

AM Luke 24:13-35 On the Road to Emmaus

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[0 : 00] Bibles to the Gospel of Luke, Luke chapter 24, Luke chapter 24, and we shall begin our reading at verse 13.

! Luke 24, verse 13, which you'll find on page 1066, 1066 of the Church Bibles.

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 recognizing him. And he said to them, what is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?

[1 : 09] 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 said to them, what things? And they said to him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.

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.

[2 : 17] Some 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.

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. 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 table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.

[3 : 30] And their eyes were opened and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. And 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. Amen.

And may God bless to us that reading from his word and to his name be the praise. Shall we please turn with me in your Bibles to the Gospel of Luke, the passage we read together, Luke chapter 24.

Luke chapter 24. Luke chapter 24.

[5 : 05] Luke chapter 24.

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■ They hoped that he was the one who would redeem Israel.

[7 : 03] They hoped that he was the promised Messiah. Cleopas and his companion had pinned their hopes on Jesus.

They probably hoped that he would deliver them from bondage to Rome and restore their national independence. But all their hopes had been dashed.

His shameful death on our Roman cross just two days before has put paid to their dreams. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death and they crucified him.

The civil and religious authorities had combined to put Jesus to death. And with his death, the hopes of Cleopas and his friend had died.

They still acknowledged that Jesus was a thoroughly impressive individual. He hasn't let them down because of anything he did.

[8 : 15] But his untimely death at the hands of others appears to prove beyond any doubt that he wasn't after all the long-awaited Messiah.

He promised so much. His words and deeds were so powerful. But an ignominious death on our Roman cross seems to have drawn a line under it all.

The events which took place earlier that day haven't significantly lifted their spirits.

Cleopas and his friend admit their amazement that women who some hours earlier had visited the tomb where Jesus was laid had come back saying that the tomb was empty.

They say in verse 22 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.

[9 : 33] And Cleopas and his friend knew that the men who had gone to the tomb on hearing the women's story had found things just as they had said.

The tomb was empty. Jesus wasn't there. The body was gone. Him they did not see. Cleopas and his friend accept that the body has gone.

But they can't bring themselves to believe that Jesus is alive. They're bewildered. But still downcast.

The body may have disappeared but they're not aware that anyone has actually seen Jesus. Why should they accept an uncorroborated story that he's alive again?

They're hard headed enough not to clutch at straws not to believe an unconfirmed report. It's only a personal encounter with the risen Jesus which convinces this sceptical pair that Jesus really has risen from the dead.

[10 : 49] This story has the ring of truth about it hasn't it? Cleopas and his friend aren't hoping against hope that they've got it wrong.

Instead they're grappling with the painful implications of what they see as the realities of the situation. you can hear the poignancy in their words we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel but they no longer had hope.

And yet in the face of their disappointment and despite their scepticism they become convinced that the person who drew alongside them as they walked along the road the person who walked with them and who later had supper with them is none other than Jesus a Jesus who is very much alive.

If a sceptical pair like Cleopas and his companion can meet with the risen Jesus and be persuaded that he is indeed alive doesn't that underline the truth of the resurrection?

when they go back to Jerusalem to share with the disciples and the other followers what they now know they discover that the disciples are now convinced that Jesus is alive too.

[12 : 37] They say the Lord has risen indeed he has appeared to Simon. The resurrection is true.

The fact of the resurrection is fundamental to the gospel. Jesus actually rose from the dead. The tomb was empty.

Jesus rose to life again. The resurrection isn't what a former bishop of Durham called it a few years ago a conjuring trick with bones.

No there was nobody in the tomb Jesus had risen. The resurrection is a fact. It's true. The apostle Paul tells the Christians in Corinth that the resurrection is of first importance.

It's a primary truth. And he goes on to say if Christ has not been raised then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

[13 : 46] You see for Paul as for Luke the resurrection was a non-negotiable fact. Christian faith is based on historical facts supremely the life death resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus.

Despite their emotional trauma despite their initial skepticism Cleopas and his friend became convinced of the truth of the resurrection and so must we it's something we need to be clear about the resurrection is true.

