

## Hidden in Plain Sight: He's Always Been There

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Let me give you a picture

Of where we're going today

I always like it better

When I know where the GPS is taking me

So, we're going to start

With the story of Jesus' resurrection

The world was changed

Not just because Jesus died on a cross

The world was changed

Because Jesus rose from the dead

Jesus died

And then lived again

His grave is empty today

So, we're going to start

With Jesus' resurrection from the dead

Then I want to talk about movies for just a second

Not just because I like movies

Well... be patient

I'll make it make sense

And then we're going to talk about Jesus again

Easter's His day after all

So, we'll tie it all together

Jesus is hidden in plain sight

He's been there all along

He's here now

Because He rose from the dead

OK – we got a lot to get to

We got a long way to go

And a short time to get there

So, grab a Bible

**Turn to Luke 24**

It's page 722 in these Bibles

Take one of those

We didn't get you an Easter basket or chocolate bunny

So, let us *at least* get you a Bible

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By the way

If we've not met, I'm Andy

It's great to have you joining us today

It's also great to have you folks joining us online

Now – or later

We celebrate

The Resurrection of Jesus today

Because Jesus lives

We have hope

Because He lives

We can make it through tough times

Because He lives

We don't have to fear death or life or condemnation

OK - Let's look at this account together

Read Luke 24:1-8

This is the Resurrection story

This is the game changer

I want us to catch the shock of this scene

Luke – an historian

Makes that clear in his writing

But this story is so famous

So famous!

That it's easy to lose the shock of the scene

Nobody

Went to the tomb

Expecting it to be empty

Nobody

Then in Luke 24:9-12

We see three embarrassing details

You know what they always say

“History is written by the winners”

So often in history, details get whitewashed

To remove anything embarrassing

However, in this passage

We’ll look in just a sec

Luke includes 3 embarrassing details

Back to back to back

That he could have just as easily scrubbed

See if you see them?

Look with me:

Read Luke 24:9-10 – The first witnesses were all ladies

In the Roman & Jewish culture of that day

Women were not considered trustworthy witnesses in court

God considers women trustworthy witnesses

But the culture of the day did not

You only write that if it is true

Read Luke 24:11

Who is “they?”

Verse 11 says, “But they did not believe the women”

Who is they?

All of the leaders of the early church

Catch that:

All of the church’s earliest leaders

Heard the central message of the Gospel

The message that this book

The book of Luke

Is designed to get others to believe

And none of them believed it

Amazing

You only write that if it is true

Look in your bible at verse 12:

Read Luke 24:12 - Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, and proclaimed to everyone he met that Jesus was alive, just like He said.

That’s not what it says

It says that Peter

The point person for the early church

The visionary

The leader

Saw Jesus' empty tomb

And went away, wondering what in the world had happened.

Nobody

Went to the tomb

Expecting it to be empty

Nobody

The world was changed

Not just because Jesus died on a cross

Lots of people died on crosses

The world was changed

Not because they're leaders were super-human

These yokels made lots of embarrassing mistakes

The world was changed

Because a dead man came back to life

Read Luke 24:13-24

And so, they shrugged

Didn't believe it

And then went home

Hang on to that for a second

While we talk about movies

I love when movies drop little details

You know, throughout the movie

And you don't see them

Or you don't realize their significance

Till the very end

Or when movies

Have this aha moment

Where you learn something

That changes the whole movie

**Like the Life of Pi**

Where the kid's in the boat with the Tiger

**Or the Sixth Sense**

Where he sees dead people

I don't want to spoil any cliff hangers

**Or like the movie Adrift**

You get to the end  
And you have this aha moment  
And you realize that the whole movie you were watching  
Is different than you thought it was  
While you were watching

I mean there's something going on

The whole time  
And the author knows it  
The director knows it  
If you go back and watch it  
You'll wonder how in the world you missed it

But you don't see it till the end

**Or that movie 7 pounds**

**Wait, we can't talk about Will Smith anymore**

Or - like my all-time favorite movie

My all-time faaavorite movie

**The Notebook**

You don't even know who James Garner *is* right away



Just so we're clear

The Notebook is not my all-time favorite movie

You do get the aha moment at the end

But you've got to pay an *extraordinarily* high price to get there

I just love it when the author

Because they knew the whole story from the beginning

Drops hints

That you don't see at first

But make sense

When you know the whole story

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So what's this have to do with Jesus?

