**April 26, 2020 Luke 24:13-35**

***On the Road to Emmaus***

**Scripture: Luke 24:13-35 NRSV**

*(13)Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, (14)and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. (15)While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, (16)but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. (17)And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. (18)Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" (19)He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, (20)and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. (21)But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. (22)Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, (23)and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. (24)Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." (25)Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! (26)Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" (27)Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. (28)As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. (29)But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. (30)When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. (31)Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. (32)They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" (33)That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. (34)They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" (35)Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

**Notes:**

1. The journey to Emmaus is both a literal and a spiritual ***journey***.
2. Jesus ***seeks*** us.
   1. God did not want them to ***recognize*** Him.
   2. The ***events*** did not happen as expected.
   3. We are not always privy to God’s plan.
   4. They had little ***faith***.
   5. Be careful not to make the same ***mistake***.
3. Jesus opens our ***eyes***.
   1. If they would only ***believe*** they would have known who He was.
   2. Trust the testimony of ***Scripture***.
4. Jesus ***reveals*** Himself
   1. ***Fellowship*** with Jesus does not depend on our ability to see Him.
5. Jesus ***moves*** us to share.
   1. All who ***experience*** the risen Savior should be moved with similar emotions.
   2. Do you ***know*** Jesus this morning?
   3. Jesus wants to open ***our*** ***eyes*** to who He really is.

**Transcript:**

It’s difficult to recognize somebody when you are not looking for them. Especially when you expect them to be elsewhere. I remember after I graduated from college, a couple of friends from college showed up at my door. I really had no idea they were coming and they were supposed to be in California; so, when I answered the door in Pleasantville it took me a few moments to realize who they were.

But imagine if we had watched our friend die and placed in a grave. We would never expect to see them standing before us, right? If we saw them, we may think that person really resembles “so’n’so”, but we would not consider them to be our deceased friend. And then let’s say for the sake of argument, that it was our friend and they didn’t want to be recognized; the slightest disguise would hide their identity. We see it all the time on the soap operas. A character is killed off in a dramatic fashion; and then they come back with a different actor playing the role. We have all seen this in the soap operas, right? Well at least those of you who do watch soap operas.

Do you get what I am trying to say this morning? This morning we have a most vivid and insightful accounts of our Lord's appearances. It is after His resurrection, after Mary has seen him, and Luke is the only one of the four gospel writers to include this story. It is a story that reveals to us not only something about who we are, but how Jesus opens our eyes to see Him for who He is and about how we can come to know Him.

Turn with me in your bibles to Luke 24:13-35; as we share in the reading of our sermon passage for today, ***On the Road to Emmaus***.

*(13)Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, (14)and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. (15)While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, (16)but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. (17)And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. (18)Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" (19)He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, (20)and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. (21)But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. (22)Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, (23)and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. (24)Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." (25)Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! (26)Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" (27)Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. (28)As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. (29)But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. (30)When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. (31)Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. (32)They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" (33)That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. (34)They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" (35)Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread. Luke 24:13-35 NRSV*

The journey to Emmaus is both a literal and a spiritual journey. A journey that may be filled with various observations and discovery. On one hand it recounts the story of two disciples after the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord, they decide to walk to their village of Emmaus; a distance from Jerusalem of about seven miles. On the other hand, it outlines for us the journey a journey that we all take from not recognizing Jesus, to understanding what the Scripture says about Him, to recognizing Him for who He is, and finally to our giving witness of what we have experienced. Discover with me, as we celebrate our Lord's resurrection this morning, five things from this passage.

I wonder how many of us really understood that Jesus seeks us. Although the disciples knew who Jesus was, they did not recognize Him. They knew a lot about Him. They had been witnesses to all those things that had happened in Jerusalem. They had heard, no doubt, on many occasions the things Jesus testified about Himself. Yet, they were not able to recognize Jesus when they met Him.

There were several reasons they did not recognize Jesus: God did not want them to recognize Him. The original language conveys the sense that Jesus’ identity was hidden from them. God had a purpose in blinding their eyes from the reality of who he is. Jesus is not being cruel here. As he shares the events about Himself, the discussion allows them to learn about trusting God's promises. I have little doubt they had heard the prophecies of these events many times, but they either had not believed or they did not recognize them as they were unfolding.

The Events did not happened as expected. They had a preconceived idea of who Jesus was, what He had come to do, and how He should do it. But when things did not turn out like they thought they should, they dismissed the whole thing as a mere failure, as misplaced hope and trust. While God always has a plan, we are not always privy to that plan. When things don't turn out like we expect, instead of giving up and admitting defeat, perhaps we would be wise to see things differently, to see if maybe God is up to something we simply do not understand. What might we learn from the situation? What is God trying to show us? Where can we see God working in the midst of it all?

They had little faith. They had heard about Mary and other women who went to the tomb. They had opportunity to see the empty tomb for themselves and yet they had not believed. The power and supernatural work of God to raise Jesus from the dead was outside their ability to comprehend or even imagine. They had never seriously considered who Jesus was.

We need to be careful not to make the same mistake, We must not reduce what God has done simply because we cannot explain it or understand it. While God often uses natural things to accomplish His will, He also does things we can neither explain nor understand. He will use people we never expect. These two disciples knew something had happened, but it was beyond their level of faith to see things as they truly were. Just because they knew about Jesus does not mean they knew Him. I know many people, but that doesn’t mean I know who they are deep inside. I cannot say I know their struggles, their desires, or their passions.

