{□1}. Now Jesus suddenly appears^{□2}. It seems that the new resurrection body of Jesus was able to pass through closed doors. Nothing like this ever happened during His earthly lifetime. He passed through the grave clothes^{□3}. The body of Jesus had powers after the resurrection that it did not have before.

□1 24:31

□2 24:36; John 20:19-23

□3 John 20:6-9

He showed them that His new body is really a body

• *New powers – but tangible and material – a great mystery*

He showed them that His new body is really a body. The new resurrected body of the Lord Jesus Christ is a great mystery. The disciples are startled as if they were seeing a ghost^{□1}. Jesus' body has new powers and can pass through doors, yet Jesus wants to make it very clear that it really is a tangible body^{□2}. He is not a ghost or spirit. His body is not some kind of non-material body. (In passing we note that Jesus distinguishes very clearly between 'spirits' – beings that truly exist but do not have a body – and beings that are not just 'spirits' but they also have a body. And 1 Corinthians 15:40

□1 24:37

□2 24:38-40

refers to non-living things that have a body but are not ‘spirits’.) Jesus’ body really is a body. He is not some kind of ghost. He has a **physical** body^{□3}. The disciples are overjoyed and can hardly believe what they are seeing, so Jesus takes the trouble to demonstrate the physical nature of His resurrection body^{□4}.

□3 24:39

□4 24:41-43

The disciples recognise the body of Jesus

- Identity

The resurrection for us

(i) It vindicates Jesus

(ii) It shows that resurrection power is available to us



(iii) It is a foretaste of what will one day happen to us if we do the will of God

Jesus shows that He identifies with what He was before His death and resurrection. There is some kind of identity between the pre-resurrection and the post-resurrection body of Jesus. They are able to **recognise the body of Jesus**. When we are first raised from the dead the marks of our previous life are still upon us – at least for a while. The Swiss Reformer John Calvin thought they would then eventually disappear.

What does the resurrection mean to us? (i) It vindicates Jesus. It shows that all along what He was saying and predicting was true. ‘These are my words which I spoke to you.’ Jesus’ enemies often asked Him to perform a sign to prove that He was the Saviour. On these occasions Jesus would say that no sign would be given them except the sign of the resurrection. Yet Jesus did not appear to His enemies, but only to His disciples. To those who had believed in Him He gave a sign and proof that He was everything He claimed to be – and that proof was the resurrection from the dead. God would surely not raise from the dead a liar and false teacher. Jesus’ resurrection was the vindication of His claims. (ii) It shows that resurrection power is available to us. There is such a thing as experiencing the power of Jesus’ resurrection^{□1}. (iii) It is a foretaste of what will one day happen to us, if we do the will of God. He who does the will of God will abide for ever. Believers who live for the Lord Jesus Christ will be raised physically with the same kind of glory that He has, and then they will live for ever. They will be ‘raised immortal’^{□2}. If there were no resurrection of the dead we would be still in our sins. But Jesus is alive from the dead, the first instalment of the raising of all of His people from the dead. It is that certainty which is to make us steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

□1 Philippians 3:10

□2 1 Corinthians 15:42

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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