

Eyes opened on the road Luke 24v13-35

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[0 : 00] at verse 13. Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus about seven miles from Jerusalem.

They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them. But they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, what are you discussing together as you walk along? They stood still, their faces downcast.

One of them named Cleopas asked him, are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened here in these days? 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. The chief priests and the rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death and they crucified him.

[1 : 04] 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. In addition, some of our women amazed us.

They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us what they had seen, a vision of angels who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said.

But they did not see Jesus. He said to them, how foolish you are and slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued as on as if he was going further.

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. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

[2 : 26] Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he disappeared from their sight. 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?

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven and those with them assembled together and saying, it is true, the Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon. Then the two told what had happened on the way and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Well, let's pray and ask for God's help as we look at his word together. Father, thank you for your word, for Luke's account, these eyewitness accounts of the risen Lord Jesus.

And yet we recognize that as we come to our word, that we need you by your Holy Spirit to open up our eyes. For we too want to see Jesus.

[3 : 52] We want to love him, obey him and follow him. Father, may your spirit descend with power so that our hearts might burn, burn with a love for you and burn with a joy that the Saviour has risen.

Help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, the most amazing event in history has just happened.

Remember what the angel said to the women as they came to the tomb looking for Jesus? Look back at chapter 24, verse 5. Why do you look for the living among the dead?

He is not here. He has risen. Listen, this is the climax of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. We followed and watched as Jesus has died on the cross.

We have seen how Jesus has been laid and buried in an empty tomb. Now, three days later, we are greeted with this earth-shattering, life-transforming, glorious news that Jesus is risen from the dead. [5 : 21] But no one has yet seen the risen Jesus. All the evidence so far points to the fact that he has risen, but nobody has seen Jesus.

Well, all that is about to change as Jesus now embarks on another journey with two people. One we know the name of.

His name is Cleopas. The other, was it his friend or perhaps his wife? We don't know. But on this journey, as Jesus walks with them, he makes himself known to them.

And we read these wonderful words, verse 31, As they walked along, then their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus.

Now, I think Luke is inviting us to walk this same journey. Because this journey is also our journey. As we walk with these two travellers, we too will come to experience and see the risen Jesus.

[6 : 30] It's a journey that begins with great disappointment, but it ends with burning hearts. So put on your boots, tie up your laces, and let's go for a walk.

First, disappointed by Jesus. Look back at verse 13. Now that same day, so this is Easter Sunday morning, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They had come to Jerusalem with great hopes, but now they were leaving with heavy hearts. Verse 14. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened, about, do you remember how the crowds had welcomed Jesus as King, but only a few days later they were now crying out, Crucify Him!

Verse 15. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus Himself came up and walked along with them. But they were kept from recognizing Him.

More on that later. He asked them, What are you discussing together as you walk along? They stood still, their faces downcast.

[8 : 02] Everything they had built their life upon has come crashing down. Dejected and depressed, they are disappointed with Jesus.

They are so disheartened, they can't even recognize Him, though He's with them. Why? Why can't they see Jesus?

Well, let me give you two reasons. First, they have false hopes about Jesus. Look at verse 21. It's kind of comical, the scene.

They're talking to the risen Jesus, verse 21, and they said, We had hoped that Jesus was the one who was going to redeem Israel. Jesus was their hope.

Remember, Israel was under the might and authority of their enemies, the Roman Empire. Now this Jesus person had come along. Verse 19, He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed, before God and all the people.

[9 : 08] He was teaching great things. He was doing mighty miracles. He was their hope. In their minds, He was going to come and kick the Romans out and redeem Israel.

But, verse 20, the chief priests and our rulers handed Him over to be sentenced to death and they crucified Him. Their powerful rescuing King was now dead.

The one to restore and redeem was broken and defeated. As Jesus died on the cross, their dreams were completely shattered.

They had false hopes. But they also had false expectations. Look at verse 22.

In addition, they're still talking to Jesus, of course. He said, Some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning, but didn't find His body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels who said, Jesus was alive.

[10 : 13] Now, resurrection implies that the person must first die. And for these couple of disciples, that's a huge problem.

If you claim to be God's king and you die, that's a problem. Jesus is meant to be the one with absolute power and supreme authority.

He's victorious, not defeated. He's the ruler, not a failure. He's powerful, not weak. He's the redeeming hero. The only thing the resurrection implies to them is that Jesus has died and Messiahs aren't meant to die.

What good is a resurrection when you've just been defeated by your enemies? It's too little, too late. You see, they had hoped that Jesus would redeem Israel.

They expected Jesus to defeat their enemies. But Jesus has been crushed, defeated, shamed by hanging on a cross, mocked by the sign that hangs above Him, King of the Jews.

