

Appearances of the Resurrected Lord

BIBLE BASICS

Introduction: Christ's Appearances After the Resurrection

After the Resurrection, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to many people for forty days. We cannot tell exactly how many times Jesus appeared after His Resurrection, since not every event was mentioned in the Bible. In this topic, we will look at some of Christ's appearances after the Resurrection and how we can benefit from them in our lives and in our service.

These appearances are not merely historical details. They are **pastoral encounters** by which Christ:

- confirms the truth of His Resurrection,
- heals fear and doubt,
- restores broken disciples,
- establishes the Church's mission,
- and prepares the disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Why Did Jesus Appear After His Resurrection?

Before listing reasons, we should frame the question theologically:

Christ's Resurrection is the foundation of Christian faith, and Christ's appearances are the Lord's own pastoral "teaching plan" for His disciples. The disciples were not yet strong. They were confused, fearful, and scattered. Therefore, the Lord appeared repeatedly—each time carrying a specific medicine for the soul.

Reasons for Jesus' Appearances After the Resurrection

1) Proof of Resurrection

There were rumors among the Jews that His disciples came at night and stole His body. So Jesus appeared to many people to prove His Resurrection. These appearances dispelled doubts, strengthened faith, and established the truth that He truly conquered death.

This is why later the apostolic preaching insists that the Resurrection was witnessed, proclaimed, and confessed publicly (see 1 Corinthians 15:3–7 below). The Church does not preach an idea; she preaches a **seen and testified reality**.

2) Revelation of His Glorified Body

Here we preserve your important point:

The church fathers say that before the crucifixion, Jesus was proving His Divinity. But after the Resurrection, He was proving His Humanity.

After the Resurrection, Christ shows that He is truly alive in His own glorified body:

- He asked Thomas to touch His wounds.
- At the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus ate with them.
- He entered the upper room while the doors were shut.
- He told Mary Magdalene not to cling to Him.

These events teach us two truths held together:

1. The Resurrection is **physical and real** (He is not a spirit or illusion).
2. The resurrected body is **glorified and transformed** (no longer limited by corruption and death).

So Christ is not merely “back.” He is risen in glory.

3) Establishment of the Church

The third reason why Jesus appeared after the Resurrection is to establish the Church. During the holy forty days, Jesus was teaching His disciples and assuring them that He is the Living God. He was confirming them in the faith—as He appeared to Thomas to cure his doubt. And as He appeared to Peter to call him back again to service: “Tend My sheep... Feed My sheep.”

Christ had to bring His disciples back together to start serving and spreading the Word of God all over the world. The Resurrection does not produce passive admirers; it creates witnesses and servants.

Christ’s appearances show us that the Church is built on:

- **truth** (Christ truly rose),
- **healing** (fear and doubt are restored),
- **mission** (the Gospel must be preached),
- and **grace** (Christ Himself gathers and strengthens His servants).

Who Did Jesus Appear To After the Resurrection?

Before listing appearances, we frame the purpose of this list:

The appearances of Christ are not random. Each appearance carries a **message**—joy, peace, hope,

restoration, and mission. As servants, we do not only teach what happened; we learn how Christ **deals with people**, because that becomes our model in service.

1) Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Resurrection morning)

“Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.””

(Matthew 28:1–10, NKJV)

Jesus rewarded them for their diligent act—coming early to honor His Body. They were the first to receive the good news of the Resurrection. They saw Jesus Himself and touched Him. This teaches us that love, diligence, and seeking Christ early are not forgotten by God.

As servants, it also teaches: the first witnesses were not political leaders or scholars, but faithful hearts. Christ entrusts His joy to those who love Him.

2) Mary Magdalene (second time, Resurrection morning)

“Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’ ” Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.”

(John 20:14–18, NKJV)

You noted: Mary waited at the tomb crying; angels asked, “why are you weeping?”; she saw Jesus but thought He was the gardener. This moment is deeply pastoral: sorrow can blind us, even when Christ is near.

The message of the Resurrection is not only “He rose,” but also: “**Do not be afraid.**” If Christ conquered death, then the biggest enemy is defeated—so every smaller fear must be reinterpreted in that light.

- Rejoice, do not be afraid
- We should rejoice in the Lord regardless of the situation
- Focus on the Lord, our Savior

Mary Magdalene did not realize Christ because she was not looking at Him—her grief dominated her vision. This becomes a rule for spiritual life: when the heart is swallowed by circumstance, it can fail to recognize the Lord’s presence.

You connected this powerfully to St. Peter: he walked on water while focusing on Christ, but sank when looking at the wind and waves (Matthew 14:22–33). The same spiritual principle applies: **focus determines stability.**

And you rightly applied this to our current anxieties (pandemic, layoffs, sickness, worries): the Church does not deny tribulation, but she refuses despair, because the Resurrection is real.

