

PM Luke 24:13-35 The Road to Emmaus

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Date: 02 July 2023

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[0 : 0 0] Luke chapter 24 and we're reading from verse 13. That very day, two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

And they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

But their eyes were kept from recognising him. And he said to them, what is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?

And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them named Cleopas answered him, are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?

And he, Jesus, said to them, what things? And they said to him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet, mighty indeed and word before God and all the people.

[1 : 1 4] And how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucified him. 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 happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us.

They were at the tomb early in the morning. And when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.

Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the woman had said. But him they did not see. And he said to them, O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

[2 : 2 9] So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going further. But they urged him strongly saying, Stay with us, for it is towards evening and the day is now far spent.

So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.

And their eyes were opened. And they recognised him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road?

While he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, The Lord has risen indeed and has appeared to Simon.

Then they told what had happened on the road and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. So let's turn back to the passage that we read a few minutes ago in Luke chapter 24 verse 13.

- [3 : 52] You find it on page 1066. Where we have this wonderful account of Jesus, the risen Lord and Saviour, turning two of his followers' despair and agony into inexpressible joy.
- We're going to divide our time together into four sections. The first one, we're just going to look at the context of the passage. What has just happened in the days leading up to it.
- Secondly, we're going to take a close look at what actually happened on the road to Emmaus as Cleopas and his friend walked from Jerusalem to what we presume is their hometown.
- Then thirdly, we'll think about Jesus and how we find him in the Old Testament scriptures. And lastly, we'll seek to apply the passage to our lives.
- So let's begin by putting this passage into its context. Jesus had turned the lives of his followers upside down.
- [5 : 06] He had called a disparate group of fishermen, tax collectors, zealots, and other types of people to himself. And they had become his closest companions.
- The twelve disciples were closest to him. But when we read the New Testament, we find out there were many others who were involved with him personally and also in his ministry.
- And his followers had seen him perform amazing miracles. Water to wine. The paralysed walking.
- The storm stilled. The dead brought to life. They listened to wonder to Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God.
- And after three years of close company, they could find no fault in him and found him to be perfect and altogether beautiful.
- [6 : 14] They'd concluded, as Peter had said, you are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. By recognising Jesus to be the Messiah or Christ, they saw him as the promised one of the Old Testament.
- The one who would deliver his people. And by calling him the Son of the Living God, they recognised his deity.
- God in the flesh. God's kingdom on earth and its king had come. And then everything had gone completely wrong.
- I wonder whether we can put ourselves, even to a very limited extent, into the shoes of Jesus' friends and followers before, during, and in the aftermath of the crucifixion.
- Let's put a few verses of scripture together and try to imagine, as best as we can, what it must have been like for them to look on and to be even part of the events that were taking place.
- [7 : 33] Judas appeared, with him a crowd armed with swords and clubs. Then the disciples deserted him and fled.
- Peter began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, I don't know the man. He went outside and wept bitterly.
- The assembly condemned him as worthy of death. Then some began to spit at him. They blindfolded him and struck him with their fists.
- The crowd shouted all the louder, crucify him. The soldiers led Jesus away. They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him.
- They struck him on the head and spat on him. Then they led him out to crucify him. When they came to the place called the skull, there they crucified him.
- [8 : 57] Those who passed by heard insults at him, shaking their heads. In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him.

Jesus cried out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? When Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

Then Joseph rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. On the evening of the first day of the week, the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews.

How would you describe the state of Jesus' followers? Heartbroken to the core? Utterly devastated?

That the last three years had been for nothing? Without purpose? Lost? Frightened for their lives?

[10 : 18] Completely without hope? Why had Jesus' followers lost all hope? Well, we might say, well, that's obvious.

Their great leader, the Messiah, had been crucified. But perhaps the answer isn't that obvious. They had lost all hope because their hope had been based on the wrong foundation.

If you look at verses 20 to 21, we can see this. They crucified him, but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.

Jesus, in their eyes, could not be the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. To be executed on a tree went completely against the idea of what the promised Messiah would be like.

Indeed, scripture stated, as we saw this morning, that anyone hung on a tree was cursed by God. I think it's fair to say that they expected the Messiah of the Old Testament to be the king, but not the king who would also be the suffering servant.

