

Jesus' Concerns after Coming Back From Death

Luke 24:13-35

5/4/25

What is the most important thing to do? Depends on the context, you might reply. O.K. so lets think through some contexts. Coming to church? The most important thing to do is? Deepen friendship with Jesus and others. Getting ready for a job interview? The most important thing to do is? Know about the position and company. Recently retired? The most important thing to do is? Prayerfully consider how to use your talents to glorify God and better humanity! Recently won a scholarship to go to Salt Lake City to attend a human resources conference? The most important thing to do is? Schedule at least 1 day of skiing! Raising a child? The most important thing to do is? Teach and practice the faith of Jesus to invite into friendship.

If you just came back from the dead? The most important thing to do is?

Let's hear God's Word in Luke 24:36-53.

Notice how Jesus' concerns aren't about telling us about Heaven. You would think Jesus would tell us all about Heaven. How awesome it is. How to get in. What it is like. But Jesus is not that concerned about the afterlife, Jesus is concerned about our lives right now. Are you living well now?

I ask, "Are you living your best life now?" because Jesus gives us three things to focus on to live Heaven on earth. 1) Jesus demonstrates that Heaven is a full-bodied experience. 2) Jesus gives us our purpose in this passage. 3) Jesus tells us He wants to be an ever-present friend.

Before we discuss purpose and how Jesus desires to be an ever-present friend, lets talk about how Heaven is a full-bodied experience. The resurrection accounts are some of the funniest reads in the Bible. Jesus appears and disappears in a moment. He is Spirit. Jesus shows His flesh and bones. He is physical. He's not a ghost. Jesus eats. This goes along with the story of the Bible. In the beginning, God creates and the creation is good. We are created to care for the creation. God wants to save everything you see. To live well, Christians conserve the environment and our bodies.

We are created to care for our bodies and each other's. The body and the physical world is not something to try to escape but to redeem. Many religions teach to escape physical being: this is not Christianity.

That brings us to our purpose. Jesus gives us our purpose. Jesus gives us our mission. Tell the good news of repentance and the forgiveness of sins to all nations. Be witnesses.

There are many paths to be traveled in this life but there is only one that leads to friendship and wellbeing. Most lead to being nowhere and alone.

# *Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church*

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Gen Z is experiencing 2 things right now: 1) loneliness and 2) returning to the faith of Christ. I learned on Monday in one of my human resource seminars that Cigna Health reports that loneliness is worse for the body than smoking 15 cigarettes per day.<sup>1</sup> Loneliness is the belief that not one person cares about you. Invite young folks to church. Encouraging friends, family, children to worship is a life and death matter.

My wife sent me an article from Vox magazine that Gen Z is also finding the faith of Christ. However, there is a dramatic difference between Gen Z men and women. Gen Z men like churches that are more traditional and teach a faith in which men are in charge. Gen Z women are leaving those churches for a religious affiliation to more politically liberal and tolerant faith traditions.<sup>2</sup>

That leads me to ask the question, “What is the most important thing to do?” Deepen your friendship with Jesus and tell others about the teachings of Jesus.

Finally, Jesus promises to always be there for us. When I reflect upon my faith, Jesus is an ever-present friend. As a good friend, He wants the best for me and for society. Jesus challenges me to change for the better. Not only does He challenge. He empowers us with His own Spirit.

When we worship together, we more connected to His Spirit. When we pray for each other, we are more connected to His Spirit. When we serve each other, we are more connected to His Spirit. When care for our bodies through eating well and exercise, we are more connected to His Spirit. The Bible teaches that we are the Temples of the Holy Spirit. When we conserve the environment, we are more connected to the Holy Spirit.

Friends, Jesus’ faith is holistic. If we ask, Christ’s faith informs every area of our lives. Not change for the sake of change, but to be transformed into Christ’s hands, feet and voice on Earth. Together, we are Christ’s body. Jesus lives to live in us.

What is the most important thing to do? Prayerfully consider practicing the faith of Jesus Christ!

Love,  
Pastor Curtis

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<sup>1</sup> <https://newsroom.cigna.com/loneliness-questionnaire>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.vox.com/religion/410359/gen-z-zoomer-religion-god-faith-politics-trump-pope>