God

The Holy Spirit

Inspired this book

And He did that

Over thousands of years

And He had the prophets write things

Knowing that Jesus was coming

**Hebrews 10:1 (NLT) – The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come, not the good things themselves.**

The first half of the Bible

Was a shadow of Jesus

It says:

**The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship.**

It was never enough

Those sacrifices pushed back sin

Kicked the can down the road, so to speak

But it was always pointing the way to Jesus

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Read Luke 24:25-27

“Moses and all the prophets”

What’s He talking about?

The Old Testament, right?

Let me put that last verse up here

So, we can see it together

**And beginning with Moses and *all* the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in *all* the Scriptures concerning Himself. – Luke 24:27**

I highlighted the word “all”

Listed twice there in this passage

*All* the prophets

And *all* the Scriptures

They all talk about Jesus

Jesus was telling Cleopas & Mary how *all* the Old Testament

Was about Him

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After a long conversation

Their eyes were opened and they recognized Him

And then He disappeared

So, they ran back to their friends

Who were still in Jerusalem

And Cleopas bursts in the room

And tells them “It’s true... it’s all true”

Read Luke 24:36-40
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This is reasonable

They thought they were seeing a vision

Or a ghost or something

So, Jesus says look at my hands & feet

“touch Me and see”

Casper doesn't have nail scars that you can put your hands on

Then I love the next verses

I'm a dork

But I love seeing humor in the Bible

Look at verse 41:

Read Luke 24:41-43

So, He's providing proofs, right?

You think it's a vision

No... visions don't talk with you

You think it's a ghost?

Nooo... ghosts don't have scars you can touch

You still don't believe

{Eye-roll}

OK – you got anything to eat?

And then

This cracks me up

Look at verse 42

Read Luke 24:42-43

They hand Him a piece of broiled fish

And He eats it in front of them

That's the miraculous part

A guy who was dead yesterday

Is eating in your kitchen

That's miraculous

But the funny part to me

They didn't hand Him a potato chip

Or a carrot stick or something

They handed Him a "piece of broiled fish"

You don't just whip up a "piece of broiled fish"

What's that mean?

We don't know

But I think they were eating supper when He got there

And no one offers Him anything to eat

And Jesus was hungry

I mean, I've never done it

But I hear that rising from the dead

Works up quite an appetite

So, when they don't offer

He says, "I don't know... does anybody have anything to eat?"

And they fumble all over themselves

Trying to get the former dead guy

A piece of fish

And then catch what He says to them:

Read Luke 24:44-45

The whole Bible whispers His name

He was there all along

He's here now

We don't worship Jesus

In churches all over the world

Because He's a footnote in history

We don't worship Jesus

In churches all over the world

Because He said wise things

We don't worship Jesus

Because He died and came back to life

And – this is just wise advice

If a guy predicts his own resurrection

And then pulls it off

Do whatever He says

This is all throughout the Bible

Look at this interaction

Between Jesus and the Pharisees

**John 5:39a - You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life.**

What Scriptures is He talking about?

The Old Testament again, right?

They didn't have the New Testament part of the Bible

That we have yet

*You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life.*

**These are the very Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life. {John 5:39-40}**

The whole Bible points to Jesus

He was there all along

But they didn't see it

He's here now

But we still don't see Him

He's hidden in plain sight

As we wrap up

Let me speak to each of you

Any given week

There are 2 distinct groups of people

In the room

Or online

I want to speak to each of you

If you're new to all of this

Maybe you've recently made a commitment to Jesus

Maybe you're still not convinced

Maybe you're pretty convinced

That you'll *never* be convinced

I really am thrilled you're here

I would say to you

Don't assume that the spiritual blinders

That kept the people of Jesus' day from seeing Him

Won't affect you too

Whether you know it or not

Whether you acknowledge it or not

Jesus has been there in your life all along



Hidden in plain sight

The times of sorrow or loss or confusion

That you sensed a comforting hand

The times of struggle

That someone just happened to come along

I was listening this week

To a young man

Who, while growing up on the east coast

Was wrestling with his sexuality

He was convinced his parents wouldn't approve

That the church wouldn't approve

That God didn't approve

So, he snuck into his parent's bedroom

After they had gone to sleep

Late one night

Like 3 in the morning

He quietly grabbed his dad's pistol

Out of the nightstand

He went back to his room

Sat the pistol in his lap

And thought thru each of the next steps

One last time

The moment itself

His parent's hearing the shot

Or finding him the next day if they didn't wake up

The relief that he was sure they would have

When his shameful self was gone

That's a lie by the way

If that ever starts to make sense

Know that there are people who care about you

The world would be less without you here

So, he said one final prayer

To steel his nerve to go through with it

He just said to God

"God, if you're real

And I don't really think you are

But if you are

Just show me that you are

And show me that you care

He said Amen

He took a deep breath

Then his cell phone rang

He thought

It's 3 o'clock in the morning

Who in the world is calling me at 3 o'clock in the morning?

