

# Luke 24 28-29

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[ 0 : 00 ] Can we turn back to the passage that we read together in Luke's Gospel in chapter 24, the last chapter in Luke's Gospel.

You can read again, verses 28 and 29. 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 toward evening, and the day is now far spent.

So he went in to stay with them. We have here in this chapter two people who seem to have given up on Jesus because things didn't go quite as they expected they would.

They left the other disciples in Jerusalem and they've trudged or are trudging home to Emmaus, downcast and dejected and dismayed.

You know, that's one reason, probably the reason that most folk turn away from the Gospel or turn away from Jesus is because of some disappointment in their life.

[ 1 : 28 ] Because something happens and things don't work out quite like they expected them to. These two folk, for them, this man they had set their hopes on, he was dead as far as they were concerned.

And he's let them down. And all their expectations have come to nothing. All their hopes and plans have faded away over this weekend of Jesus' crucifixion.

But Jesus wasn't dead. He was very much alive. And he was about to reveal himself to these two men and to begin to teach them that things don't always work out the way we expect them to.

The Bible tells us clearly that God's ways are not our ways. So having this morning looked at Christ's death and remembered Christ's death as he commands us to, I want us to remember tonight that this Christ whom's death we remembered is living.

He has risen. And that's what Sunday is all about. The Lord's day is a remembrance that there was a resurrection and that we worship a risen Savior.

[ 2 : 51 ] And if there's one thing that the resurrection of Jesus teaches us, it is this. That no matter how hopeless things appear, that God is always in control.

And God is always working out his purposes, no matter how hopeless they might appear to us. And we need to learn, myself included, to wait on God.

Not to wait and to wait and to know that he does all things well.

And if you're a Christian, the Bible guarantees that he works all things for the good of those who love him. But we're slow learners.

And it's at these times of trial and these times of testing and these times when things go pear-shaped that we should be trusting him more, rather than like these disciples who were ready to give up and walk away and go home.

[ 4 : 04 ] In the film, Chariots of Fire, the British sprinter Harold Abraham says, well, he's obsessed with winning.

All he can think about is winning. And in a warm-up hundred-meter race, he gets beaten by Eric Little. And he takes the huff. And Abraham says to his sister, if I can't win it, I'm not going to be in it. And he's ready to chuck it and walk away. And his sister, who's much wiser than him, says to him, if you're not in it, you will never win it.

If you're not in it, you'll never win it. There are disappointments that we will face in life, friends, like these two on the road to Emmaus.

And that is not a time to turn away or turn your back on Jesus. That is a time to invite him into your home like these two did. And you will experience fellowship with him like you've never experienced before in your life.

[ 5 : 14 ] But as we study this passage, we see there's some strange things going on as Jesus chats to these two depressed characters who have decided to pack up and go home.

Because Jesus asks them, what are they talking about? And they say, you must be the only visitor in Jerusalem who doesn't know all that happened this weekend.

And Jesus says, what things? Why would he say what things when he was right at the center of it? And then when they reach their hometown of Emmaus, we read that Jesus acted as if he would have gone further.

What's all the pretending about? Well, consider why Jesus behaved the way he did. I want to look at three things, three headings tonight as we study this chapter together.

The first is this, they talked, these two disciples, and we'll listen in to what they had to say.

Secondly, they listened, and we will listen in to what Jesus had to say.

[ 6 : 24 ] And then thirdly, they invited him in, and we'll notice the outcome of that invitation. These three things, then, they talked, they listened, and they invited him in.

Now, we don't know much about these two characters. One of them is called Cleopas, I think it's in verse 18, we read that. The other might be his wife.

We always assume that these are two men, but we're not told that. We're not told that. Some translations, I think, translate verse 25 as, you foolish men.

But the ESV translates it correctly as, oh, foolish ones, because the original doesn't make it male or female. But really, we just, we don't know. They were two followers of Jesus who had had a pretty major disappointment.

And here they are on this first day of the week, making the seven-mile trek from Jerusalem to Emmaus, going over the weekend's events. And what a weekend it was, their hero, their leader, Jesus, to them is dead.