[11 : 29] Jesus has failed them spectacularly. Look at the end of verse 17. They stood still, their faces downcast.

They are disappointed with Jesus. Everything they had built their life upon has come crashing down around their feet. Do you ever feel this way about Jesus?

I do. An unexpected illness comes and we hope that Jesus will heal us. We face financial pressures or some family concern and we expect Jesus to just take it away, make it all better.

But instead of healing, the sickness seems to progress. Instead of deliverance, God's only answer is more trials.

We pray more, we believe more, but the suffering seems to go on. Our hopes are gradually shattered and our expectations of Jesus are brutally destroyed.

[12 : 45] Like these two disciples, we stand still, our faces downcast. We're disappointed with Jesus.

Where are you, Jesus? What are you doing, Jesus? You said you were King, the all-powerful, all-healing, all-delivering God.

But slowly over time, the struggles and suffering cause us to doubt that Jesus is who he claims to be.

And if he is the so-called King, we can't really trust him. We're left disappointed with Jesus.

But as we go along this journey, not only do we see that we can be disappointed, but we are actually confronted by the risen Jesus.

[13 : 47] The wonderful thing about this journey is Jesus actually meets us in our disappointments. Look back to verse 15. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, here they are filled with deep, heavy hearts, broken and dejected, and in the midst of all of their brokenness, verse 15, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them.

How comforting is that? He doesn't ignore their situation. He's not immune to their heartache and their pain. Jesus draws alongside us in grace and gently confronts us.

First, he gently rebukes us. Go to verse 25. Jesus has been listening carefully to all their concerns. And he responds to them, verse 25, he said to them, how foolish you are. And how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

You're not thinking clearly. You're not seeing things as you should. You've lost your vision of who Jesus is.

[15 : 17] Verse 26, did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, which is shorthand for all the Old Testament, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself.

disciples. Now put yourself in the shoes of these two disciples and all that's gone on in their disappointment. What these two disciples desperately need is to be able to see the risen Jesus. And isn't that what we long for in our disappointments? In the midst of our troubles and struggles, maybe if Jesus just showed up just for one minute, just for thirty seconds, if the risen Jesus just appeared, then everything would be different.

Well, as Jesus gets alongside the downcast disciples, he does reveal himself, but look how he does it. He doesn't just jump out of his magic box and go, surprise, here I am, it's me, Jesus.

No, look at verse 27. And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself.

[16 : 49] Jesus conducts a Bible study. Are you surprised? He takes them on a journey through the Old Testament, pointing out who he is.

as they walk along the road, Jesus began to teach them the Bible. We can imagine what he might have said, starting in Genesis.

See, Adam, well, he was the one who failed the test in the Garden of Eden and brought the curse. But Jesus, well, he's the one who passed the test in the Garden of Gethsemane and brings you blessing.

Or, look at the Exodus, the great rescue of God's people who lived in slavery, who were under a brutal king. Well, Jesus is the one who's come to set you free from sin so that you can live for a better king.

Or, remember David. He was called by God to go and fight against Goliath, thereby securing a victory for his people. Well, Jesus is the one who stands in for us and fights our ultimate enemy, sin and death, so that we can share in his victory.

[18:02] Can you imagine what they would have been thinking as they heard Jesus teach about the Old Testament? And look at the temple. You know the temple back in Jerusalem, where God comes to meet his people, but yet only partially and only annually because of everybody's sin.

But Jesus, if you could meet him, well, he's the true temple where we can meet God without fear or guilt or shame, any time, any place.

But what about Nehemiah? Remember how God had directed him to rebuild the city of Jerusalem? Well, Jesus is much better than Nehemiah.

He is the one who's come to build the ultimate city, the new heavens and the new earth where we will be with him forever and ever. This must have been the greatest Bible study ever.

The risen Jesus teaching his way through the scriptures, through the Psalms, through the prophets, showing us that actually all our hopes, all our expectations are met in Jesus Christ.

[19:16] So let me ask the question, where do you run to when you are disappointed? Who do you look to for your comfort when things are turned upside down?

Do you run to your children? Maybe food? Maybe drink? Maybe it's a secret look at pornography? Or maybe it's a treat myself and go to the shops. Where do you run to when you are disappointed and you want to be lifted and be comforted?

Well, listen to what Jesus is saying. We meet the glory and the beauty of the risen Jesus who satisfies us and fulfills us and meets all our hopes and all our expectations as we read his words.

Jesus comforts, encourages, and restores us through the scriptures. So Jesus comes alongside us and gently rebukes us, showing us, revealing us to us who he is through the Bible.

[20:39] Secondly, he graciously teaches us. Look again at specifically what Jesus taught. Verse 26. Maybe you missed it.

Listen to what Jesus was teaching them as he went through the scriptures. Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?

