

44-01-06-Christ's Post-Resurrection Agenda
 resurrection, reason, divine fellowship, remembering, kingdom of God
 Acts 1:3
 Jesus always meets our needs for the journey ahead.

INTRODUCTION:

–After His *Resurrection* and before His *Ascension*, Jesus spent extra days ministering to His disciples. We know little about His activities during that time, but Acts 1:3 gives us a synopsis: “*After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.*”
 –Jesus had a *post-Resurrection agenda*. He knew what was coming in the lives of His followers—just as He knows exactly what’s in store in our lives—so, His *agenda* focused on preparing them. **HOM.idea**. This verse shows 3 areas of need Jesus met and still meets today. *First*,

I. Jesus Meets Our Need for Certain Faith—“*many convincing proofs...*”

- A. Envision how the disciples felt, having seen the *bloody, broken body of Jesus* dying on a Cross, and then, suddenly, seeing Him appear to them looking better than ever? *It was unbelievable!*
1. [Most know what it’s like to watch a friend or loved one go through the physical changes that accompany the dying process. Imagine that same loved one stepping into this room right now, looking better than when he or she was well. *What would you be thinking?* A ghost? a dream? a hallucination?]
 2. Doubts arise, when the *supernatural* enters our *natural world*. (It fits in *fairy tales* and *fiction*, but not in down-to-earth thinking—**John 20:24-25**. Now Thomas... was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.”)
- B. The Christian faith is not about *putting our brains on hold!*
1. In fact, God urges us to talk with Him intelligently and logically about salvation—**Isa 1:18**, “Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”
 2. God gave us rational minds in a natural world and they logically question *the unnatural*. (This allows Him to *work with us to meet our need for certainty in faith*—“*After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive.*”)

3. Jesus has “*convincing*” evidence for logical doubts— **John 20:26-27**, A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. **Stop doubting and believe.**” (God tolerates our human doubt, until He meets it with rational proof; then His evidence demands the verdict of faith.)
4. But Thomas wasn’t the only doubter, and he still isn’t— **Mat 28:16-17**, Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but **some doubted**. (The need of “*convincing proofs*” for certainty of faith hasn’t gone away, and God is still at work to meet that need.)

TRANS: Jesus supernaturally proved His identity before the Cross, but afterwards, He continued doing so. In **John 20:30-31**, in the *context* of His post-Resurrection ministry, John wrote: “Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. **Jesus always meets our needs for the journey ahead**. He knows the big role of reason in our world, so He continues to meet our need for a certain faith. But also,

II. Jesus Meets Our Need for Divine Communion— “He appeared...”

- A. *With Jesus out of the picture, what happened?* (He’d predicted it)— **Mark 14:27**, “You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’” (*Christian fellowship thrives* on a tangible sense of Christ’s presence: **without it, flocks scatter, churches fold, Christian movements lose momentum**.)
- B. Jesus knew His disciples needed to spend more time with Him before He went to Heaven, so “*He appeared to them over a period of forty days*.” (*Was it a ‘weaning process’ before the Ascension?* Maybe.... But soon His physical presence would be *unnecessary*.)
- C. *Pentecost was coming!* Jesus knows that we, as believers, cannot function without His presence in our lives, so He provided for it to continue — **John 14:18**, I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. (And He says in the last phrase of His Great Commission in **Mat 28:20b**, “...And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”)

TRANS: Pentecost is God’s ongoing statement that Christians are not

repositories of rules and regulations, but temples for the living Christ. The *Holy Spirit* brings the *life of Christ* into the heart of each individual believer. The *presence of Jesus within*, and *living His life through us* is the ultimate way He meets our needs for the journey ahead. *Finally*,

III. Jesus Meets Our Need to Focus on the Kingdom— “He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.”

- A. Humans are forgetful, even of *very important matters*. (Jesus made it clear, before and after the Cross, that “the kingdom of God” was at the center of His teaching and must always be our guiding focus.)
- B. Why this “Kingdom” emphasis during “a period of forty days” before His ascension to Heaven? [**E. Stanley Jones** in his devotional, *The Word Became Flesh*, says, “The Christian conception of the Incarnation is unique in that the incarnation is not only to be in a person, but in an **order**, the **kingdom of God**. Jesus made Himself and the Kingdom of God synonymous.... One’s relationship to Him determined one’s relationship to the Kingdom. Not only was absolute love embodied in Him, but absolute authority. God was not only redeeming in Jesus, He was ruling in Jesus. The Kingdom is Jesus and Jesus is the Kingdom. The Kingdom is the Christlike spirit universalized.”]
- C. If we allow our own individual preoccupations to *distract us* from the *larger picture of God’s rule*, we will neglect a Kingdom focus.
1. If this happens, we need to *re-focus* (as E. Stanley Jones says) *on Christ, our indwelling King, Whose resurrected life manifests “the kingdom of God”* — **Mat 28:18**, Then Jesus came to them and said, “**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...**”
 2. *In Christ, we have not just a Savior but the Lord of creation, the King of the universe, Whom we are called to obey*, as *He obeyed the Father*. (The *salvation* Jesus offers is **not a special exemption** or a ‘*dream*’ *vacation*; it’s an enlistment in divine service—a call to get to busy in the business of Kingdom living!)

CONCLUSION:

—**Jesus knew** what was in store for the disciples. He *knows* what’s in store for us, and **He always meets our needs for the journey ahead**. He *reassures us in our faith* — He *makes His presence known to us* (as individuals and as groups of believers) — and He *reminds us that He sits on the Kingdom throne of the universe*. This *post-Resurrection agenda* encouraged His early disciples. But it was also meant to be a present encouragement for us, to help us through the rest of our journeys.