

# Too Good to Be True

Luke 24:36—49 (v. 41, 45)

## Introduction

*They still disbelieved for joy and were marveling (Luke 24:41).* Two weeks ago, on Easter Sunday morning, we examined Mark's ending of his account of the Resurrection of Jesus: *And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid (Mark 16:8).* The reaction of the disciples here is very similar to that of the women in **Mark 16**. They were so overwhelmed that they didn't believe it was really the risen Jesus they saw. It was **TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE**.

## Context

To put things into context, the two who had seen Jesus on the road to Emmaus had just told the rest of the disciples that they had seen the Lord (see **Luke 24:13—35**). This is what they were talking about when Jesus appeared (v. 36). Also, the women at the tomb saw an angel. Here, the disciples have now seen the risen Jesus and still don't believe.

## Worse than Thomas?

We make a big deal about "Doubting" Thomas, who said, *"Unless I ... place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe" (John 20:25)*. While no one here made such a statement, look at their reactions. When Thomas saw Jesus who invited him to touch Him, he said, *"My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)* without having to touch Him. When Jesus invited the disciples to touch Him, *they still did not believe (Luke 24:41)*.

## Proving His Physicality

So, to prove He was physically there, *He asked for some broiled fish and ate it before them (v. 42)*. A spirit can't eat solid food.

## The Key – "He Opened Their Minds"

Then Jesus removed all barriers to belief, *He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (v. 45)*. This is not just explaining Scripture. Earlier, when Jesus met the two on the road to Emmaus, *He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself (Luke 24:27)*. But they still didn't recognize Jesus until He broke the bread, *and their eyes were opened (v. 31)*. When Jesus opened the disciples' minds, He got rid of everything that stood in the way of their believing in Him. In opening their minds, He emptied out the garbage and filled them with His Word.

## Unbelief Today

Today, people still have garbage in their minds that keep them from believing in the risen Christ. There are people who call themselves Christians for whom the resurrection is just too good to be true. Things like that don't fit in with their worldview. Things like that must be "spiritualized" because they fly in the face of common knowledge. They aren't logical or sensible enough. But what happens without the bodily resurrection of Christ?

## Without a Risen Christ

(Read **1 Corinthians 15:12—17**). Even though the physical, bodily resurrection of Christ doesn't make sense, without a risen Christ, there is no salvation, no life, no resurrection of the dead, no Gospel. In short, without a risen Christ, there is nothing. All humanity is still lost in its sin.

## The Answer

How can people today believe in a risen Christ? According to the **Formula of Concord**: *Reason and free will are able to live an outwardly decent life to a certain extent. But only the Holy Spirit causes a person to be born anew (John 3:5) and to have inwardly another heart, mind, and natural desire. He opens the mind and heart to understand the Scriptures and to listen to the Word (Formula of Concord, SD, Art. II Free Will ¶26)*. Only the Holy Spirit can help people believe something that seems too good to be true, like Jesus rising from the dead. Only the Holy Spirit gives us this life.

## Word & Sacrament

The Holy Spirit gives us this knowledge and acceptance of and belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ through the Word of God. And when the Word is added to the elements, He gives us this faith through the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Receive faith in the bodily resurrection of Jesus, even though it seems **TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE** and you will see that:

Christ is Risen!

**He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

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*And the peace of God,  
Which surpasses all understanding,  
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

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