

# Open Our Understanding

by Anton Bosch

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**Scripture:** Luke 24:36, Luke 24:39, Luke 24:41, Luke 24:44, James 1:5, Hebrews 13:5

**Topics:** "Resurrection", "Understanding Scripture"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Luke chapter 24, and we're in our second last study on the Gospel of Luke. Luke chapter 24, and we'll read from verse 36 through the end of the chapter. So Luke chapter 24, reading from 36 through the end of the chapter.

Now as they said these things, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and said to them, peace to you. But they were terrified and frightened and supposed they'd seen a spirit. And he said to them, why are you troubled and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself.

Handle me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have. When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. But while they still did not believe for joy and marveled, he said to them, have you any food here? So they gave him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, these are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me. And he opened their understanding that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then he said to them,

thus it is written and thus it was necessary for this Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day.

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all nations beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold I send the promise of my father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as Bethany and he lifted up his hands and he blessed them. Now it came to pass while he blessed them that he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

Amen. So verse 36 then begins with them in the upper room. So remember that in the previous passage two of them had been on the road to Emmaus and Jesus had met with them on that road.

They didn't understand who he was. They came, he opens the Scriptures to them. They arrive at the place where they were going to be.

He said he was going to move on and they persuaded him to stay. And they had supper or dinner and as they broke the bread he opened their eyes. They understood who he was.

And the two then immediately go back to Jerusalem, obviously late in the day already, but two of them go back to Jerusalem and they meet with the other disciples in the upper room, we presume. There's probably more than just the eleven. Remember Judas is gone.

It's only the eleven, probably a hundred and twenty in the upper room at that time. And obviously they're confused, they're frustrated, they don't know what's going on. Jesus had seemed to have all the promise of being the Messiah and now he had died.

Some of them had been to the tomb that morning. The angels had appeared. This is still on this on the Sunday, this is the first day of the week.

Some of them, the angels had appeared to some of them and told them about the resurrection and so, but they still don't quite believe. So as they talk about these things and as the two who were on the road to Emmaus had now joined the folk in the upper room and began to tell them what was happening, it says that as they said these things, as they were telling them what had happened on their way to Emmaus, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and said to them, peace to you. It's a wonderful that the Lord Jesus presences himself with them in the midst of their confusion and, you know, that's the the wonderful grace of God that at the times when we are confused, at the times when we don't understand what's going on, he is there.

He promises in the book of Hebrews that I will never leave you nor forsake you. And so even in the darkest hour, and in fact it wasn't the darkest hour, I think that this is one of the points of the passage, is that as far as the disciples were concerned, this is the pits, this is the darkest time in all of their lifetime, because Jesus, who was the light, has been snuffed out, and there seems to be no hope. And yet from God's perspective, there is no problem at all.

In fact, there's a glorious victory because Jesus had risen from the dead. The problem is that they could not see what God was seeing. They couldn't see the reality.

All they could see was their problem and their short-sighted view. And that's of course no indictment against them, because we're all exactly the same. We sometimes get so caught up in the details of our problems, and of the negativity, and everything that's going on around us, and everything that's happening in our lives.

We look at all of these things, and it just seems dark, and there seems to be no hope. And yet from God's perspective, there is hope. From God's perspective, there's a totally different picture.

And so we need to put ourselves in their place, as they sit there, and they say, well, you know, he's dead. There's nothing going on. Yeah, there's these reports, but we don't really believe these reports, and that was the problem.

They didn't really believe. And yet at the same time, this was the most glorious time in the history of the Church, the most wonderful day in all of eternity, the day that Jesus rose from the dead. And so God, even in our despair, meets with us, and Jesus is there.

And again, they don't really recognize him. We'll come back to that in the next few verses. But he stands in the midst of them.

He stands amongst them. Notice, it says, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them. So Luke doesn't go into the details.

John tells us that the doors were closed, because of fear of the Jews. So they were not only in despair, because Jesus had died, but they were also afraid, because Jesus had been killed, and they felt that maybe they were next, and that the Romans or the Jews would come after them, after they had killed the Lord Jesus. And so they barred the doors, and the doors were closed, and Jesus appears.

In spite of the closed doors, Jesus just appears there. And notice, it says in Luke, it doesn't say that he came through the door, or through the wall, it just says, he stood in the midst. So the next thing they saw is, there's Jesus standing in the middle.

And sometimes we say, well, you know, I want to see something beginning to happen. And yet, Jesus is there. And his word to them is, peace to you.