The second thing I'd like to note from this passage is that Jesus' death was no accident Jesus' death was no accident. Cleopas and his friend thought Jesus' death was a pointless end to a promising life but Jesus says to them in verse 25 O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory and Jesus goes on to expound to Cleopas and his companion relevant Old Testament scriptures no doubt he points them to passages which speak about the necessity of sacrifice for sin to be atoned for passages which speak about the suffering servant and passages like

Psalms 16 perhaps which hold out the promise of resurrection Jesus' death wasn't an unfortunate accident it wasn't a rogue event that sadly cut off a potentially useful life it happened in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies more than that it happened in fulfillment of God's plan and purpose from all eternity to save and redeem a lost humanity there was no other way to quote the words of a well known Easter hymn there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin he only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in in accordance with the father's will

Christ came into our world to live the life we ought to have lived and to die the death we deserve to die it was only by dying for the sins of his people that the Messiah could fulfill his father's will and receive his reward Cleopas and his friend thought that the Messiah might save his people from suffering what they didn't realize was that the Messiah would save his people through his own suffering that Christ had to suffer these things and then enter his glory listen to the familiar words of the apostle Paul though Christ was in the form of God he did not count equality with

[18 : 03] God something to be grasped but made himself nothing taking the form of a servant being made being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death even death on a cross therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed in him the name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father the exaltation of Christ to the highest place was dependent on his humiliation even to the point of death

Luke has earlier recounted the crucifixion and the events which led up to it without providing us with much commentary on their significance but here in the Emmaus story he makes explicit the necessity of the cross in the plan and purpose of God he was delivered over to death for our sins and raised again for our justification Jesus death was no accident Cleopas and his friend needed to see that and so must we the resurrection is true Jesus death was no accident the third thing I'd like to draw from this passage is that Jesus still makes himself known

Jesus still makes himself known after he rose from the dead Jesus appeared to his followers on a number of occasions over a period of forty days he had a real physical presence they were able to touch him they were able to converse with him but when the forty days were over he ascended to heaven no longer was he physically present on earth and yet he still makes himself known to those who believe in him and I think in this passage Luke points to two ways in which he does that first of all note how Jesus explains to Cleopas and his friend the significance of his death verse 27 beginning with

Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself Jesus effectively gives Cleopas and his friend an in-depth bible study as he highlights and explains passages of scripture that speak about himself and his mission Cleopas and his friend find it exciting afterwards they say to each other in verse 32 did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road while he opened to us the scriptures I'm sure Luke wants his readers to see that the risen and ascended Jesus still reveals himself through the scriptures the Old Testament scriptures are now of course supplemented by those of the

New Testament and together they're the principal means by which Christ makes himself known to us today by his spirit he speaks to us through the Bible it's as we respond to Christ's revelation of himself in scripture that we come to put our trust in him and as we keep on hearing and responding to scripture we get to know him better I wonder if we share something of the excitement of Cleopas and his companion as they listened to scripture and heard it explained Jesus reveals himself to us through his word the second thing to note is when Cleopas and his friend actually recognized Jesus although he walked with them for possibly several miles they did not realize at that point who he was verse 16 says that they were kept from recognizing him it's not entirely clear why that was the gospel suggests that

[23 : 35] Jesus resurrection body was in some respects different it was as they say the same but different possibly Cleopas and his friend were kept from recognizing Jesus immediately because they needed time to absorb from the scriptures as Jesus expounded them the significance of recent events that was no doubt important in any case it was only as Cleopas and his companion were having supper with Jesus having persuaded him to lodge with them for the night that their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus for who he was look with me at verses 30 and 31 when he was at table with them he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them and their eyes were opened and they recognized him the words of verse 30 are interesting he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them do these words remind you of another meal which had been held just a few days earlier in recounting the story of the last supper in chapter 22

