

# CAPITOL STUDIES

APRIL 1, 2026 • WEEK 12



## LUKE FOR LEGISLATORS SECOND SESSION

### *Contents*

Introduction	2
Tomb is Empty	2
Truth Encountered	3
Rs. Gives Affirmation	5
Rs. Gets Attacked	6
Conclusion	6
About Capitol Studies	7



### *Theme Verse*

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man has come to **seek** and to **save** that which was **lost**.



## Resurrection Appearances



**F**ROM MY FRIEND and fellow chaplain Michael Sprague of Louisiana: “This is PASSION WEEK, or as I like to say, THE WEEK THAT CHANGED THE WORLD!!!!”

“In the first century all the smart money was bet on Rome. Most thought the followers of Jesus would soon be dead and gone. 2,000 years have come and gone. Today we name our kids James, John, Peter and Mary and our dogs Caesar and Nero. The Kingdom of God is unstoppable, and the Roman Empire is only ancient ruins.

“William Penn said, ‘No thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.’ Because Jesus wore the cross of death, you and I, in Christ, will wear the ‘crown of life.’ There is a lot to be thankful for this Passion Week. He is Risen!”

*Arin Hess*

Pastor Arin Hess  
Chaplain, Capitol Studies



## INTRODUCTION

Luke, our historian, has recorded the truth that we might believe. “Christianity is in its very essence a resurrection religion. The concept of resurrection lies at its heart. If you remove it, Christianity is destroyed.”<sup>1</sup>

*Luke 23:50-54*

*And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man <sup>51</sup>(he had not consented to their plan and action), a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God; <sup>52</sup>this man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. <sup>53</sup>And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain. <sup>54</sup>It was the preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.<sup>2</sup>*

### I. THE TOMB IS EMPTY

#### A. The Women at the Tomb

*Luke 23:55-24:1*

*Now the women who had come with Him out of Galilee followed, and saw the tomb and how His body was laid. <sup>56</sup>Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment. <sup>1</sup>But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.*

Luke gave special recognition to the women who followed Jesus. Not only did they follow Jesus while He traveled the countryside ministering to the needy in body and soul, they were also with Him while He hung on the cross, taunted and shamed by the multitude. They followed His broken body to the tomb to be sure of its placement. Where were the men? We don't know. We do know that all the disciples, except John and Peter, fled after Jesus was arrested. Were they in hiding that Sunday morning?

After the ladies saw where the body had been laid, they went home to purchase and prepare spices to aid in its preservation. The next day was the Sabbath. It was “unlawful” for them to do any “work” on the Sabbath, so they came as early as they could the next day. They had seen the tomb where the body had been laid and knew a large stone (perhaps as heavy as one ton) had been rolled in front of the door. The problem they thought would be finding someone to move the stone for them (Mark 16:3). However, that problem was already solved when they arrived.

#### B. The “Men” at the Tomb

*Luke 24:2-7*

*And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup>but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup>While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; <sup>5</sup>and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living*



*One among the dead? <sup>6</sup>He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup>saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.”*

The stone had been rolled away, but where was Jesus’ body? Suddenly two men (angels) appeared with garments that flashed like lightning. The petrified ladies fell to the ground in fear as they tried to understand what the men were asking. “Why are you looking for someone who is alive in the place of the dead?” “Surely the thing about the people of our planet that must perplex the angels more than anything else is their chronic unbelief. How could anyone forget such truths as He had taught His own?”<sup>3</sup>

## II. THE TRUTH IS ENCOUNTERED

### A. Truth Received

*Luke 24:8-9*

*And they remembered His words, <sup>9</sup>and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.*

Finally, the truth began to take hold. That was why the tomb was empty! Jesus said He was going to be crucified, but He would rise again on the third day. It was the third day! The women had to tell Jesus’ followers. Comparing the Gospel accounts of the resurrection, it seems the women split up to spread the word faster.

### B. Truth Rejected

*Luke 24:10-11*

*Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles. <sup>11</sup>But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.*

Even though the women reminded them of Jesus’ words, and even though the women had actually seen the empty tomb, and even though they had heard the words of the angel saying, “He is not here for He is risen as He said,” the apostles were perhaps more unbelieving than the women initially were. “The Greek word translated ‘nonsense’ was a medical term describing the feverish ramblings of a delirious patient. The disciples dismissed the women’s story as insane babbling prompted by hysterical wishful thinking.”<sup>4</sup>

### C. Truth Pursued

*Luke 24:12*

*But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings only; and he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened.*

There was one disciple who was persuaded to at least check out the story. Peter went to the tomb and saw empty grave clothes. The Lord’s body





had risen through them, so they were still in the shape of His body. Peter marveled, or wondered, at that. But all he knew was that the body was gone. He still wasn't convinced that what the women said was true.

*Luke 24:13-16*

*And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place. <sup>15</sup>While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and began traveling with them. <sup>16</sup>But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.*

Throughout that first day of the week, Jesus appeared to several individuals or groups. One group of two was deep in discussion about the empty tomb seen by the women and some of the other brethren when Jesus walked up to them. They did not recognize Him, perhaps because His body was different.

*Luke 24:17-24*

*And He said to them, "What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?" And they stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup>One of them named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened there in these days?" <sup>19</sup>And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, <sup>20</sup>and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. <sup>21</sup>But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. <sup>22</sup>But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, <sup>23</sup>and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. <sup>24</sup>Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see."*

These men, like Peter, wondered, but found it difficult to truly believe Jesus was alive.