Just because these two men could see Jesus does not mean they could see who He was. Many people today know who Jesus is. They have heard about Him, read about Him, use His name, and many even claim to know Him. But they would not recognized Him if they saw Him. Their eyes have not been opened. Knowing about Him and knowing Him are two different things.

Secondly notice that Jesus opens our eyes. Verse 27 says, "Then beginning with Moses and from all the prophets Jesus interpreted for them the things concerning Himself in all the Scripture." While we do not know the specific passages Jesus used, we know He explained to them the Scriptures with an explanation showing them how all of the Old Testament pointed to Jesus as its fulfillment.

Perhaps Jesus began with Genesis 3:15, where God cursed the serpent saying, "I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. And He will strike your head and you will strike His heel." From there maybe He pointed them to Deuteronomy 18:15, which says, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to Him." And from there to Isaiah 7:14 where God says, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive, have a son and name Him Immanuel." From there Jesus could have taken them to Isaiah 53:3: "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. He was like one people turned away from; He was despised, and we did not value Him."

Perhaps Jesus showed them what Isaiah 53:7 says: "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. Like a lamb led to the slaughter, and like a sheep silent before His shearers, He did not open His mouth." Maybe Jesus quoted to them Zechariah 12:10: "Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the house of David and the residents of Jerusalem, and they will look at Me whom they pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child and weep bitterly for Him as one weeps for a firstborn."

We know that Jesus walked them through the entirety of the revelation to show how it gave witness to who He was, why He had come, and why it was necessary. Jesus wanted them to see that if they would only believe what the Scriptures say about Him, they would understand why He came and why He had to suffer. They would have known who He was.

Scripture gives testimony of who Jesus is. He uses it today to open the eyes of those who do not know Him. Luke 16:31: "If they don't listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded if someone rises from the dead." John 1:45: "Philip found Nathaniel and told him, 'We have found the One Moses wrote about in the Law (and so did the prophets): Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth!'" In John 5:46: "For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me."

Many people will try to tell you who Jesus is. They will tell you He is one of many ways to get to Heaven. They will tell you He was a good man, a great prophet, a good teacher, or a rebel who defied the Roman authorities. But outside of a knowledge of Scripture you will never properly understand who Jesus is.

This is one of the reasons it’s important to believe that all of Scripture is God's word. For if it is untrustworthy at any point then it can be untrustworthy at every point. It is either all God's word or it is not His word at all. When you know the Scriptures, they will build your faith, and only through faith can you come to Jesus. The truth of Scripture about Jesus leads to personal faith in Jesus.

God prevented these two disciples from recognizing Jesus to convey a deep truth: Even if we were to see, we might still not believe. We must trust the testimony of Scripture. Jesus tells us that we must have the scriptural truth to understand who He is. Romans 10:17 tells us that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Outside of the word of God there is no reliable witness to who Jesus really is. The scripture tells us the truth about Jesus. But look in verse 30.

Jesus reveals Himself, it was only as they had fellowship with Jesus that He revealed Himself to them. Jesus reveals Himself to those whose eyes He has opened through the truths of His Word. It is not without significance that it is at the supper table that the disciples' are opened that they see Jesus for who He really is. After the resurrection, many appearances of Jesus are associated with table fellowship. This is true here, in Luke 24:41-43, in Acts 1:4, and in John 21:9-15. In the intimacy of fellowship Jesus reveals Himself to us. His working in our lives becomes clearer, and His provision and protection come into focus. But when they recognized Him He disappeared. Fellowship with Him was not going to depend on their ability to see Him, but rather upon their taking Him at His word, and believing that he was still there in their midst. And notice finally their response. Once they recognized Him, they could not help but share Him. They got up from the table, returned to Jerusalem and told the other disciples what they had seen.

Jesus moves us to share. When your eyes have been opened, you will want others to have their eyes opened. Can you imagine the excitement they must have felt? They said to one another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?" Their encounter with Jesus had been emotional. It had stirred them on the inside. It had moved their very hearts. And once moved they could not help but share. That very hour, dark as it was, late as it was, dangerous as the road was, they left for Jerusalem. They gave witness that Jesus was risen, that He had walked with them and talked with them, explained the Scriptures to them, and broke bread at their table.

All who have experienced the risen Savior should be moved with similar emotions. All who have come to know Him should react the same way. We should not be able to contain it. Jesus told Thomas in John 20:29, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Those who believe without seeing are blessed."

Do you know Jesus this morning? Have your eyes ever been opened to who He is and have your eyes recognized all that He has done for you? Do you know that He walks with you, every step of the way, day in and day out? Do you know that he talks with you? Even when the world seems to be screaming at as loud as possible, He is whispering his words of wisdom and love to you? Can you testify to His presence in your life? In the biggest of events, in the smallest of events, even now when we are in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic, do you see him? Do you have fellowship with Him? Has your experience with Him been so real, so moving, so life changing that it has caused you to tell others about Him? What will you do with Jesus this morning?

Jesus wants to open our eyes to who he really is and open our eyes to what he truly wants from us. Go deep with Jesus today, dig deeper into the scriptures, dedicate a special time to go deeper into prayer, make it a priority to be in relationship and fellowship with him and His church; and dig deeper into discipleship; find somebody who you can learn from, find somebody that you can teach, find somebody you can bond with; go deep as you to get started on your road to Emmaus.