

Wednesdays in the Word
Digging Deeper
April 15, 2020
Luke 24:1-12
“Timing and Emotion”

In what could arguably be the most historically important week in the existence of our planet, from Palm Sunday through the Crucifixion, Jesus' ministry had reached its culmination. He had fulfilled many prophecies. In fact more in this week and more than on any one day as could be found anywhere else in the Bible. He has made enemies and friends. Among his enemies the time had come to get rid of him. Among his friends they had hoped time would never stop because everything Jesus was doing was the answer to all their prayers, hopes and dreams. As far as the disciples were concerned the rise to fame and the sudden death of their Leader was perhaps the worst timing for an event they had ever witnessed. The Sabbath day after his death must have been the deepest, saddest and most painful day ever for them. All their joy turned to sorrow. Their hope for a defeated Rome and a restored Nation of Israel had been dashed to despair. The Messianic Kingdom with its time of peace and healing now seemed impossible. The timing, they thought, was disastrous. In only three years His rise to fame and the evidence of His Authority was undeniable. Now it was over. In our own lives we know of loved ones whose lives came to an end much too quickly and certainly at the worst possible time. In our grief and loss we can identify with the disciples. Their transition to Apostleship was thrust upon them and they would have to muster the strength to continue. Some even planned to return in hopelessness to their old lives. They had no idea what was about to happen to them on the following day. Timing and emotion seem so meaningless sometimes. Why this? Why now? As Resurrection Day greeted us this year it seemed so very different. We couldn't meet as a church. Most could not meet with our families. Some met in cars and driveways, keeping "social distance". No doubt a new phrase we are sick of. Our hopes may have been that Easter might be a sign of the new life of freedom from our global virus. Somehow though, this year's celebration of New Life was perfectly timed. All the death around us reminds us of our temporary existence (James 4:14) and the blessing and necessity of our resurrection. (Romans 8:11) Some of us are truly learning of the sanctity of life. Every day is precious. Every moment must be redeemed. Every relationship shines high as a thing to be restored. Let's look into our text.

In Luke 24:1 we see these faithful women bringing the burial spices to anoint Jesus body. When were they prepared? Could they have gone home after the awful crucifixion of their Lord on Friday afternoon to put all this together? Have you had to make death arrangements when there was no time to do so? Sunset on Friday evening began the Sabbath when no work could be done. Sunday morning may have been a frenzied rush to get things ready "very early in the morning". The Jews were sticklers for detail so no quick or abbreviated preparation would suffice. Read verses 2 and 3. We have all visited a grave of someone we love. Imagine for a moment the grave being open and nobody within! What would you think? Would you be perplexed? Verse 4 uses this word. The Greek word Diaporeo speaks of being thoroughly at a loss mentally. Think again about standing at the empty grave of a loved one you buried two

days ago! You might scream or faint or go into shock. Here they stood gasping at the emotion they could not express and perhaps remembering the day Jesus rose Lazarus from his grave. John 11:1-45. Read it. Sense the emotion and timing in this historical report. Considering again if this were you at Jesus' empty tomb, can you imagine turning to see angelic beings appearing behind you? Shock turns to fear. Face to the earth fear. Been there? God can bring you there and back. This word 'afraid' in verse 5 is *Emphobos*. It means to be fixed in the position of terror. If you had a scary mom or dad you might remember them asking and answering their own question as these two men do. "Why do you seek the 'zao' among the 'nekros'? Why would a living man be found in the grave of a dead man? The answer in verses 6 and 7 may have been in a scolding tone but we must consider the wonder and the love these angels felt for the humans who did not understand the works of God. See Matthew 16:21, Mark 8:31. Incidentally, the 3 day timing of death and new life is a recurring theme in much of God's Word. 3 is the number of God. See Matthew 12:40, Genesis 22:1-13. Consider the pain endured by Abraham and Sarah during these three days. The word 'remember' in verses 6 and 8 of Luke 24 speaks of a fixture in the mind. The disciples knew what Jesus said but shock and grief tested that fixture. Verses 9-11 of our text notes the value of the dear women who publicly addressed the needs of Jesus after His death. They boldly assisted Him in life as well even when the others hid out somewhere in the city. A sad tone rises up in verse 11 when the words of these ladies are rejected by the men to whom Jesus entrusted the message of the Kingdom. The Gospel, here fulfilled, was but an idle tale or an 'incredible story' to the very men who would one day give their lives in martyrdom to that same gospel. To believe not is literally 'Apisteo' in the Greek and means to betray a trust or be unfaithful. Before condemning this error, consider asking yourself, "have I ever betrayed the trust of the Lord or been unfaithful to Him in any way?" Let's at least give credit to Peter in verse 12 and John in John 20:3 for following up on the story. Being skeptical towards God is ok if it causes you to investigate. If your unbelieving loved ones dare to investigate, God will shew Himself to them. What emotion meets Peter here? Wonder. *Thaumazo* is the Greek, meaning to marvel in admiration. Can you see his wide open wonder develop into the new birth of Joy? Picture the changes in the look on Peter's face as this happened. Recall the wonder and joy of your own salvation as God, once in a while, shows you His Kingdom and His Power! Confer Psalm 51-12. And doesn't He speak life to you at just the right time? Hebrews 4:16. Jesus loves you now! He comforts and cares for you now! 1 Peter 5:7. Allow for God's perfect timing and the deep emotions He causes in you. These are from your Heavenly Father!