This was the message that heralded his arrival in chapter 2 of the Gospel of Luke, when we were there many years ago now, three or four years now, 2018, so it must be four years. But in the gospel, in chapter 2, the angels declared peace on earth. And so at his birth, he declares, the angels declare peace.

Here, in his resurrection again, he declares peace. Now, I want us to understand that the peace is not the absence of trouble. These guys were in for a lot of trouble.

All of them, except for John, would be martyred for the faith. They would be imprisoned. They would be beaten.

All sorts of things would happen to them. But in the midst of that, Jesus brings peace. In the midst of the frustration, in the midst of the confusion, in the midst of everything seeming to go wrong, he is able to bring peace.

And Paul speaks about that peace as that peace which transcends human understanding. The fact that a true Christian can have peace in the midst of bereavement, that a true Christian can have peace in the

midst of trouble, and of financial hardship, and of physical challenges, and whatever else goes around, we're able to have peace with God because of the Lord Jesus being amongst us, or being in us. Without him, there is no peace.

And that's, of course, the problem, is that the world is chasing after peace. And unfortunately, some Christians are chasing after peace by chasing after entertainment, are chasing after all kinds of things out there in the world, hoping to somehow get peace. But only Jesus is able to bring peace.

He is the Prince of Peace. And when he is in the midst, remember when he was in the boat, the boat couldn't sink, and even though they were in the storm, Jesus is able to calm the storm. We need to have Jesus in the boat.

We need to have Jesus in the church. We need to have Jesus in our hearts and in our lives, because in that, he is able to bring peace. But they were terrified, and frightened, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

The King James says a ghost. So they now had several witnesses. Several people had testified that Jesus was risen.

They had heard from the woman who had been to the grave, and had seen the grave clothes and evidence of the resurrection. They had heard from Peter, and Peter is one of them. They're all part of this group, who had gone in and seen, and somehow had some understanding, even though he'd not fully believed, had some understanding of what was going on.

The Lord Jesus had appeared to Mary, and so there were witnesses, and yet they still did not believe. They still did not accept the reality. And I know that sometimes there are truths in God's Word that are hard for us to come to grips with.

The penny doesn't quite drop. And I'm going to come back, because I think this is an important part of this whole passage. While this passage deals with the resurrection, and shows us proof and evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead, I believe that the whole of the chapter deals with the problem of our unbelief, and the problem of our not accepting the Word of God.

And we'll see that as we move along. But they were terrified, and they were frightened. Some commentators say that this was not in a negative sense, in the sense that they wanted to run away.

But at the same time, you know, I guess you can imagine what would happen if we had closed the doors, and locked the gates, and everything, and suddenly here's somebody standing in the middle, just appearing, who hadn't been there before. What's going on? Particularly if it was someone that we know was dead, and that we had maybe been to the funeral of, and yet there he is. And so they thought, well, this is a ghost, this is an apparition.

Now, what happens now is absolutely vital for our faith in the resurrection. Because here's the problem, is that the question is, how will we be resurrected? Because remember, the whole point is that because he was raised, we have confidence that we will be raised. Because God proves the resurrection in Jesus, therefore we can have faith that there is a resurrection for those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, how will we be resurrected? This is the question. And remember that Paul deals with us in 1 Corinthians 15 in great detail, because there's, you know, how will we be? Will we, and these are

questions people ask, you know, will we, if we had certain impediments, if we had, you know, an amputated arm, or we were born blind, or you know, how will we be in the resurrection? How old will we be in the resurrection? And Paul says, well, we don't quite understand all of these things. There are certain things that we know for sure, and there are certain things that we can see in Jesus' resurrection that we can learn from.

But at the same time, there are certain things that we need to be careful of, and I'll touch on that in a few moments. And so, he said then to them, why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Now, remember I've said that in these three accounts of Luke, those who went to the grave, those on the road to Emmaus, and now those in the upper room, that there are certain similarities, there's a pattern between each of those three accounts. The first is that they all begin with unbelief.

The next is that there is a rebuke, in the first case by the angels, in the second by Jesus, and here in the third, again by Jesus. This is the rebuke. Why are you troubled, and why do your doubts arise in your hearts? Now, he's really saying, don't you get it? How many times have I told you that I must be raised, that I must be crucified, and I must be raised? Have you not read the Scriptures? And remember that the Scriptures, and he's going to talk about the Scriptures in a moment, all of the Scriptures in the Old Testament, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, all of them speak about Jesus in his death and in his resurrection.

