

Their Eyes Were Opened (Part 2)

Preached: 4/18/2021,; Germantown;

Scripture

Luke 24:13 – 35 (NIV)

Message

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Maybe you can relate to this. You buy a new toy for your kids, or a new household item, or a new tool. When it arrives, you see those words on the Box – “SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED”. So you open the box, take out the pieces, and throw the paper work that includes the instructions to the side, and start in on the assembly. But then you get stuck. The product doesn’t look like you think it is supposed to. There are extra parts or nuts or screws left over. It is at that point that you realize (probably with some “encouragement” from your wife) that you ought to look at the assembly instructions. You look at the pictures on the paper, and maybe try to read and decipher the assembly steps that only make sense to an engineer, and you finally figure out what you did wrong, or what steps you missed. You realize (and again with some help from your wife) that if you would have read the paper work in the first place, you would have spared yourself a lot of frustration, and maybe some anger. Sometimes we ignore God’s written instructions or “paper work.” When we do that we may miss understanding what God is doing.

We are going to look again at this story from the end of Luke’s Gospel. We started this study last weekend. It is the story of 2 of Jesus’ disciples who are leaving Jerusalem where the rest of the disciples were and are walking toward a village called Emmaus. We are not told why they are making this journey but it appears that they are **turning back from following Jesus**. He is dead. They have concluded that **he is not who they thought he was**, and they are going back to their life. But a stranger they meet on the road helps them to understand something in the Scriptures they did not see before, and they change their mind about what had happened to Jesus. Kind of like jumping to conclusions before we read the directions.

As they are walking toward Emmaus, walking away, they are joined by Jesus, however, Luke tells us that they were “Kept from recognizing Him.” Last weekend, I made some observations about this first part of the story.

1. There are times as believers that we are going along, and we don’t realize **Jesus is with us**, but he is. Even if we are “walking away”, Jesus is with us.
2. There are times when we are downcast and brokenhearted by some event that we did not plan for. In those moments, rather than abandoning us, **Jesus comes by our side to walk with us**. David in Psalm 23 reminds us “***Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear, for you are with me!***”
3. These two disciples had been given some evidence that what they thought was true – Jesus is dead – was in fact not true. Their faith was weak. They couldn’t believe that. But **Jesus does not abandon us when our faith is weak**. He comes to meet us and teach us.

Now, I want to pick up the story. We want to know why this encounter with Jesus was so important. I raised the question last week, “**Why would Jesus come after these two? Why didn’t he just let them go back?**” I believe that the answer to that is that Jesus needed to teach these two something so that they could give it to the rest of Jesus’ followers. I believe that is why they are kept from recognizing him. If they would have recognized him right away they would have been overjoyed to see him, but he would not be able to teach them what he wanted them to know.

As the two of them explain to this “stranger” why they were so downcast, they express their disappointment and their doubt. They recount for him how Jesus had been sentenced to death and handed over and crucified. Because Jesus was crucified they had concluded that Jesus was not who they thought he was. “**We had hoped that He was the one who would redeem Israel.**” In other words, we had hoped that He was the promised Messiah that God was sending into the world. BUT, since he was put to death – He could not be the one they thought He was. He could not be the Messiah. **Suffering and death were not part of their understanding about the Messiah**. They are not the first ones to think this way. Earlier in his ministry, Jesus had been talking with his disciples about what was going to happen to him when they arrived in Jerusalem. He would be rejected, handed over to be beaten and killed. On that occasion, Peter took him

aside and told Jesus “This will never happen to you!” Jesus’ response to Peter was to rebuke him: “Get Behind Me Satan!” Pretty strong rebuke. Now, his response to these two is again a strong rebuke: “**How foolish you are and how slow to believe**”. Jesus shows them from the Scriptures that the Messiah had to suffer. **He takes them to the Scriptures (the Old Testament)** to teach them that according to the Scriptures, everything that had happened to him had been predicted in the Scriptures. Jesus wants them to know that **God’s plan could be found in the Scriptures**, and he wants them to know that what had happened to Him was a part of that plan. According to their understanding of the Scriptures, the Messiah would be a conquering hero, not a sacrificial lamb. **We do not have the luxury of picking and choosing what we want to believe from the Bible**. These disciples of Jesus only wanted to believe what they thought should happen. This is an important principle that comes out of this text.

Sometimes we may not understand what is happening in our lives. **We may not understand what God is doing**. But in those times when we do not understand we must **turn to the Scriptures** and ask God to reveal his truth to us. And we must trust what He teaches us, even if it isn’t what we thought should happen.

Luke tells us that Jesus then explained to them what the Scriptures taught about Him. What a Bible Study session that must have been. Jesus the teacher, showing them the truth. Later they would remark “**Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?!**”

As they continued to walk, listening to Jesus teaching, they arrived at their destination. Jesus acts as though He is going further, but they persuade him to stay with them. As they sit down to the evening meal, Jesus takes the role of the host. He gives thanks and breaks the bread and suddenly their eyes are opened. They realize it is Jesus who has been walking with them. They have seen this before. When Jesus was teaching on the hillside, and there was a crowd of people there, **Jesus takes bread and breaks it and passes it to the crowd**. Now again they see Jesus offering bread to them. Luke tells us that when their eyes were opened, he disappeared from their sight. They don’t seem to be unnerved by Jesus’ disappearance. They have now learned that even when they don’t see him He is alive and is with them. And they are now convinced based on the truth of Scripture that they had not been mistaken to follow Jesus. He really is the one Israel was waiting for.

Luke tells us that they rushed back to Jerusalem – a journey of about 7 miles – and find the disciples. The disciples are sharing their stories about encountering the risen Lord, and now these two have a story of their own. They have become witnesses. **But they have something more**. They have the Bible lessons they have learned from Jesus. They can share with the rest the truths that they have learned from the Scriptures about Jesus.

So what do we take from this today:

- The Scriptures reveal God’s plan – If you want to know God’s heart and purposes you must read the Scriptures.
- The Scriptures reveal Jesus to us – Read the Old Testament. It speaks of Jesus
- The Scriptures are the foundation for our witness about Jesus. We can confidently tell others to believe in Jesus because the Scriptures convince us that He is the Savior of the World.

Invitation