Luke writes something very similar he writes he took bread gave thanks and broke it and gave it to them saying this is my body given for you do this in remembrance of me Luke uses almost the same form of words in both passages the language he uses in chapter 24 echoes the language he uses in chapter 22 he seems to be reminding his readers that just as Cleopas and his companion recognize Jesus in the breaking of bread as he broke bread with them so Jesus followers in every age may recognize him in a special way as they break bread in remembrance of him in accordance with his command and it's interesting how in verse 35

Cleopas and his friend tell the disciples in Jerusalem how Jesus was known to them in the breaking of bread Jesus still makes himself known to his people through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper the Lord's Supper is a means of grace Horatius Bonner the 19th century hymn writer wrote a well known communion hymn which begins with these words here oh my Lord I see thee face to face here would I touch and handle things unseen here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace and all my weariness upon thee lean the resurrection is true

Jesus death was no accident Jesus still makes himself known the fourth thing we learn from this passage is that the resurrection puts a new perspective on things the resurrection puts a new perspective on things when we're introduced to Cleopas and his friend they're sad and disconsolate their faces are downcast the bottom has fallen out of their world but when they discover for themselves that Jesus is alive that he has indeed risen!

from their dead their mood is transformed they see everything in a totally different light even though it's now dark they go back to Jerusalem straight away because they have wonderful news for their disciples they thought their hopes were dashed they thought Jesus was dead but now they know for certain that he's alive it is worth remembering that the Christian faith is a resurrection faith we believe in a risen saviour a saviour who experienced death but did not stay dead a saviour who now lives by the power of an endless life that has all sorts of implications the resurrection guarantees that Jesus death was not in vain his sacrifice of himself for us and for our salvation is effective now that he has been raised from the dead we know he has secured the justification of all who believe in him the resurrection also means that the

[29 : 39] Christian has hope even in the face of death because he lives we shall live also that's why Paul urged the Christians in Thessalonica not to grieve for their dead like the rest of men who have no hope we believe he writes that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him so we will be with the Lord forever for believers death is not the end it's the gateway into life in all its fullness I think it was D.L.

Moody who used to say one day they'll tell you that D.L. Moody the great evangelist is dead don't you believe it I'll be more alive than ever I was we also see the pattern of death and resurrection in our lives here and now if we're Christians the apostle Paul didn't find his life and ministry easy much of the time but he had a positive perspective on his sufferings he writes we are hard pressed on every side but not crushed perplexed but not in despair persecuted but not abandoned struck down but not destroyed he goes on we always carry around in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of

Jesus might be revealed in our body for we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus sake so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body the trials and difficulties Paul faced allowed him to experience and demonstrate the resurrection life of Christ as he copes with the problems that come his way by Christ's grace and in his strength he becomes more like his savior he becomes more useful to him and more fitted for the life of the world to come the resurrection gives hope in the face of the pressures and difficulties that come our way and even in the face of death itself the resurrection puts a new perspective on things the fifth and last thing

I'd like to highlight from the passage is that the Lord Jesus walks with us the Lord Jesus walks with us this story begins with a journey Cleopas and his companion are walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus as they walk the risen Jesus draws along side them and strikes up a conversation with them they thought he'd abandoned them but instead he joins them on their journey and accompanies them on their way Cleopas and his friend are not alone Jesus himself is with them and he still accompanies his people on their journey through life didn't he say shortly before he died I will ask the father and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever the spirit of truth you know him for he lives with you and will be in you

I will not leave you as orphans I will come to you before long the world will not see me anymore but you will see me you see the risen Lord Jesus is with his people by his spirit there's good objective evidence for the resurrection but the believer should also have a measure of subjective evidence that Jesus is alive in the words of an old chorus he lives he lives Christ Jesus lives today he walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way he lives he lives salvation to impart you ask me how I know he lives he lives within my heart that is the point to which the

[35 : 00] Easter message should bring each one of us the resurrection is true Jesus death was no accident Jesus still makes himself known the resurrection puts a new perspective on things all these things are gloriously true but the question is are they true for you have they been made real to you have you put your trust in this risen Jesus can you say you ask me how I know he lives he lives within my heart shall we pray pray