[ 7 : 35 ] And all their hopes have vanished with him. Two confused disciples, humbling home to Emmaus. Let's look, then, firstly at they talked.

We read in verse 15. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself threw near and went with them. This word that's translated as disgust, it means an impassioned, can't even mean a heated discussion.

But clearly, clearly they're going over and over this again. They just can't get their heads round the crucifixion. They cannot understand why Jesus had to die.

And it's possible that you're here tonight, and that's exactly your situation. You know that there's something about this book. You know that there's something about the gospel.

And maybe you know that that's what's missing in your life. But you just can't get your head round it. You cannot grasp it. You cannot understand it.

[ 8 : 52 ] That's what they were like. And then this man, whom they thought was dead, turns up and walks along with them. And we're told something strange in verse 16.

That they didn't recognize him. They didn't recognize him. Now, that is strange because as followers of Jesus, they would have been in his company most days. So how on earth did they not recognize him?

Well, verse 16 tells us how not. Because their eyes were kept from recognizing him. Their eyes were kept. You know, there's an important scriptural truth being taught here that we would do well to grasp.

And it is this, that you will never understand the gospel unless God himself opens your eyes and your heart to understand it.

Their eyes were kept. And your eyes are too, unless God himself does it. You see, the gospel is not something that we grasp academically.

[ 10 : 01 ] It is something that we are shown spiritually. And you tonight could be the smartest kid on the block. But try as you might, you will never make yourself a Christian.

Does that mean you've got to be simple to be a Christian? No, but it does mean you have to be humble.

Humble enough to accept that you need God's help to understand it. Jesus comes alongside these two then.

And in verse 17, he asks them, what's up? And clearly his question shocks them because we read that they stood still looking sad.

They just, they couldn't believe that anybody didn't know the big event of that weekend. And they say to him, you must be the only visitor in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened here.

[11:03] And then Jesus says to them, what things? Why? Why would he say to them, what things? When he knew fine and he was at the very center of it.

Because he wanted them to pour their hearts out to him. He wanted to hear their voice. And 2,000 years later, he is still the same.

He would love to hear your voice. He would love for you to call out to him in prayer. He would love to hear what's going on in your heart.

He knows it anyway. He knows it already. But he wants you to share it with him. So these two now have the opening and they pour their hearts out to Jesus.

See, what was wrong was they had a wrong view of Jesus. They were looking for the wrong kind of guy.

[12:04] They expected a conquering redeemer, not a suffering servant. They were looking for glory and not suffering. They expected someone with a crown, not someone on a cross.

They had a wrong view of Jesus. Oh yeah, they still thought that this man was something special. They talked about him as a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God.

But their hopes for what he would do for them have evaporated when Jesus himself was taken away. And you know, apart from Jesus, friends, there is no hope for us.

There is no hope apart from him. You take him out of the equation. You make your own plans, but these plans will be futile. These plans will come to nothing apart from Jesus.

We have here a picture of hopelessness. Two people who had set their heart on something and it's fallen apart. Maybe that's your situation here tonight.

[13:16] You had hopes and you had plans. By this stage in your life, you were going to achieve a lot. And things would be tickety-boo. And they're not.

They're not. It's left you with no hope. Just like these two disciples, though. Maybe it's time to stop talking.

And to start listening to what Jesus has to say. So let's move on to our second point. We've looked at they talked. Secondly, they listened. You know, Jesus, he doesn't mince his words.

He doesn't pussyfoot about with these men. Look at what he says to them in verse 25. O foolish ones and slow of heart.

It's hardly language that's guaranteed to get them on side, is it? But you know, when you've hit rock bottom, there's nothing much that can offend you, really.

[14:27] And that's where these men were. And despite his approach. And Jesus' approach is unusual at times. They couldn't help but listen to him.

You really don't get it, is what he's saying to them. You've never understood the prophets. So 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?

You know, he said to them, he says, if you had understood your Old Testament, because that's all they had, remember, you would have known that this was what was going to happen.