[11 : 43] I think they'd listen to prophecy such as Isaiah 9, for a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us, and the government will rest on his shoulders, and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

But had they listened to the passages in the Old Testament that showed that this king, the Messiah, would also be a suffering saviour.

Isaiah 53, he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, by his wounds we are healed.

They had not taken in even what Jesus had said to them. Jesus had given them repeated warnings about his upcoming death.

They didn't understand that God the Son the Messiah had to take the curse of our sin in order for us to be released from it.

[13 : 02] Jesus' followers had lost all hope because their hope had been based on the wrong foundation. So far we thought about the background to the account of the road to Emmaus.

Secondly, let's now think about the road to Emmaus itself, the passage you find on page 1066. Now as I was reading through those texts that I brought together in the first section, what we see there is unsurpassed darkness, especially for the disciples and these two men who have no idea what is coming next.

but into this unsurpassed darkness comes this amazing account. Two of Jesus' followers have been in Jerusalem and are on a seven mile walk home, a similar distance I think from here to Loch Mabin.

They are devastated to the core as they go over what has happened over the last three or four days. In many ways their walk from Jerusalem perhaps symbolised them walking away from their hope and their faith in Jesus.

A fellow walker joins them asking them what they are talking about and they find it hard to believe that the third man can even ask this question.

[14 : 40] for what has happened in Jerusalem is the only news and it is huge news. Some are overjoyed, ecstatic that Jesus is no more.

Others like these two men are broken, devastated. But everybody knows. Do you notice how the fellow walker teases out the state of these two men by asking questions?

Look at verse 17. What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk? Verse 19. What things?

We see the way the men are thinking. Jesus has been degraded in their minds. Look at verse 19. From Messiah to a prophet.

We can see in verse 21 that their hope that Jesus was the Messiah has been dealt a deathly blow by his crucifixion. Jesus, their fellow walker, listens to them as they tell him of the situation from their perspective.

[16 : 03] Now it would seem from verses 21 to 24 that they do still have a fragment of hope. They state it as the third day since Jesus was crucified.

Were they just stating amazement that their new companion had not heard what had happened in the last three days? Or were perhaps were they recalling what Jesus had said?

on the third day he will rise again. The two men tell their companion of what happened that very morning.

Of how some of Jesus' female followers had gone to the tomb and they had found it empty and the angels had told them that Jesus was alive.

It seems that the two men are unsure of what they should make of this news. And this is when Jesus takes over. Look at verses 25 to 28.

[17 : 07] Jesus I'm sure without scriptures in his hand shows the two men from the Old Testament that the Messiah the King had also to be the suffering servant.

Oh to be a fly on the wall as it were to have been present as Jesus lovingly but with complete authority takes him through the Old Testament scriptures his own word and shows these two men his presence in it from Moses right through the prophets.

The two men have reached their destination and they urge Jesus to stay it's late they're hungry and they want to spend more time with this unique man.

Tells us that their ears were burning within them. Why didn't these two men recognise the companion until he gave thanks and broke the bread?

Well verse 16 and verse 31 make it clear that they were divinely kept from recognising him. I wonder why that would be.

[18 : 23] Perhaps Jesus wanted them to know him primarily through the scriptures rather than through the miracle of him being in their company.

He would not spend time like this with them again but they would always have the scriptures in which to root and build their faith in Jesus.

As Jesus said to Thomas later on, blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. From a human point of view it's not surprising that these two men didn't recognise Jesus.

If they hadn't been present at the crucifixion their friends had been and Jesus was now in his resurrection body. Similar but not instantly recognisable to grieving eyes for whom death was always the end.

But there were characteristics about Jesus that had not changed. Especially spiritual characteristics. The way he gave thanks for the meal and broke the bread.

[19 : 41] what a joyous as the two men returned those seven miles to Jerusalem probably now in the dark.

What a difference between the journey home and then the return journey back to Jerusalem. The heaviest hearts and feet had become the very lightest.

What joy as he found the eleven disciples who had been hiding for fear of the Jews the doors locked and they also have learned the most amazing of news.

And as I read this account and I'm sure the same is true of you I find the greatest beauty and the deepest love in Jesus' character as he teaches and cares for these two broken men.

And this is the same Jesus who still reaches out to us equally broken through his word and presence and with the same beauty, love and care.