Suffering and then glory? you see, their hope, their expectation was the Messiah, God's chosen king. Someone with power who was mighty and full of strength.

Someone who would rule and be victorious. But to start talking about a Messiah that suffers, well that's a contradiction. How can a shamed, mocked, dead and defeated man on a cross, how could he do anything for you?

You don't expect us to believe that. If Jesus is the Messiah, he's a failure. But Jesus needed to correct their expectations.

[21:49] You see, Jesus did have to die. He did come in weakness because his weakness was his power. His suffering was his victory.

The death of Jesus on the cross was not a failure, it's the fulfilment of God's master plan. The cross is the means of securing our ultimate redemption, forgiveness of all of our sins, freedom from Satan, a future, an eternity with him.

And the proof that he redeems us, the proof that he actually does a work in our life, is his resurrection from the dead. The resurrection proves that Jesus has absolute power and supreme authority.

You see, we need Jesus to come alongside us by his spirit to teach us. We need to be people who line up our hopes and our expectations with the Jesus of the Bible, not the Jesus of our own making.

Look what he says in verse 26, did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory? You see, look, as Jesus is teaching them, he's showing us the pattern for his life, that death must come first and then the resurrection.

[23:20] It's going to be suffering now and then glory. And as he's teaching them, he's showing them, look, this is the pattern for the journey of your life also.

Line up your hopes and your expectations behind the Jesus of the Bible. Death comes first, then the resurrection. Suffering comes now, glory later.

You see, we're still living in a sin cursed and broken world. And the effects are all around us. There's disorder, there's destruction, there's the sadness of death itself.

But the resurrection gives us hope as we walk through our journey of suffering that this is not the end. Brand new bodies in a brand new world awaits us and that future hope gives us peace and comfort today.

Suffering now, glory later. This is the journey that Jesus walked and this is the way that we must follow.

[24 : 34] So as we walk this journey, we can be disappointed, but as we are confronted by Jesus, we begin to see who he is and what to expect.

eyes opened by Jesus. I wonder, have you ever experienced the risen Jesus yourself?

You see, what Jesus teaches here is not easy to accept. It's hard. It's a hard way to follow. And like these two disciples, to be able to grasp it and to be able to follow, we need to have our eyes opened.

The journey begins, if you remember, if you look back at verse 15, it begins with their eyes being closed. Verse 15, as they walked, or as they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them, but they were kept from recognizing him.

Part of their blindness, of course, was not seeing Jesus the way they should see him. All they have seen is a failed, dead Jesus hanging on a cross.

[25 : 58] That's all they can see. So it's as if they're kept from recognizing him. They can't make him out. They can't understand what's gone on. But then they are confronted with the message of the scriptures.

Verse 31, then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he disappeared from their sight.

You see, it's through God's word that they began to see who Jesus was. They began to make sense of who Jesus is, that he had to die, that he had to rise.

We need to understand that as Jesus spoke to them, he opened up their eyes. And we need to pray that the Lord Jesus would open up our eyes so that we can begin to see him clearly.

and when he does, look what happens. Seeing Jesus clearly changes everything.

[27 : 07] Verse 32, 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.

One writer put it so well when he said, burdened hearts now become burning hearts. hearts. These guys are on fire.

Their downcast faces are beaming brightly. Their disappointment has turned to glorious joy. What a transformation from the outset of their journey to the end of the journey.

They start confused, hopeless, failed expectations. expectations. The end of their journey, their eyes are opened, filled with hope and certain expectation.

How did it all happen? What's the point in which everything comes clear? But we're told in verse 32, were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us?

[28 : 14] I would love for Jesus to walk through those doors physically.

To just burst in through those doors. To come in and sit right down beside you. Could you imagine that? To start comforting you.

To listen to your questions. How amazing that would be. if Jesus came in that door and sat down with you.

Well this may sound shocking to you. That wouldn't be the best way to meet Jesus. It's not the way Jesus has chosen to come to us and to meet with us.

Remember the two guys as they walked along the road? They still don't get it. But Jesus shows himself through the scriptures. He comes alongside us.

[29 : 19] He meets with us as we open up the Bible. It's in the pages of scripture that Jesus comes to us and meets us in our disappointments and teaches us and reveals us, reveals himself to us and encourages us and builds us up.

God's word. If you are disappointed today, if you are struggling to make sense of life today, go to God's words and by his Holy Spirit ask that your eyes would be opened and as you read through it ask, help me to see Jesus.

Jesus. And I guarantee you will see the risen Jesus and you will continue to see him until that day when the risen Jesus will return and then you will see him face to face and all our hopes and all our expectations will be fully and finally realised as we sit and eat and feast with him.

Disappointed, let the scriptures confront you, let your eyes be opened and your hearts burn with fire as we meet the risen Jesus.
Let's pray. Amen., here we go.