Have you not believed the Scriptures? Why are you troubled? Why are you worried? And folk, of course, we're worried, I suppose the answer is because we're human. I think that the Lord can ask us the same question when we are troubled about all sorts of things, when we worry about all sorts of things. Why do you worry? Well, the real reason is because we're human, but the reality is because we don't believe the Scriptures.

Had we believed, if we believe the Scriptures, we won't be worried about things we ought not to worry about. Remember, Jesus says, why do you worry about what you're going to eat tomorrow? Don't you have enough trouble to deal with today, and yet you want to bring tomorrow's troubles into today? Don't you understand, Jesus says, that if the Father cares for the sparrows of the field, for the grass that today is, and tomorrow is no more, and we know about that here in California, when the winter comes, it's green for a few weeks, and then suddenly it's all gone, and yet the Father cares for the grass and for the flowers. Are you not worth more, Jesus says, than many sparrows? And so, why do we worry? We worry because we don't believe.

We hide behind our humanness. We say, well, you know, I'm just human. In Africa, when you ask people, well, why did you mess up? Their answer is, if I translate it, because I am a person.

I'm a people. I'm human. That's why I messed up.

Well, I guess that's part of the answer, but it doesn't really deal with the real issues. And whenever we doubt, whenever we're troubled, whenever we're stressed, we can't just hide behind the fact that we're human. Oh Lord, well, you know, I'm just who I am.

No, he says, I've given you the scriptures, and I've given you many other things that you can build your faith upon. You need to learn to trust me. And so, it's not a harsh rebuke, but it's a mild rebuke.

Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Now, I think this is an important statement, because this gives us an idea as to really what's going on, because there seems to be a mixture of faith and doubt in these guys. Peter had seen something, and he had believed something. The woman had somehow come to some kind of understanding, but at the same time, there's doubt.

And this is what he is saying. Why do doubts arise in your hearts? He's not saying, why are you unbelieving? But why is there a struggle? Why is there faith, and then there's no faith? Why is there doubt, and there's believing at the same time? And I think that that's where most of us find ourselves. We don't necessarily find ourselves, certainly, hopefully, being in church this morning, we are not those who are total unbelievers.

But there's a mixture of faith and of doubt, of trusting and not trusting. And even that, we say, well, you know, Lord, remember the disciples, Lord, help our little faith. Lord, you know I just have a little bit of faith.

No, that's not the answer. He doesn't want us just to have a little faith. He wants us to fully trust him in every situation, in every condition.

And so, why do doubts arise? Why do you allow doubt to rise in your heart? Because, you know, it's like the coldness that seems to, if you're in a cold place, that seems to get into your feet and then it starts just enveloping you. And doubt is the same thing. It just starts at the bottom of our heart, just there somewhere.

And it begins to become, it begins to rise, and it becomes more and more and more in our thoughts. You know, just a niggling worry about something. But it soon becomes bigger and bigger and bigger, and it's rising and rising and rising.

And fear is reducing, sorry, faith is reducing as doubt increases. No, we need not have, we should not have doubt rising. We must have faith rising, and doubt receding, doubt going away.

Why do doubts arise in your heart? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have. So, he now gives them three evidences, three proofs, that he is truly resurrected.

The first is he says, look, behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Now, again, when we say we can learn certain things about Jesus concerning the resurrection, and there are other things we can't learn, clearly Jesus in his resurrected form still has the marks in his hands and in his feet. I remember one of the other gospel writers speaks about the fact that Thomas wasn't there when Jesus first appeared on this occasion.

Thomas then joins them the next week, and Jesus says come and put your hand in my side. So, the five marks, the two in his hands, two in his feet and the side, are still there in his resurrection. Does he, did he still have the other wounds? Remember that he was, his face was pulled apart.

The scripture says his face was marred more than any man. I don't believe that that was there. His back, the scripture says, was as a plowed field.

I believe that that wasn't there. But the marks which were evidence of his, the price he had paid for our salvation, were still there. So, when we are resurrected, and we all have scars, I have scars all over my hands from working with my hands, and I have other scars.

We all have marks of this life. Will those marks still be there? No, I don't believe they'll be there. Jesus' marks are different, because they have to do with our salvation, with our atonement.

And so, if you lost an arm in an accident or something like that, it doesn't mean that you will be that way in the resurrection. I believe that we will be perfect in the resurrection physically. But Jesus still has those marks.