You cited Philippians and John. Here are the verses in NKJV form where you quoted them partially:

“For I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:”
(*Philippians 4:11, NKJV*)

“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”
(*John 16:33, NKJV*)

And since you referenced 2 Corinthians 12:9, here is the verse verbatim NKJV (to anchor your line accurately):

“And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”
(*2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV*)

In our service:

The servant who believes the Resurrection must become a bearer of Resurrection peace.

- Always carry the message of joy and happiness
- Message of hope during the hard time
- Message that our God is mighty and merciful

Our students often live with hidden fear—family stress, identity confusion, academic pressure, loneliness. The servant brings them not mere positivity, but **Resurrection truth**: Christ is alive, Christ is present, Christ is victorious. That is why “Rejoice” is not emotional hype; it is theological reality.

3) The two disciples of Emmaus (Resurrection day)

“Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem...”
(*Luke 24:13–35, NKJV*)

(Your full Luke 24:13–35 is already verbatim and is retained.)

These disciples heard the testimony of the women and knew the tomb was empty, yet they remained doubtful and sad. They were walking away, as you wrote, “as if returning from heavenly Jerusalem to the materialistic world.” This is a powerful pastoral image: discouragement often makes us retreat from spiritual zeal back into the “old normal.”

Christ heals them in a distinctly Church-shaped way:

1. He walks with them
 2. He opens the Scriptures
 3. He is known “in the breaking of bread”
 4. They return immediately to witness
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- Learn & be ready
 - Conversed and reasoned (Luke 24:13–16)
 - The scripture (Luke 24:27)
 - Preach the word of God (Luke 24:33–35)

“Conversed and reasoned” shows that even sincere discussion can become closed if it is detached from revelation. Christ does not win them by argument alone; He opens the Scriptures and reorders their interpretation of suffering: “Ought not the Christ to have suffered...?” Their hearts burn not because they heard opinions, but because they encountered divine meaning.

Then they preach immediately. The true encounter with the risen Christ does not end in private comfort; it becomes mission.

In our service:

If we want our service to be Emmaus-like, it must be Scripture-shaped, not opinion-shaped.

- Serve based on the scripture not our opinion
- Be active, and don’t slack
- Keep learning

When servants rely on personal opinion, they may sound confident but give unstable guidance. When servants are filled with Scripture, the lesson carries authority and healing. This is why reading, learning, sermons, and spiritual study are not “extras”—they are fuel.

4) The disciples on Resurrection night (without Thomas)

“Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.” ... “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.””

(John 20:19–23, NKJV)

The disciples were locked in fear. Christ does not rebuke first—He gives peace first. Then He sends them. Then He breathes the Holy Spirit. This is the pattern of apostolic life.

- Peace be with you
- Have peace
- Make peace
- Trust in Him

Peace is not the absence of problems; it is the presence of Christ. The Lord’s first word after the Resurrection becomes the Church’s first gift to the world.

In our service:

A servant must not transmit anxiety. The servant must carry the peace of Christ.

- Be a peacemaker
- Be reason of gladness
- Be ready to go wherever/whenever He send you

If the disciples were sent from behind locked doors, then servants must be ready to serve even when circumstances are not ideal. Peace does not wait for perfect conditions.

Small correction for accuracy: you wrote “Matthew 4:9 ‘Blessed are the peacemakers...’” — that Beatitude is **Matthew 5:9**.

5) The disciples with Thomas (one week after)

“Now Thomas, called the Twin...”

(John 20:24–29, NKJV)

The Lord did not abandon Thomas. Even when Thomas did not believe the disciples, and even after repeated discussion, Christ came specifically for him. This shows the Shepherd’s heart: He seeks the struggling and restores them.

Do we rejoice when a difficult child comes, or one who disappeared for a long time?

“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them...”

(Luke 15:4–7, NKJV)

- You’re Special

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- Peace to you
 - Speak your heart
 - You're special
 - He will never forsake you

Thomas was allowed to speak his condition honestly. Christ did not shame him; Christ healed him. In service, struggling students are often “Thomas-like”: they need patient presence, truth, and love that does not give up on them.

In our service:

A servant must share the Shepherd's zeal.

- Seek the lost or least committed
- Seek and help those who struggle
- Zeal for the lost, not laziness

The servant who avoids the difficult child is not serving like Christ. Christ goes to the locked room and returns for Thomas. That is the model.

6) The disciples at the Sea of Tiberias

“After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias...”
(*John 21:1–14, NKJV*)

Christ didn't blame them for going back to fishing. He gently reoriented them back to their calling using the same miracle pattern as Luke 5. The message: “You may be weak, but I have not cancelled your vocation.”

- Fresh start
- Don't go back to the old way
- The influence
- A fresh start
- He is THE source

The “fresh start” is not merely emotional—it is a Resurrection gift. Many servants feel like Peter: “I failed; I cannot continue.” Christ answers: “Cast the net.” He restores calling by grace.