But He picked up his phone and looked

And saw it was a friend of his who lived on the west coast

So, it was only like midnight there

And his friend said

I was praying before I went to bed

And I just felt this *overwhelming need* to call you

I couldn't get your face out of my mind

I thought you probably wouldn't answer

But if you did

I'd know I was right to call

And the young man said

“You were right to call”

I’ll fill you in tomorrow

But you just saved my life

Listen, I don’t know each of your stories

But you’re welcome here

We love you

If you’re life’s a mess

We’ll walk along with you

And we’ll love you through *every part* of it

If you say your life’s perfect

Well... we’ll know you’re a liar

But *you’re* welcome here too

We love you

We’ll walk along with you

And love you through *every part* of it

And I don’t have to know you

To tell you that Jesus has been holding you together

All along

Whether you know it or not

Whether you acknowledge it or not

He's been hidden in your life

In plain sight

All along

I know that because

He's holding all of us

**Colossians 1:15a, 17 (NLT) – Christ is the visible image of the invisible God... He existed before anything else, and He holds all Creation together.”**

“All Creation”

That includes me

That includes you

And I want you to notice that there is nothing in there

About Him needing you to know it

He holds us together whether we admit it or not

Is it possible

That as our culture is feeling ripped apart

HE is the One who's holding us all together?

Is it possible

As there's so much division and disunity and disgust

That HE is the reason we're not pulling apart at the seams

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Is it possible

That you are writing a classic story

That even though Jesus

Has been there all along in your life

There comes an aha moment

When everything makes sense

Is it possible

That the aha moment is today?

There comes a moment

When you realize that all of those hints

All of those coincidences

All of those little details

Were placed there in your life

By God Himself

They were foreshadowing

For the hero's arrival

They were foreshadowing

For Jesus

If you're a Christian

I am so excited for this series

We're going to look at how Jesus' words are true

How He was in the Bible

Long before we get to the Gospels

How the Holy Spirit of God

The author

Inspired the first part

Knowing how this Book was all going to end

And if you're a sold-out, all-in Christian

You're going to love this series

For everyone else

This series is *really* for you

Thousands of years of Jewish history

Foreshadowed this One Man's life

If Jesus is God

This makes sense

If He's not

I don't know how to explain it

The burden

Is on you to explain it

But if He's God

Then today matters

If Jesus is God

Then His death

Wasn't just another Roman execution

If He's God

Then He really did rise from the dead

And His resurrection

Has deep implications for my life

His resurrection

Has deep implications for all of us

As we wrap up

Let's look at how the Bible describes

What Jesus did for us all:

**Colossians 2:14 (NirV) - He wiped out what the law said that we owed. The law stood against us. It judged us. But He has taken it away and nailed it to the cross.**

You know you don't always live up to your expectations

You sometimes feel like a failure

Like less than

But God sees you

He loves you

And because of that love

He came and took all of that condemnation

And paid for it on the cross

Look at the next verse:

**Colossians 2:15 (NirV) - He took away the weapons of the powers and authorities. He made a public show of them. He won the battle over them by dying on the cross.**

When you feel like the devil

Is winning in your life



Remember – he’s already lost

And he knows it

His defeat was very public

The battle has already been decided

I heard someone say recently

That all of life is a test – a judgment

You can take that test on your own

But let me tell you now

It’s too hard and you’re going to fail it

Or, you can let Jesus take the test

And let me tell you now

It’s not too hard for Him

In fact, He’s already aced it

Easter reminds us that that day is coming for all of us

I want to plead with you

To place your life fully in Jesus’ hands

I love this passage

He says in verse 16 that

People are going to feel judged

They’re going to feel that failure in their life

But the Bible here says

That all of those rules

All of those standards

**Colossians 2:17 (NirV) - They are only a shadow of the things to come. But *what is real is found in Christ.***

The most famous man

In all of history

Knows you

Knows all of your strengths

And all of your failures

He died

The most famous death in all of history

He rose from the dead

But His followers didn't believe it at first

He convinced them

That it was true

And it changed their life

It changed the world

And now I hope to convince you

That Jesus

The most famous man in all of history

Has been hidden in plain sight

In your life

But if you'll allow it

    If you'll open your mind & heart to it

You'll discover that

    What is real is found in Christ

So, what happened on the cross...