

4-9-23 Easter Sunday

Sermon- On the Road to Emmaus

Scripture- Luke 24:13-35, CTW Psalm 116:12-19

Hymns- Pk, Ileana, and WDT to Choose

Theme- Jesus called the two disciples who were on the road to Emmaus that day "foolish and dull-minded" because they did not believe all that the prophets were talking about. This "on the road" story could be called "Faith in a Nutshell" because it spells out all the basics of our belief. As such, we should refer to it often, especially on this Easter occasion!

I. Jesus Gives Us the Story in Logical Segments:

A. Verses 13-17 What was the mood that afternoon? Now **that same day** two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They **stood still, their faces downcast.**

1. Easter Afternoon- The afternoon of the resurrection was surely the talk of the town- very few would have not heard about it. Why would they leave?

2. Two Disciples walking away- dejected, heads down, talking to themselves. The word "downcast" is used. We have all had times like that, as if to say "My God, why have you forsaken me?"

3. Sad, discussing what had happened- can't believe the events.

B. Verses 18-20 Jesus the patient and persistent Teacher comes along side of the two Disciples in disguise. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you **only a visitor** to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "**He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.**" ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him;

1. Their response was as if to say: "What rock did you crawl out from under?" They could not believe this person had not heard what had happened.

2. So Jesus tests their hearts by having them explain "**what things?**" Does he test our hearts? Yes, of course. What in the world would make us think that Christ has changed his method of stirring people's hearts? Have you felt Him testing yours lately? I sure have!

3. They describe Jesus as "A prophet mighty in word and deed"- at least they are still giving him credit for that.

C. Verses 21-24 They Fail the Test- "but we had hoped that he was the one who was **going to redeem Israel.** And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

1. He died- what kind of a King or Messiah is that? Even though they had been told of Christ's impending death and resurrection many times, they still did not fully understand it and were caught off guard...are you?

2. They had "Hoped he would redeem Israel"- not the Messiah they were looking for or had been told about for all those years. They thought that they would be heading for a whole new life in the land of milk and honey.

3. The Tomb is just empty! And their dreams and hopes too. That's what they felt inside- how do you feel when you think your prayers are not being answered?

D. In verses 25-27 Jesus rebukes and teaches- patiently and completely. Jesus took the time to share and explain the Scriptures. He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, **he explained to them** what was said in **all the Scriptures concerning himself.**

1. Calls them foolish and SLOW OF HEART- how do we stack up in that regard?

2. Treats them to a thorough review of Scripture- appeals to their Head, taking the time to go all the way back and cover the subject well. Think of the parallels to Philip and the Ethiopian- "how can I understand it unless someone explains it to me?"

3. Jesus is trying to tell them- "I am the one you thought you wanted- you just didn't understand my true nature!"

E. In verses 28-31 Jesus holds an Impromptu Communion- appeals to their hearts- a Spiritual Refreshment. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly

evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.³⁰ When he was **at the table** with them, he **took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.**³¹ **Then their eyes were opened** and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.

1. Jesus takes on role as host- this is culturally significant because it became Jesus' obligation to serve them.

2. Took bread blessed it and broke it- sound familiar? This is what he had told them about at the Last Supper.

3. As part of the process, their eyes were opened, they remember the HEART BURN- Wesley's "my heart was strangely warmed- we need to be on the lookout for this in our lives.

F. Verses 32-35 The response to their Heart Burn- They asked each other, "Were not our **hearts burning** within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"³³ They **got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.** There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together³⁴ and **saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."**³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

1. They **turned around** and faced the opposite way from the direction they had been heading. (This is the meaning of the word Repent)...the proper response!

2. Returned to Jerusalem (Followed Christ) Head, Heart and hands exercise was completed.

3. Remember that Wesley said that in order for it to be a bona fide movement of the Holy Spirit in your life, **it**

had to culminate in an irresistible urge to live the life in Christ that we are called to. It should be a natural response performed by one "slain in the spirit."

II. Jesus Disciplined them in these ways:

A. Wesley's prevenient grace- used the Holy Spirit to warm them up...he does the same for us.

B. Shared the Word- appealed to their heads with knowledge.

C. Communion as a celebration of the resurrection. Here he stirs their hearts to the message...that same message is waiting to stir our hearts as well...calling us to go deeper in our knowledge and understanding of the Savior and His atoning work on the cross...waiting to transform us...how have you responded?

D. Response- they turned and walked to Jerusalem to do the work for the kingdom they were called to do.

III. So Every Day, Can You Still See Jesus?

A. As a culmination of Old Testament promises, Jesus was a disappointment. To them he would have been just another false prophet.

B. Their response was to drift away- ours is too, when Jesus does not seem to fit our expectations.

C. They didn't know what they wanted, But they sure didn't want what they got!

D. Are we disappointed in Jesus? If we had our druthers wouldn't we change him? Like the Disciples we

need to learn more in an attempt to understand Jesus and the many ways he will interact with us.

E. Heart refers to the inner attitudes and commitments- Jesus knows our hearts- in practice people have a hard time believing this one:

Calvin- God "pricks our heart"

Wesley- heart "strangely warmed"

Finney- "waves of liquid love"

IV. What Can We Do?

During this current time of trial as we face the invisible enemy called Covid-19, Jesus calls our faith to be deep and active, now more than ever.

A. We need to recognize the way the Holy Spirit moves our hearts- if we become detached; we are not tuned in to the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

B. We need to review the Word- Jesus will take the same time with us that he took with the disciples! Ask him in prayer to show you his truth in the Word. He will look over your shoulder as you read. Remember that the Word was not written to inform you, it was written to TRANSFORM YOU!

C. Enjoy every meal as a gift from God and celebration of the resurrection. Let it renew you and turn you toward the God from whom all blessings flow! We need to take a fresh look at the many ways God rejuvenates us!

At every meal you are blessed to partake of, I would suggest that you stop, give a prayer of thanks for the food which He has provided and say these simple words "Lord we partake of this meal in remembrance of thee, use this food to strengthen us for the days ahead in thy Holy and powerful name, Amen!"

In worship we encounter the Risen Christ! In seminary we were taught that the sole function of the pastor in worship was to lead the congregation to an encounter with the risen Christ. That is what we all should be experiencing in our everyday lives!

D. I believe it was C. S. Lewis who said: "We do not believe in God because we believe in the Scriptures. We believe in the Scriptures because we have encountered the God of whom they speak!"

E. Have you looked for ways to encounter God? It is His heart's desire that you do!

F. Where are each of you on that road to Emmaus? Think of the detailed steps that Christ put these men through- where are you on that road? What direction are you going in, AWAY FROM or TOWARD, GOD? Is your heart burning for Jesus Christ. Now more than ever we all need that!

Let Us Prepare to Come to the table which Christ has prepared for all of us!

Let us pray...Blessed Father, Almighty God, we are excited because we see how you work with your people when their hearts have been stirred and they desire to be on the road to fulfillment in you. We commit ourselves to you and that divine process and ask that you prepare us for that journey as you did the men in this story. We ask that you then take our hands daily and lead us onward to new life in you. Nourish us at this table as only you can...amen!