Now, there are other teachers who say, well, those marks, Jesus no longer has those marks in his glorified body. Well, here he is glorified already, and he has the marks. And remember that the prophet says that at the end of time, Israel will look upon him whom they have pierced, and they will weep as for an only son.

And so, Israel will come to faith at that time, the remnant of Israel that's still left after the tribulation. But why does it say they will look upon him whom they have pierced? Because they will see the marks, and they will recognize that they have pierced, they have marked their Messiah. And so, Jesus points to the marks in his hands and in his feet, and he says, look, look.

Now, folks, here is the one of the steps of faith, is we need to look. The problem is, where do we look? We look at the trouble, we don't look at Jesus. Remember when the disciples were in the storm, in the boat, Jesus was there.

He was the answer, but they're not looking to Jesus, they're looking out at the winds and the waves. We need to be looking in the right place. We need to be looking at the right things.

The world is doing everything to destroy our faith, to destroy our confidence in the Scriptures, to destroy our faith in the resurrection, and in the Lord Jesus, and in his atoning work. The world is doing whatever it can to attack our faith in creation and in the Scriptures. But where are we looking? We need to be looking at the evidence, not looking at what people say.

People say, Jesus is dead, he's gone. Jesus says, look at the evidence, here I am. Here's that this is me.

And so, then he says the second thing is, handle me, or touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have. Now, I don't want to get too deep into the theology, but remember that God is a spirit.

That Jesus, before he was incarnated, before he became a man, was a spirit, because he was God. A spirit does not have flesh and bones. So, God does not have a visible form.

God does not have a human body. God does not have long white hair and blue eyes, or whatever image we have concerning, you know, how he looks. God is a spirit.

But Jesus takes upon himself a human form. And I believe that he will forever now have that human form. But it is not, here's the thing, it is not a typical human body.

It is not a typical human body, because he was able to come through the wall, or wherever he came. And it's not, you know, again, we're putting it in human terms. He didn't come through the wall, he just appeared, beaming up Scotty.

Remember the same thing happened to Philip. He's preaching to the Ethiopian unit, he baptizes him, and then it says the spirit caught him away, and he appears in another place. So, the laws of physics no longer apply.

And so, we have this difficulty, because at the same time, he says, feel me, I'm real. And yet, at the same time, the laws of physics no longer apply. We know from Paul's teaching, and from the book of Revelation, that in the resurrection there is no sickness, there is no dying, there is no pain.

So, some, most of the things that define us as human beings, with a physical body, don't apply in the resurrection. And yet, some things do apply, and that's the difficulty. You remember, Paul explains this in the book of Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 15.

He says, well, there are birds, and there are animals, and there are fish, and there are some similarities between a fish and a dog, but they're not the same. They both have life, they both are able to eat, they both move around, but they're not the same. There's similarities between, and of course, this is what evolutionists love to do, is they love to look at the similarities and say, well, you know, a dog has four legs, and a bird has two legs and two wings, and those wings are just front legs.

The problem is that, yeah, there are similarities, but there are massive differences between a dog and a crow. And Paul says that's the problem, is that we look at the resurrection, and we look at human flesh, and we try and understand that. And the point he's making is, just like there are similarities between fish and creeping animals, and flying animals, there are big differences between this life and the life to come.

And the same is true of Jesus. And so here he is. He, flesh and bone, can't pass through a wall.

I mean, it's just impossible. It's why we have doors to keep people out. Keep bad people out, anyway.

And yet, he has substance, and he says, come and feel. He says, flesh and bone. Not just flesh, not just an apparition, but substance, flesh over bone.

Notice that he doesn't say blood. And so, handle me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have. And so, the first step to faith is to see, to look.

The second is to experience, to touch. But remember that everything is based on the Word of God. Remember that for those on the Ratio of Mayors, he doesn't give them the experience first, he gives them the Word first, and then he shows himself to them.

Here the order is reversed, and yet you cannot have one without the other. And so, we must experience the Lord. We must, we can't just, you see, here's the thing.

Many people look at Christianity, they study Christianity, they read about it, they go to church. But they're just looking. No, you need to get in there.

You need to experience it. You need to feel it. And we're not preaching a sensory, a feeling-based faith.

But unless, the scripture says, taste and see that the Lord is good. And obviously not meaning tasting in a physical sense, but in a spiritual sense. Unless you commit yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, unless you come to a place of saying, Lord, I want to handle you, I want to feel you, we will not come to faith.

