

April 11 2021

The road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

This is a beautiful story that only appears in Luke's Gospel. This story has many lessons for the Christian of today. The events of this story happen in the evening of Easter Sunday. Just a little bit of background information to add to this story. The name of the town Emmaus means "warm spring". The name Cleopas is actually a boys name. Most likely it is a diminutive of a longer formal name. It means the "Glory of the Father". This is the masculine form for Cleopatra. Church tradition tells us that Cleopas was the brother of Joseph. The husband of the Virgin Mary. So that makes him Jesus's uncle, of sorts. Cleopas's unnamed travelling companion is actually St. Luke the writer of this Gospel.

Cleopas and Luke were from Emmaus and were returning home from Jerusalem. They had been there for Passover. They were disciples, followers and believers of Jesus of Nazareth. They were truly committed to Jesus and are expressing their great sorrow and disappointment as they return home. They are in shock that Jesus is actually dead. They saw many of the miracles and cannot make sense out of the events that happened. They are more confused and perplexed by the accounts of the women and the angels and the absence of their master's body. Today we would say that they are suffering from PTSD.

Then they meet a stranger on the road home. They did not recognize Him as Jesus. Only because they truly thought He was dead. So they would have no reason to be looking for Him or expect to see Him. It is not in the realm of possibility that this would be Him. Then the stranger asks what they are discussing between themselves. Cleopas and Luke are incredulous that anyone could have been in Jerusalem for the Passover and not be aware of the tragic events of the Passion.

Then Jesus speaks. The first thing He does is call them slow or dim in their understanding. The translation uses the word fool. Which is a poor translation. They are not stupid, just slow to understand what actually happened. They are slow to understand because they do not know scripture and how it applies to the events that happened. If they knew their scripture they would have known that He was to die and rise from the dead. To help them understand scripture and how it relates to the events that just happened, Jesus schools them. He starts a bible study with them for seven miles. Jesus talks to them about Moses and the prophets and what they said about Him. That it was all written centuries before. Our Lord laid down His life as a sacrifice. We watched Him die on Friday but He is alive on Sunday morning. John 10-18," No one takes from Me but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have the power to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." This sums up the events of the last three days.

These two disciples almost lost their faith. This was why they were returning to Emmaus. They failed to know scripture. Yet Jesus saved them and explained the scriptures to them and what they said about Him. Genesis to Revelation is all about Christ. The entire word of God is all about Christ.

As they reached Emmaus, the disciples put an end to the Bible Study they were receiving. Jesus wanted to go further so He could continue their education. They ask Him to stay with them. So after explaining the word of God to them, Our Lord gives them communion. They only recognize Him at the breaking of the bread. Just as Jesus did on Maundy Thursday. We can only assume that these disciples were present at the Last Supper. Jesus gives them His own body and blood and then He vanishes.

When we think about it deeper, Our Lord really did not leave them. They also consumed the bread and wine. Jesus actually goes deeper into them and becomes part of their being. Our Lord was beside them on the road, in front of them at the table and finally inside of them. John 8-31," Then Jesus said to the Jews who believed in Him, If you abide in my word, you are My disciples indeed". John 6-56, "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood, abides in Me and I in them."

These two disciples had their faith in Jesus restored by Him in person. Jesus conducts a Bible Study for them as they walk to Emmaus. So that they could understand the scriptures as it concerned His death and resurrection. Only then could they accept the bread that was broken. Then they took the Lord's body and blood into themselves.

Here are some of the lessons I drew out of this story. Read and know your scripture. Try to apply it to your life and live by it. It is also prophetic and what does it say about our times. Most importantly what does it say about His return. This is why Luther wanted the Bible in the hands of the average person and in their own language. So that they would not be unaware as Cleopas and Luke. The importance of eucharist or communion in our lives. Luther said to do eucharist as

often as you can and receive it as often as you can. The breaking of the bread is very important. That was the point where Cleopas and Luke recognized Jesus. It took them back to the Last Supper and what Jesus said and did. Jesus is present in the bread and wine just as He was on Maundy Thursday and at Emmaus. You should treat every stranger you encounter as possibly Our Lord. You may have a lot more lessons than the ones I shared this morning. So please share your ideas.

God Bless, Pastor D.