Because that Old Testament speaks about me, Jesus says. And then we read there in verse 27. Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

You know what that teaches us? That the Old Testament is all about Jesus. You think it's history? That's past? That's dull? That's uninteresting?

[15:32] Jesus begins with Moses. That's Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. If my counting's right. First five books. And all the prophets and all of the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

What a sermon that must have been from Jesus. Just as well, they had a seven-mile trek to cover it all. I wonder how many points he had.

I wonder where he stopped. I wonder where he spoke from in the Old Testament. Maybe Genesis 3, 15. The seed of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent.

And Jesus could have said, that's me. I'm the descendant of Eve who would crush Satan underfoot. Maybe he paused at Genesis 22.

Abraham sacrificing Isaac. And then at the last minute, God saying, no, don't do it. I'm giving him a ram to sacrifice in his stead. And Jesus said, that pointed to me.

[16:38] That ram was a substitute. Taking someone else's place, just like I am. I expect he would have spoken about the Passover lamb.

That pointed to the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. For the brazen serpent that Moses lifted up in the wilderness. That was all about me being lifted up on a cross, Jesus would say.

All these sacrifices. They all pointed to me. Maybe he paused in the psalm. Psalm 22. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Or Psalm 69. I looked for comforters. But none I found. The New Old Testament is full of Jesus, friends. Full of Jesus.

Wonder how long he spent in Isaiah 53. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities.

[17:39] The chastisement of our peace was upon him. And by his thrifes, by his wounds, we are healed. Can't imagine that he would pass that one by.

It's all about me. It's all about Jesus. May we be paused in Jeremiah. A time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel.

Or even in Zechariah, awake, O sword, against my shepherd. You could go through the whole of the Old Testament. And continue teaching them about Jesus.

Delve into it, friends. It's full of Christ. Full of Christ. And I guess he could have gone on teaching them. Had they not got a little bit close to home.

Or got near to the village to which they were going. And then something strange takes place here. In verse 28.

[18:39] They drew near to the village to which they were going. And Jesus acted as if he were going further. What are we to make of Jesus pretending that he was going to carry on?

When, as far as we can make out, he had no intention of doing so. Well, R.T. Kendall. With whom, I suppose we should exercise a little caution.

I wouldn't agree with everything he says. But R.T. Kendall talks of God playing hard to get. Now, that language is arresting, friends.

But it's something like that that is going on here. Jesus is probing the hearts of these two disciples. He is testing them to see how much they really want him in their homes.

How much they really want him in their lives. It was a testing. And maybe tonight Jesus is probing your heart.

[19:49] Maybe he's been doing so for a long, long time. But he's testing. He's probing. And he wants to know, do you really want him or not?

Maybe you've been tagging along somewhere on the fringes for quite some time. And tonight he wants to know, do you really want to let me in or not?

That seems at least to be what Jesus is doing as he pauses with these two outside of their home. But let's move on to our third point. We looked, first of all, at they talked.

We looked at they listened. Thirdly, they invited him in. They invited him in. Now, you read what they had to say, and there's no dubiety about what they wanted.

They urged him strongly, saying, stay with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.

[20:52] You know, if there's one thing Jesus doesn't like, it is half-hearted commitment to him. He wants our whole hearts.

And maybe there's been a time, or maybe this is the time, and you've been saying, well, Jesus, if you really want to come into my heart, okay then.

He doesn't want half-hearted invites. No, that's something like, I don't know if you've ever gone to someone's house, and they might say something like, well, if you really want a cup of tea, I suppose I could put the kettle on.

You know, it's not very inviting. It's not very inviting. You're hardly likely to say yes. But that's the way we treat Jesus sometimes.

I'll let you in as long as you don't shift the furniture about. As long as you don't change my life or cause me any bother. But that's not what Jesus is like, friends.

[22:02] It's not what he's like. These two, you know, they still didn't know that this was Jesus, although they invited him in.

They still didn't know. And yet there was something about this man that attracted them that they just couldn't get over. The attraction of Jesus.

