



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Beyond the Grave

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THEME Focus on the Spiritual

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

Luke 24: Four Principles for Spiritual Growth

Luke 24 is about the disciples' first experiences of Christ after Jesus' resurrection. The chapter focuses on two incidents which showed the disciples' lack of faith and understanding of Christ. However, they grew in their faith when Jesus opened their eyes, hearts and minds. The first is about two disciples meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus. They did not realize that it was Jesus walking and talking with them, until He blessed and broke the bread. In the second incident, the two disciples had gone back to Jerusalem to tell the eleven that Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus then appeared to them and opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. Then he showed them physically that He had indeed resurrected. From these two stories, we can learn four principles to use to grow in our faith – emphasis on Scripture, experiences with the Saviour, being eyewitnesses for the Saviour and empowerment from the Spirit.

The Four Principles

1. Emphasis on Scripture

During the two incidents, Jesus referred back to the Scriptures while He was talking to the disciples (v25-27, 44-45). Through these, He showed the importance of knowing and understanding the Word in order to grow in our faith. Engaging with the Word is vital because it teaches us who God really is. The God in our mind must be the same God of the Bible or we will be worshipping a false god. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that we must not gravitate towards certain scriptures; it is important to engage with *all* of Scripture so that we know God in His entirety. It must also be remembered that it is the Scripture, not experiences, which should inform our mind of who God is. We will grow in our faith when we not only understand the Word but live it out as well.

2. Experiences with the Saviour

We need to experience Jesus in order to grow in our faith. There are three things that need to be “opened” – our eyes, heart, and mind. When our eyes are opened, we will have revelation. Testimonies from others can encourage us but it cannot replace personal revelation as we are called into a personal relationship with God. When our hearts are opened, we will be passionate for God. When our minds are opened, we will have illumination, i.e. understanding of the Word. How then can we have opened eyes, an opened heart, and an opened mind? We simply have to ask God. We have to invite Him to do so as God will never force the truth on us. Experiencing God is also multisensory. To experience God, we need to understand our learning style i.e. auditory, visual, or kinaesthetic. Lastly, emotions are a part of experiencing God, so we should not fear being

emotional before Him. After all, God is the one who gave us the ability to feel.

3. Eyewitnesses for the Saviour

From reading the Word and experiencing God, we must move on to being a witness for God as an expression of our faith. We *have* to share the Gospel. This checks the foundation of our faith. If we do not want to share it, there must be something missing in our spiritual lives. Beyond living out our lives in Christ-likeness, we should reach out to others actively, such as praying for open doors, fellowshiping, blessing, and inviting others to events.

4. Empowerment from the Spirit

Being filled with the Spirit is important in the growth of our faith because we will be empowered for living. When we are filled with the Spirit, we will be able to believe that supernatural things can happen and live our lives out accordingly. The empowerment of the Spirit has led to the spread of the gospel, such that we are now living in the times where the gospel has spread to almost all the nations before the Second Coming, just as prophesized in the Bible.

CONCLUSION

Luke 24 highlights four principles that can help in our spiritual growth. Firstly, we must engage with the Word because it teaches us who God really is. Furthermore, we need to know and understand all Scripture so that we can know and fully understand who God is. We will grow in our faith when we not only understand the Scripture but live it out as well. Secondly, we must have a personal experience with God. Ask God to open our eyes, hearts, and minds so that we will have revelation, passion, and illumination. Knowing our learning styles will help us to learn and understand the Word. Do not worry about being emotional before God; experiencing God involves our feelings. Thirdly, we must be eyewitnesses for Christ. We have to share the Gospel with others. Lastly, we must be empowered by the Spirit. When we are empowered by the Spirit, we will be able to believe that supernatural things can happen and live our lives out for such things to happen.

QUESTIONS

Think about a past situation and a recent one in which faith was required. How has your faith grown since then? How would you rate your current faith level?

Luke 24 highlights four principles that help us to grow in our faith. What are these four principles and how do they help in our spiritual growth?

Knowing your current faith level and the four principles for spiritual growth, what are you strongest in and what are you weakest in? What active steps can you take to nurture your spiritual growth?