[20 : 52] We'll just go on to our third point in a second. So the third part of our thoughts is to take a step back like we've been doing with the Psalms I suppose singing this morning and this evening and to think of what Jesus might have shared with these two men in the section from verses 26 and 27.

Now we can't know where he took these two men but we can still look back and find out for ourselves. he took them through the Old Testament from Moses to the prophets and explained to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

The Messiah who had to suffer. Again, something I've said already today. Notice how the scriptures shine light in Jesus and I'm talking about the Old Testament scriptures here, how they shine light in Jesus and sometimes more light than what we gain even in the New Testament.

Let's listen to some of the amazing prophecies that Jesus might have brought to the attention of these two men, that wonderful evening of resurrection. Moses in Deuteronomy 18.

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites.

[22 : 24] You must listen to him. Isaiah 7 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Emmanuel.

Micah 5 But you Bethlehem, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

Isaiah 42 Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight. I will put my spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.

A bruised reed he will not break and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. Jeremiah chapter 31 The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.

Isaiah 53 He was despised and rejected by man, a man of suffering and familiar with pain.

[23 : 47] Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised. And we held him in low esteem. Psalm 41 Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.

Zechariah chapter 11 I told them, if you think it best, give me my pay, but if not, keep it. So they paid me thirty pieces of silver.

Psalm 22 which we sang earlier on. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?

Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me. They pierce my hands and my feet. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.

Psalm 69 They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar to drink. Psalm 16 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices.

[25 : 11] My body also will rest secure because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay. You made known to me the path of life.

You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Isaiah 53 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied.

My righteous servant will justify many and he will bear their iniquities. Job 19 I know that my redeemer lives and that in the end he will stand on the earth.

And lastly, moving forward to the end times. Daniel chapter 7 in my vision I looked and there before me was one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven.

He approached the ancient of days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power. All nations and peoples of every language worshipped him.

[26 : 31] His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. I'm going to finish now with six short applications, they're all quite short, for us to take from the account of the road to Emmaus.

So firstly, I think it's been very clear tonight and this morning as well, the importance of the Old Testament. I think there's a danger that we might think of the Old Testament as second class scripture compared to the first class of the New Testament.

Now, we would recommend that people interested in Christianity or new believers start with the Gospels rather than Old Testament history or prophecy, but as we grow as Christians we should be developing our knowledge and understanding of the Old Testament scriptures.

Paul tells us as we thought about this morning, all scripture is God-breathed, it's inspired by God. Jesus makes it so personal, he says in John 5 that the Old Testament scriptures speak of me.

As we've already noted several times today, sometimes the prophecies bring us the closest to Jesus' experiences, particularly on the cross.

[28 : 06] The Gospels tell us in the third person, Psalm 22, Psalm 69, Isaiah 53 for example, tell us in the first person. So our first application is we find and get to know Jesus and the scriptures as a whole.

we therefore need to be in the old as well as the new. Our second application is the importance of taking from scripture in a balanced way.

The Bible is a big book. We all have our favourite verses in chapters, I'm sure if it was to ask round, maybe Romans 9 for example, or Psalm 23, just as examples would be your favourite passages.

Often these passages bring us great comfort and assurance. The followers of Jesus, like the two on the road to Emmaus, were like that.

I'm sure they loved to read and hold on to the passages about the Messiah, the King, who would rule over and save his people.

[29 : 20] They missed. they perhaps ignored or glossed over the other side, that the Messiah would experience extreme suffering and brutality and die a cursed death.

It might be good for us to consider if we let the whole of scripture speak to us, or if we are somewhat selective. So our second application is that we have to be careful that we read the Bible in a balanced way.

We need to give equal weight to the comfort and the challenge. We need to give equal thought to the encouragement and the warnings.

Our approach to the Bible cannot be in any way pick and mix. third application is of vital importance and perhaps it's the most important thing that will come out of this evening's message.

Third application is that we need to have faith in the suffering Messiah. Verse 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things?

[30 : 40] The two men on the road to Emmaus loved Jesus. They recognised him as king. They and the disciples had however not grasped that Jesus could only be their saviour, could only be of eternal benefit to them through his sacrificial death for them.

So we likewise need to recognise who Jesus is. the son of God. But we need more. Our faith in him has to be centred on what he did for us on the cross of Calvary.

