Sermon: When Jesus was raised not only were they not sure about Jesus being alive, but it was almost as if they did not even look. Why?

[1] They were not expecting to see someone who was dead.

In our experience once someone is dead they stay that way, even though we dearly want them alive, and in many ways those nearest to them often find them still close eventually.

In John, Mary Magdalene thought he was a gardener, Thomas could not believe, disciples in the boat did not recognise him (John 20.15, 25, 21.4)

In Luke, we hear of disciples who mocked the women who were told Jesus was alive, the two on Emmaus Road did not recognise him, when meeting the 12 they thought he was a ghost. (Luke 24. 11, 16, 37)

[2] Since Jesus had died they had switched off their ‘Jesus scanner’.

Their emotions were all haywire, their spirits were as low as could be, so they switched off their ability to see Jesus. Despair/fear blinded them, made them unable to see, despite the evidence.

Even when they saw Jesus they retained their fear (eg. Matthew 28.9-10, Luke 24.37)

[3] Jesus was different in some way (back to what he was like before the Incarnation)

So it was not all their fault, as Jesus was different somehow.

Jesus went through locked doors

Only recognised when he broke bread – was it dark?

Jesus at the lakeside not recognised even though by then they knew he was raised.

Then in John 21.12: **None of them dared ask him “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord.**

Disappeared at the Ascension in a cloud (Luke 24.51 & Acts 1.9-10)

What is all this to us?

Sometimes our scientific background prevents us from trusting that he was raised.

Sometimes we turn off our Jesus scanner and cannot see Jesus in others or in the good going on around us, especially the good done by those not obviously his disciples.

Sometimes we treat Jesus just as human – big buddy in the sky, not as God incarnate in majesty.

This is not about forcing belief but being open to truth and trust even though we do not fully understand.