

## Finding Jesus

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INI - SDG

**Luke 24:13-35** <sup>13</sup> Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And they talked together of all these things which had happened. <sup>15</sup> So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. <sup>16</sup> But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. <sup>17</sup> And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" <sup>18</sup> Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" <sup>19</sup> And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> "and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. <sup>21</sup> "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. <sup>22</sup> "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. <sup>23</sup> "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. <sup>24</sup> "And certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." <sup>25</sup> Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" <sup>27</sup> And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. <sup>28</sup> Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. <sup>29</sup> But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" <sup>33</sup> So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, <sup>34</sup> saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" <sup>35</sup> And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.

The Emmaus disciples cannot be blamed or criticized for not recognizing Jesus. The scriptures imply that Jesus himself kept them from recognizing him. What they can be criticized for, where we often fail, and what Jesus himself rebukes them for is that they did not see Jesus when they read the scriptures.

**Luke 24:25 O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!**

Jesus purposely hides so that they might learn to find Him by faith in the scriptures rather than by sight in the flesh. IF we would learn to find Jesus we too must seek Him through the scriptures.

Many of Jesus appearances after His resurrection are marked with a call for His disciples to stop looking with their eyes and start seeing Him by faith through the Scriptures.

Jesus told Mary "Do not cling to me."

What he meant was that she needed to learn to cling by faith and not with hands. She needed to find Him and talk to Him and see Him in the Scriptures since she would no longer be able to find Him with her eyes.

Jesus revealed himself to Thomas and then said, "**blessed are they who have not seen but have believed.**"

What He meant was that those who see Him with the eyes of faith are more blessed than those who see Him with physical eyes. The disciples could see Jesus with physical eyes only for forty days, but those who learn to see Him by faith will see Him their whole lives.

The angels on the day of Christ's ascension asked the disciples "why do you stand gazing into heaven?"

They were implying that the disciples should stop looking with their eyes and instead walk by faith.

Jesus revealed to these two disciples how He was the fulfillment of ALL the scriptures. If we would see Jesus, if we would walk with Him, if we would find Jesus, we must do it by seeking Him in every word of Scripture.

The picture on the front of our bulletin, is the Emmaus disciples walking with Jesus. That picture is probably one of the top ten, maybe even top five favorite biblical paintings. It portrays an idyllic scene many of us would love to be part of, to walk with those two and hear what Jesus taught.

The truth is there is nothing stopping us from being one of those two disciples.

We can begin with the books of Moses Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and search to see how every word is a picture of Christ.

Some passages are obvious:

Isaac was sacrificed on the very spot where Jesus would die for the sins of all people.

The bronze serpent was lifted up, and all who look to it were saved. In the same way Jesus was lifted up and all who look to Him are saved from their sin.

The temple was the place where God came to meet and talk to His people. Jesus is the temple, where God comes to walk and talk with us.

Jacob saw the vision of the ladder going up to heaven. Jesus is the way to heaven. It is only through Jesus that we would get there.

Others are less obvious:

God killed an animal to make clothes for Adam and Eve to cover their nakedness, So Jesus would die to cover our sins in His righteousness.

Able offered a sacrifice acceptable to God. It was because in that sacrifice Able saw Jesus and the sacrifice He would make and believed in God's promises.

The flood destroyed the wicked and gave the earth new life. In Christ our sin and wickedness is washed away and we are given a new life in Him.

God brought water out of a rock to quench the thirst of the Israelites. Jesus told the Samaritan woman I will give you water "springing up into everlasting life."

Every word of scripture reveals Christ. If we would find Christ, if we would walk with Christ, we must seek Him in every word of scripture.

Every verse we want to ask: "What does this teach us about Jesus?"

The popular thing these days is to ask questions like:

What is relevant to me?

What does this have to do with my life?

Why do I care?

Scripture isn't here to teach us how to have our best life now, or ten steps to a perfect marriage. It does have a lot to say about us, our life, and our relationships, but that isn't its primary purpose.

It is here so that we can walk with Jesus, as Cleopas and His friend did. It is here so that we can see Jesus by faith even though we cannot see Him by sight. Through His word we can cling to His promises like Jacob who would not let the Lord go. We receive this and so much more when we seek to find Jesus in every word of scripture.

We want to walk with Jesus and the truth is the opportunity is right here.

There's a new romantic comedy Apple released just recently. They have been advertising it a lot. So, we watched it the other night. The plot was contrived and a bit ridiculous. The writing was not that great. The jokes were flat, but it was still fun.

The truth about romantic comedies is that they don't have to be good. We watch them anyway. We often enjoy them even when they aren't that good. All we really want out of a romantic comedy is that the boy and the girl are holding hands at the end and riding off into the sunset. We watch them because we want to believe in love and in happy endings.

We often think these things are elusive, but it is not as difficult to find a "happy ending" as we think.

I'm not saying that marriage isn't hard, but it is often hard primarily because we make it more difficult that it needs to be. 90% of that hard work is our own fault. We get in our own way. We create the very problems we must work so hard to fix. Because we don't recognize or appreciate what is right in front of us. Even those of who have never been married have been blessed with family and friends through whom God provides meaningful and loving relationships, if we would stop complaining long enough to appreciate what we have.

Much like the typical leads in any romantic comedy we often fail to recognize and to appreciate what is right in front of us. The Emmaus disciples portrays something that we greatly desire, however once again it is not as hard to find as we think. Like the Emmaus disciples we often are blind to the truth that Jesus is walking right beside us.

The first petition of the Lord's prayer reminds us:

"Hallowed be thy name"

Luther explains this petition this way:

"God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as children of God also live a holy life according to it."

If Luther is explaining how to keep God's name holy, why does he all of a sudden start talking about God's word? Because of course God's word is God's name. If we want to know Jesus, we need to know the scriptures. If we want to walk with Jesus, we need to seek and find him in every word of scripture.

### **Verse 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him**

First their eyes were opened through the scripture to see Him by faith. Jesus purposely hid himself from their eyes so that they might find Him in the scriptures, then their eyes were opened to see Him in person.

Dr. Arthur Just points out that the phrase "Their eyes were opened" is the same phrase used of Adam and Eve in the garden when they ate the fruit and fell into sin. Adam and Eve's eyes were open to sin and closed to God. Now the eyes of believers are opened again to see God, through His word.

The account of the Emmaus disciples is in a sense a parable of the history of the world. Sinful men blindly walk along talking about God amongst themselves. They seek answers in idle chit chat among each other. They think themselves very wise but understand nothing.

God comes among men as a man, and men do not recognize Him as God.

God opens their eyes through His word to heavenly truths they would not have dreamed were possible. Most importantly that that it was necessary for the Christ to die for the sins of all people and rise again.

Finally, eyes are open to see Him as He is.

Jesus rebukes us as he rebuked them because we are slow of heart to believe that Jesus is walking with us, because we slow to see Him by faith, because we slow to grab hold of His promises.

Yet Christ died for our sins. He rose for our justification. And He gave us His word to open our eyes to see Him.

You want to have a good marriage or relationship, remind yourself every morning, this spouse/friend was given to me by Jesus and everything that Jesus gives us is good. You want to start the day on the right remember that Jesus is walking with you today. You want to see Jesus, search the scripture and every word that you read ask yourself, what does this teach me about Jesus. When we see Jesus in every word of scriptures, we learn to know Him and to understand that He is walking with us.

**Amen**