Now verse 40, when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. So he probably took his sandals off, showed himself to them. Verse 41, but while they still did not believe for joy and marveled, he said to them, have you any food here? Now, here their mood has changed.

And I think that it shows us how fickle they were, and it's just how fickle we are. They begin with fear. They're afraid.

They say, this is the ghost. Now they're sort of in a different place, because they still don't quite believe, but they don't believe, I guess, in the same way as somebody who wins the jackpot. Now I'm not advocating wasting your money on the jackpot.

But I think we've all seen the reactions of people who suddenly come into a lot of money, or into some great blessing, and they're amazed, but they don't quite believe. In fact, yesterday, we watched a little bit of the Wimbledon tennis, and the young Russian girl, or Kazakhstan girl, who won. You could see she'd won, she's got the trophy, but the penny hasn't really dropped.

And this is where they are. They're beginning to understand. They're beginning to believe.

But at the same time, this is so big that they still don't quite get it. So they're still not at the place of absolute faith. They're still not in the place where they will die for their testimony that Jesus has raised from the dead.

But they're getting there. And so Jesus again meets them. And this is again God's wonderful grace.

God doesn't just say, well, there's a scripture, study the scriptures, get your mind right. No, he meets them in their need. And he gives them proof, and he gives them evidence.

And now he gives them the third one. And he says, have you any food here? So they gave him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb. And, sorry, so they gave him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb, and he took it, and he ate in their presence.

Now, again, he's proving that he is not a spirit. A spirit cannot eat. Now, again, just let's get to the technical stuff because I know we try and figure these things out.

Jesus in his resurrected body, and remember that the resurrected body is eternal. It never dies. It is not subject to human physical laws the same way as these bodies are.

And so, clearly, he is able to eat. But I don't believe he has to eat. He can, but he doesn't have to.

Heaven is not going to be about hometown buffet. It's not about those things. And yet, I guess that if we wanted to, because it speaks the street having 12 kinds of trees, and they have the fruit which is for the healing of the nations.

And, of course, it speaks about the fact that there's going to be that Last Supper or that Great Supper, the marriage feast of the Lamb. And so, I think we can eat. I'm just guessing here because based on what Jesus is doing here, the Scripture doesn't deal with it anywhere else.

So, he can eat, but he doesn't have to eat. We know what happens if we don't eat. We get hungry and we eventually die.

So, he's proving that he's real, that he's not a spirit. And so, he took it and he ate in their presence. Then he said to them, these are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you.

So, he's now going to come back to the Word. Remember that his words are not like my words. Many times things happen in people's lives, and I don't often do it, but I say to myself, well, I told you so.

Didn't you listen when I warned you? And, of course, that's what he's saying, but his words are the Word of God. My words are just the words of a man. And so, he's saying, where were you when I told you? These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you.

He says, I told you. And, of course, this is the problem, is he tells us. Those who've been with us now for whatever it's been, three or four years that we've been in the Gospel of Luke, we've seen over and over and over for the last 19 years, I've been teaching the Word of God here, and yet so many times we say, well, you know, I never heard that.

But he says, this is what I told you. The words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me. And so, again, Jesus brings everything back to the Word.

He's saying, I told you, but what I told you was what the Word says. Remember, they didn't have the New Testament, they only had the Old Testament. But he says, I told you what the Word says.

The Word says I must suffer and I must die. And yet you didn't believe. Now, I haven't done a study, but I think that just based on memory, at least on three, if not four or five occasions, Jesus specifically opened the Scriptures from the Old Testament and showed them how that the Messiah had to suffer and how he had to be raised.

And so Jesus says, I taught you the Scriptures. Why don't you get it? Why don't you get it? I'm going to come to the answer to that, I think, in the next verse. But I want you to notice then that he says, in the third last line, which were written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms.

Now, remember when he spoke to those on the way to Emmaus, it says that he showed them from all of the Scriptures. And this is saying this just in a different way. The Jews have three divisions in their Bible.

Remember that we have two major divisions, Old Testament, New Testament. New Testament, we divide up into Gospels, into Acts, into the Epistles, and then Revelation. So we have those sections.

The three sections of the Old Testament for the Jews is the law, the first five books of Moses, which is the first five books in our version of the Bible. Then they have the prophets, the major prophets and the minor prophets from Isaiah through Malachi. And then they have the Psalms.

Now the Psalms is not just the Psalms, it is all what we call the poetic books. So it's Psalms and Ecclesiastes and Proverbs, the book of Job is in there as well. And so he's saying in all three the divisions of the Old Testament, they speak concerning me.