Christ without the cross is of no benefit to anyone. Christianity without the cross is a dead religion.

Jesus states that it was necessary for him to suffer and die on the cross. And for that great sacrifice to become effective for us, for him to wash our sins away, it is also necessary for us to put our trust in the suffering saviour.

Third application, we need to have faith in the suffering Messiah. fourthly, for the Christian, I think this passage is a great insight into when things go wrong, maybe very wrong, and when it seems like all we have believed in has been shattered.

[32 : 22] I think there will be times in all our lives when we are broken by our circumstances. All we have believed in and hoped for seems to be shattered.

isn't that what happened to these two men? And their experience led them to believe that they were on their own, that their faith was misplaced, that their hope was gone.

This passage shows us that our thoughts and emotions can be so wrong. You think of the footprints poem, just like this situation here, Jesus is right beside them, right beside us in our devastation, slowly revealing himself to us, comforting us and then filling us with joy.

I think we learn from these two men on the road to Maus that in our devastation, Jesus is so close, even when we're not aware of this reality, and that he's about to help and bring renewal.

Our fifth application, two to go, is also for the Christian. It's a lovely application, I think. Jesus doesn't see our doubts, even our major doubts, and give up on us.

[33 : 52] We read from Isaiah earlier on, a characteristic of the Messiah. a bruised reed he will not break, a smouldering wick he will not snuff out.

These two men are at the point, I think, of abandoning their faith. We had hoped, but these men and the disciples are very much bruised reeds that will snap in the storm.

their smouldering wicks whose flame has gone out. Life is all but gone. But Jesus revives, heals, and restores.

This is the nature of our Saviour. Two thousand years ago, and today. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and forever.

are. And Paul gives us that wonderful but simple truth in Philippians. He who began a good work in these two men, in you, will carry on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

[35 : 08] Jesus. Our sixth and final application is a word of utmost hope and joy.

In fact, when I was thinking about it, I was thinking, is there a more wonderful word? I wonder if you can guess what word I'm talking about just now. It's the word of, the word resurrection.

resurrection. As Jesus physically rose from the dead, with a perfect, eternal body, so will those who trust in him.

I'm sure you know 1 Corinthians 15. Well, it's a remarkable chapter. We read there, Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

each in his own term. Christ, the first fruits, then when he comes, those who belong to him. Now, up until now, if you are a Christian, your salvation has been spiritual.

[36 : 21] Forgiveness, a new birth in your soul, starting to become more like Jesus. But there has been no physical renewal.

we continue to get older and get here. On the day of Jesus' return, our salvation will become physical also.

God's new creation, including those who have faith in Jesus, will be finally and fully restored. What a hope when we face death, as we all do.

I remember visiting my granny's brother in Tain. It was the last week or so of his life. He had become a Christian relatively late in his life.

He was lying weak in bed and he asked me to read this chapter, 1 Corinthians chapter 15. As I read, I sensed that he was waiting for a specific verse to arrive and that he was hungering for that verse.

[37 : 36] I read on and I read on. Eventually I reached verse 42. The body that is sown is perishable. It is raised imperishable.

It is sown in dishonour. It is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. It is sown a natural body.

It is raised a spiritual body. My great uncle stopped me. I think he said to me, that is enough. It was apparent he was just chewing over this verse, taking it in by faith and trust into his soul, heart and mind.

Confident, certain, content, and even joyful as he approached death. Nothing other than faith, in the risen Christ, the suffering saviour, can give us this amazing and certain hope of resurrection.

If you have the certain hope, praise God. If you don't yet, Jesus tells us that whoever seeks him will find him.

[39 : 00] Whoever calls on his name will be saved. God is going to finish now with a quote about Jesus. I think with all reverence that 1 Corinthians 15 allows me to apply this to the believer as well.

What is true of Jesus will one day be true of ourselves who are in Christ. Christ, it was said of Jesus, he is not here, he is risen.

Come and see the place where he lay. we are going to finish our service now singing what for me is one of the most wonderful hymns, Man of Sorrows.

We are looking at the Man of Sorrows this evening and you will find this on your bulletin on the reverse side and it speaks of the Saviour who suffered on our behalf, who rose from the grave and who reigns and who will return to bring his ransomed and his resurrected people to that amazing new creation.