Have you ever experienced that? Have you ever felt that? This drawing, maybe to the Bible, maybe to God's people, maybe to church, maybe to Jesus himself.

And you maybe can't quite understand it. But that is Jesus himself that is drawing you. That is drawing you. And you invite him in and he will come.

We read here that he went in to stay with them. He went in to stay with them. But, you know, he did shift the furniture about a bit.

[ 23 : 05 ] No sooner was he in than he took control. We read there, the end of verse 29, he went in to stay with them. Then verse 30, when he was at the table with them, he took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to them.

As soon as he's in, he has taken control. He is the host. And that is what Jesus does, friends. You invite him in.

And he will become head of your home and head of your heart and head of your life. But that's not a bad thing. Look at the wonderful transformation that he brought into the experience of these two.

Verse 31, their eyes were opened and they recognized him. How come they recognized him at this point?

What was it? What was it that caused them to recognize him? Well, I don't know. I don't know.

[ 24 : 04 ] Maybe it was, maybe they saw his hands fresh from the cross with the nail holes still in them. Maybe it was that.

Maybe it was the way he broke the bread if they had seen him do it before. But I can't help thinking that there must have been something about his prayer to his own father that in that prayer they twigged.

They recognized this Jesus and how he transformed their situation. How he transformed it.

Somehow it all fell into place.

But you know, strangely, just as it did, Jesus disappears. We read that, their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he vanished from their sight.

Why would he do that? Why would he do that? Well, I guess they had to learn that Jesus would not always be physically present with them.

[ 25 : 09 ] Because being a Christian is a life of faith, friends. We live by faith. We live by trusting what this word says.

Not by our experiences. We live by faith. We live by faith. But even though he disappeared, see, his disappearance, it doesn't figure with, it doesn't sit well with what we read at the end of verse 29.

He went in to stay with them. And then we read that he vanishes. These things don't quite go together. But it doesn't alter the truth of verse 29.

That he did stay with them. He did stay with them. Because he stayed in their hearts. He dwelt in their hearts. And when you invite Jesus in, he will be in forever.

Forever. In your heart. And how he will transform the heart to which he's invited in. We read here, they said in verse 32, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road and while he opened to us the Scripture?

[ 26 : 23 ] What was it? What was the, what was the cause of their heart burn, their heart burning within them? Was it just that they'd met with Jesus?

Was it that they'd spent time with him? Was it that he was alive? None of these. Their hearts burned within them when he opened to us the Scripture.

If you want that experience, this is where you find it. In the Bible, Jesus is no longer physically present with us.

But he is present with us in his Word. And if you, friends, devour this Word, your hearts will burn within you as if Jesus was in the room beside you.

That is where he revealed himself to him. That is how their hearts burned within them. And even though he's gone, even though he's vanished, they're not in the least put out.

[ 27 : 26 ] They're not disappointed in any way. In fact, they cannot keep it to themselves. They rose up that same hour and returned to Jerusalem, found the eleven and those who were with them.

Here's, here's the two disciples who had trudged home to Emmaus. Seven miles. It's now evening. And they're sprinting back to Jerusalem because they can't keep this news to themselves.

That's the transformation that Jesus brings into the lives of those who invited him in. If you've ever had an encounter with Jesus, you'll know what that is like.

And if you haven't, let me tell you that you're missing out. You are missing out, friends. Amen. This is the one who died, who rose again, the one who gives hope to the hopeless, and the one tonight who's knocking at the door.

I think this morning we closed with this verse from Revelation 3, where Jesus says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me.

[ 28 : 47 ] That's his promise. If you hear him knocking at the door of your heart tonight, he promises to come in if you will open the door.

Oh, this is the one, friends, who went to Calvary's cross for you, that cross that reminds us so vividly, you messed up.

But I love you. I love you. I love you. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for the love of Christ tonight. We thank you for his patience. We thank you for his long-suffering. We thank you that he takes us how he finds us, but he never leaves us how he finds us.

We pray tonight that he would be at the work of transforming hearts and lives in this place, and that you would have all the glory. In his name we ask.

[ 29 : 57 ] Amen. Amen.