

## Surprise: Jesus Knows the Bible!

☞ **Word of peace (v.36)**

☞ **confirmed by evidence (vv.37-43)**

☞ **canonized by God (vv.37-43)**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Does the Bible ever use sarcasm? Check out Isaiah the prophet describing idols of wood and stone. They have eyes that cannot see, ears that cannot hear. They must be nailed down because they can't stand up by themselves. So why do people pray to them? Why fear them? A man becomes like his idol as he uses part of the wood to warm himself. *Their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?"* (Isaiah 44:15–20 NIV84) God gets sarcastic to show how spiritual blindness cannot see itself. This humbles us.

We can't see our natural born blindness either. Modern scholars and Hollywood elites depict Jesus as if He did not know who He was or what He was about. But **Surprise: Jesus Knows the Bible!** He wants to heal our blindness. For the consolation of our souls Jesus wants us to receive His...

☞ **Word of peace (v.36)**

Worries, cares, loneliness all weigh us down. Satan tries to rob us of peace like the disciples hiding behind locked doors on Easter and the week after. Jesus had compared their trauma to childbirth. *"So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."* (John 16:22 NIV84) Reminds me of right after one of our babies was born. The nurse took a heated blanket and put it over the mother of my children. Cindy talked for a long time how good that felt. Obviously, the nurses knew. And Jesus knows how desperately we need His **Word of peace**.

Troubled times help us truly appreciate the warm blanket of God's **peace** to soothe and settle your body and soul. We can relate to the disciples' blind fear. Whenever we get worried and depressed, it's as if we've forgotten our Lord Jesus is alive. Remember the story of Luther's wife Katie coming into his study all dressed in black? "Who died?" the famous doctor demanded. "Jesus died and was buried," Katie replied. "But He is risen!" Luther said. "Then why are you acting so sad as if Jesus is still dead?"

Fortunately, Jesus does not wait us to fix ourselves. We cannot. So He kept coming to His disciples over this forty-day period between Easter and His Ascension bringing this sweet, sweet greeting: *"Peace be to you."* (W.P.) Or, *"Peace be with you."* (NIV84) Jesus knows that only His **Word of peace** can soothe away our fears. Jesus does this right in the middle of our troubles – like that famous picture of *Peace* with the little bird on a branch over the raging rapids, singing his heart out to God.

☞ **confirmed by evidence (vv.37-43)**

**Surprise!** Jesus comes to help His disciples **Know the Bible** better. They heard what Jesus said, *"But they were terrified and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost."* That's all most scholars and Hollywood and modern churches see in the resurrection. Jesus just rose in their minds? He's just a memory? Isn't that the point of the most recent "new" movie about Jesus' resurrection that doesn't show Jesus at all? They only remembered Him on the shores of Galilee when Peter caught a bunch of fish?

The Holy Spirit inspired Dr. Luke to give us a close medical encounter with the risen Christ, **confirmed by evidence** – in this case physical. Jesus said to His terrified, frightened disciples, *“Why are you troubled? Why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup>Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.” <sup>40</sup>When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. <sup>41</sup>Then while they still did not believe because of joy and wonder, he said to them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” <sup>42</sup>So they gave him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. <sup>43</sup>He took it and ate in front of them.* (W.P.) No food fell out on the floor as if Casper the ghost was appearing to them. The risen Christ has a body glorified. He can eat, but He does not have to because His body can never die again. In Christ our bodies too will conquered death.

For the rest of their lives Jesus’ apostles kept telling what they saw and felt. John wrote in today’s Lesson: *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.”* (1 John 1:1 NIV84) Plus Jesus promised His disciples: *“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”* (John 14:26f NIV84) God inspired precise memories.

### ✚ **canonized by God (vv.37-43)**

Which brings us to a frequently asked question. Who decided what went into the Bible? Did Luther? Did the Roman Catholic Church as they claim? Why were some books left out? <sup>1</sup>

Listen to Jesus certify the books of the Bible as **canonized by God**: *“These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.”* These three divisions match the Old Testament we have today. They do not include the Apocrypha, interesting books that were never **canonized by God**.

We all need Jesus to open our *“minds to understand the Scriptures.”* “Closed minded” is how we’re born, denying and doubting the Bible. *“This is what is written and so it much be,”* Jesus said. *“The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup>and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”* No other religious books give prophecies over thousands of years. And these prophecies hurt God’s own Son! The prophets and apostles died telling them and spreading their witness throughout the world. God’s love is so powerful, so determined nothing on earth or in hell could stop God from saving us and telling us about it.

*“You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>Look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”* On Pentecost the Holy Spirit came...and the Apostles went as witnesses of Jesus to the entire world. Their martyrs’ deaths gave powerful testimony that life itself is not worth as much as knowing this: **Jesus Knows the Bible!**

Jesus keeps fulfilling this prophecy among our New Life children. Just this spring Olivia traveled thousands of miles to share God’s peace with strangers. Over the years Robert, Matthew and Joel; Katie, Sarah, Charis and Amanda travelled to communities as far away as Europe, Asia and South America. Amanda learned Portuguese in a month to teach poor children in Brazil about Jesus. Add Africa for Marladene’s service and three trips for Pastor with China Partners and you see God’s grace and power among us. The Holy Spirit in Word and sacraments keeps powering witnesses throughout the WELS.

**Surprise: Jesus Knows the Bible!** And what will it take for us to know our Bible better? Keep coming together like the disciples. Jesus loves to soothe our souls. *“Peace be with you.”* Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Check the fine articles at [http://www.wels.net/search/apachesolr\\_search/apocrypha](http://www.wels.net/search/apachesolr_search/apocrypha) .