#### D. Truth Perceived

*Luke 24:25-35*

*And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup>Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" <sup>27</sup>Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. <sup>28</sup>And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther. <sup>29</sup>But they urged Him saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup>When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from*



*their sight.* <sup>32</sup>They said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?” <sup>33</sup>And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, <sup>34</sup>saying, “The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon.” <sup>35</sup>They began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.

It wasn't until these two actually “saw” Jesus that they truly believed. They then excitedly shared that they had seen Jesus with others, but Mark says, “They went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either” (Mark 16:13). Even those who had actually seen Jesus were passed off as having hallucinated.

“Such is the entrenched unbelief of the human heart. If such is the case with ‘believers,’ those who in some measure know and love the Lord, how much more so, indeed, it must be with the ungodly. Nothing is more remarkable in this narrative than the utter inability of the believers to convince even other believers by their own personal testimony.”<sup>5</sup>

How is your personal testimony? Do you really believe what you say? Does it show? “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” (Mark 16:14).

You can understand why Jesus later reproached His disciples for their unbelief. But are we any different? Do we truly believe what God says about eternal life? About heaven? About sin? About salvation? About Jesus’ imminent return? About God’s love and provision?

### III. THE RESURRECTION GIVES AFFIRMATION

Jesus is the Son of God as He said (Romans 1:4).

His sacrifice for sin was accepted and the work of salvation is complete (Romans 4:24-25).

Those who believe in Jesus can “walk in newness of life” because He is alive, and His children can do all things through His strength (Romans 6:4; Galatians 2:20).

Jesus is the Judge Who will one day come and judge the whole world (Acts 17:30-31).

Death is swallowed up in victory (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

Jesus’ children will receive a new body and live forever with Him in Heaven (1 Corinthians 15:50-54; John 11:25).

**It is no surprise, then, that Satan has attacked the truth of the Resurrection.**





## IV. THE RESURRECTION GETS ATTACKED

Over the years, several theories have been proposed that attempt to explain how certain elements of these accounts could have given rise to the claim that Jesus was resurrected while still trying to evade the conclusion that the resurrection really did happen. However, there are several problems with these theories.

### A. The Disciples Came and Stole Christ's Body

Matthew reports that this theory was even circulating within days of Jesus' resurrection due to the involvement of the chief priests (Matthew 28:11-15).

Problem #1: The tomb was well-guarded and sealed.

Problem #2: The disciples did not believe He would be resurrected.

Problem #3: Would the disciples have been willing to die for something they knew for sure did not happen?

### B. Jesus Didn't Really Die, But only Swooned, and Revived When Placed in the Cool Tomb

Problem #1: Pilate checked with the centurion to be sure Jesus was dead (Mark 15:44). The centurion and those who broke the legs of the two thieves would have had previous knowledge as to how to identify death (John 19:31-34). The Romans knew how to crucify someone.

Problem #2: Roman crucifixion was brutal and excruciating. On top of that, Jesus was beaten and scourged prior to His death. He would not have been in a good physical condition to appear alive as if He'd been gloriously raised from the dead.

Problem #3: A cool tomb still would not be able to transform Jesus' body so that He could appear, disappear, and walk through closed doors.

### C. The Women Who Claimed to See Jesus Were Hallucinating

Problem #1: The women expected to find Jesus dead. They had forgotten the resurrection promises. To deny the empty tomb would have been to deny evidence.

Problem #2: Even some secular historians will admit that many people seem to have thought they saw Jesus alive after His resurrection, perhaps up to 500 people (as Paul mentions in 1 Cor. 15:6).

Problem #3: Would that many people hallucinate about the same thing at the same time?

## CONCLUSION

"The message of the Gospel rests on the death of Jesus Christ *and His resurrection* (1 Cor. 15:1-8). The Apostles were sent out as witnesses of His resurrection (Acts 1:22), and the emphasis in the Book of Acts is on

the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This explains why Luke climaxed his book with a report of some of the appearances of Jesus after He had been raised from the dead. The earthquake and the angel (Matthew 28:2–4) opened the tomb, not to let Jesus out but to let the witnesses in. ‘Come and see, go and tell!’ is the Easter mandate for the church today.”<sup>6</sup>

When the believers discovered that Jesus was alive, it changed their lives. They were excited to share the good news of His death, burial, and resurrection and were willing to die for it. Are we that excited? “If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied” (1 Cor. 15:19, ESV).



Chaplain Arin Hess

## FOOTNOTES

1. John Stott, quoted in Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Volume 1, Victor Books, 1996.
2. All Scripture quotations, unless noted, are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, 1995 Update.
3. John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Luke: An Expository Commentary*, Kregel Publications, 2009.
4. Charles Swindoll, *Insights on Luke*, Zondervan, 2012.
5. John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of Luke*.
6. Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Volume 1, Victor Books, 1996, pg. 277–278.



## WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Meeting during the  
109<sup>th</sup> Legislature’s  
Second Session

### SENATORS

6:45 – 7:45 A.M.  
Wednesdays  
Capitol Office #1004

### STAFF

12:00 – 1:00 P.M.  
Wednesdays  
NE State Office Building  
Morrill Room



*Serving Civil Servants  
With Scripture*

Capitol Studies™ exists to serve kings for the King of kings until His glorious return. We are privileged to minister to Civil Servants at all levels of government for their good and God’s glory. Capitol Studies is led by Pastor Arin Hess, who has over 40 years of ministry experience in the State of Nebraska and Washington, D.C.