In our service:

Christ makes servants “fishers of men,” and He teaches us gentleness with His people.

- You're fisher of men
- Don't quit
- Don't rebuke His children, but guide them
- Give the little you have and seek His blessing

Christ already had fish and bread, yet He asked them to bring fish. That is a deep service principle: Christ does not *need* us, but He dignifies us by involving us, so we receive blessing and grow in love.

7) Christ's private restoration of Peter (John 21:15–19)

“So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter...”

(John 21:15–19, NKJV)

Peter denied Christ three times. Christ restores him through three questions: “Do you love Me?” This is not punishment; it is healing. Christ replaces denial with confession, shame with responsibility, and fear with mission.

- He Forgives and forgets
- Never lose hope
- He is knocking on the door
- Accept the responsibility

A servant must know this personally: Christ does not only forgive; He restores. Many people can accept forgiveness but cannot accept restoration. Christ gives both.

In our service:

Restored servants must become restorers.

- Feed His lambs, Tend His sheep
- Never reject anyone
- Carry message of forgiveness and renewal

If Christ reinstated Peter, servants must never cancel people. We correct, but we do not crush.

8) The disciples before the Ascension: the Great Commission

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee...”

(Matthew 28:16–20, NKJV)

Christ's authority is declared, the Church's mission is given, and the promise of His presence remains: “lo, I am with you always.”

Your point is important: He told them not to leave Jerusalem until they receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 1 context). Mission is not human courage—it is Spirit-empowered.

9) Multiple appearances testified by St. Paul

“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received...”

(1 Corinthians 15:3–7, NKJV)

St. Paul preaches Resurrection as received tradition, seen witnesses, and lived proclamation. This anchors our teaching: we do not invent; we hand on what we received.

Messages of Christ's Appearances

When Christ appears, He does not only “show Himself.” He delivers spiritual realities. The appearances are not only proofs; they are **messages**, and servants must carry these same messages to the children entrusted to them.

- **Joy:** because death is defeated.
- **Salvation:** because the Resurrection is the seal of redemption.
- **Hope:** because despair is no longer logical in the presence of the risen Christ.
- **Peace:** because Christ stands in the locked room and says, “Peace be with you.”
- **Power:** because the weak become witnesses, and fear becomes preaching.
- **Love:** because Christ seeks Mary, walks with Emmaus, and restores Peter.
- **Confirmation:** because Thomas confesses, “My Lord and my God!”

These are not abstract words; they are the very substance of what our students need.

A Working List of Appearances

This list helps servants organize the Gospel accounts. Some appearances may overlap across Gospels, and some are summarized in apostolic testimony. The purpose is not to force a perfect timeline, but to show the richness of Christ's pastoral encounters.

There are 13 appearances for our Lord after resurrections:

- Appearance to Mary Magdalene (Early morning) - John 20:1-18
- Appearance to the Mary's (Early morning) - Matthew 28:9-10
- Appearance to Simon Peter (mid-day Easter) (mentioned by the 2 disciples of Emmaus) - Luke 24:34, 1 Corinthians 15:4-7
- Appearance to the 2 disciples of Emmaus (Easter day afternoon) - Luke 24:13-35
- The disciples without Thomas (Easter evening) - John 20:19-23
- The disciples with Thomas (Next Sunday after resurrection) - John 20:24-29
- Appearance to 500 or more - 1 Corinthians 15:6
- Appearance to James - 1 Corinthians 15:7
- Appearance to the apostles - 1 Corinthians 15:7
- By the sea of Galilee / Tiberias - John 21:1-14
- Reinstatement of Peter - John 21:15-19
- The Great Commission - Matthew 28:16-20
- Appearance to St. Paul - Acts 9:1-9

Christ's Resurrection was not hidden; it was revealed repeatedly, across places, people, and needs—grief, doubt, fear, discouragement, and mission.

Conclusion

In our lives, Jesus appears and encounters us in many ways. We need to discern, believe He is alive, and believe He is with us. We should be His image to the world. We ought to follow Him and preach His word. He called each one of us to serve Him in this life, honestly and faithfully.

And as we proclaim in the Liturgy:

“Your death O Lord, we proclaim, Your Holy Resurrection and Ascension into the heavens, we confess.”

The appearances of Christ deliver many messages: joy, salvation, hope, peace, power, love, and confirmation. We, as servants, ought to be all of that for our students—and to the whole world—through Christ who is present in our lives.



Review Questions

1. Why did Jesus appear to many people after the Resurrection? (A. To prove His resurrection, to confirm their faith, to establish the church.)
2. How many times did Jesus appear to his disciples after the resurrection? (A. We don't know the exact number because not every event was mentioned in the Bible.)
3. How can we be true servants of the Lord? (A. By being His image to the world. To find Him in our lives so we would be able to deliver Him to others.)