So you can read about Jesus' crucifixion or his atoning death in the law. You can read about it in the Psalms. You can read about it in the prophets.

You can read about his resurrection in the law, in the Psalms and in the prophets. And so we could spend weeks going through the Old Testament and looking at each one of these aspects of Jesus' life, how that all of these things spoke about the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. But Jesus says, I've gone through this exercise with you.

I've gone through the law and through the prophets and through the Psalms and shown you these things. Now here's the key, verse 45, my last verse for this morning. And he opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures.

Remember that on the road to Emmaus, he opens the scriptures and they understand, but they still don't see him. And then when they come to the meal, he opens their eyes and they understand and they see this is Jesus. Here is the other way around.

But I want you to see the importance of God's part in this process. Unless he opens our understanding, we will not see. We will not understand.

And so we say, oh, well, there's nothing I can do about it. We become determinists. We say, well, you know, if God's going to help me understand, that's great.

If he doesn't, well, then I won't. No, we need to seek wisdom. We need to pray, Lord, help me understand.

And folks, here's the problem we have today, is that there are very few Christians, even in good churches, who have any clue about the word of God. I don't mean they don't know the verses and they don't know the words, but they don't know what they mean. They don't know how to live according to them.

They don't know how to apply them in our current political environment, how to apply them in our current moral environment. And so no wonder they're led by the knows, by false teachers and deceivers and all sorts of things, because we don't understand. We know, but we don't understand.

There's a difference between knowing and understanding. You can know everything about how to drive a car, especially if it's a stick shift. You know how to work the clutch and the... That doesn't mean you know anything until you get behind that wheel and you begin to balance the throttle and the clutch.

And until you've mastered it, you don't know. You don't understand. And folks, I'm so deeply concerned that so many Christians, all of their faith is theory.

It's all up here, but there's no understanding. They can argue about this and that, and remember the Pharisees were really good at this. They could argue until the cows came home about every detail of the meaning of the word and even the letters, whether it should be this letter or that, and what does this mean, what does that mean, but they had no clue.

And folks, we're in the same place today again, whereas the Christian church in the West has a lot of knowledge, but they don't understand. And we need to say, Lord, help me understand. Help me understand.

Help me understand how it impacts on my life, how I need to live, how do I relate to this or that or the other thing. Seek, Jesus says, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you.

Ask, and it will be given. And James says that you don't understand, you don't have wisdom because you don't ask. And folks, we need to come to, I believe that's one thing that we need to pray for individually and as a church, and that is, Lord, give us understanding.

If you've been in this church for 19 years, you don't need more Bible teaching. You need understanding. What the church in America needs today is understanding.

Understanding what does it mean, and God needs to open our eyes. We can pray for revival. We can pray for all sorts of things, but until the Lord opens our eyes to see sin for what it is, to see the Word of God for what it is, to see holiness for what it is, we will never have a clue.

But he graciously opens their eyes. You see, one of the things that I do see with these people, in spite of all of their doubts and all of their fears, they wanted to know. This is the third day.

The multitude that scattered because Jesus was dead, but these guys stuck together because they said, we want to understand. We know there's something here. We don't, we can't figure it out.

We don't know what this resurrection thing is about. It looks like Jesus is dead, but they stuck it out, and Jesus opens their eyes. Father, I pray that you'd help us to be those who persevere in seeking your face.

Lord, that we may understand. Lord, we have often a lot of knowledge, but we don't have much understanding. Lord, we thank you for your grace.

We thank you that you didn't discard these people in spite of their unbelief, in spite of their doubts, in spite of their not having listened to your word and having listened to your son as he spoke and revealed himself in the law and the prophets and the Psalms. But in spite of all of those things, you stuck with them. And in due time, you opened their eyes to see not just Jesus physically, but to see him in the scriptures.

Lord, I pray that the word of God may not be a dead book to us. Lord, that we just deal with the theology and the theory and the technicalities, but Lord, that it may become a reality that we may see Jesus in every verse and every page and that he may become real to us. Lord, we need your help.

And I pray that you would touch us and touch our hearts and our minds and our understanding, open our eyes that we might see. I ask it in Jesus' name. I pray, Lord, for those who are not well this morning and not able to join us.

We pray that you would help them, strengthen them, heal them and bring them back to us in full health again. We pray in Jesus' name. I pray that you'd go with us now, keep us and protect us.

Bring us together again safely on Thursday, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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