

**I. THEIR MEETING WITH JESUS – vv.13-16**

- v.13 The scene opens with two of the disciples of Jesus traveling. It is on the same day, the first day of the week on which the women had gone to the tomb and found it empty and been told that Jesus had risen from the dead by the angels, that they are walking to the village of Emmaus. These two are not any of the 11 apostles, but rather of the general followers of Jesus who were in Jerusalem.
- It may be that these men were actually from that village, and who stayed in Jerusalem during the Passover and the Sabbath, who are now returning home.
- v.14 As they were journeying together, they are busy in conversation. They are talking about the things which had happened surrounding the events of the Passover week in Jerusalem, and particularly the events surrounding Jesus of Nazareth's teaching and crucifixion. It is likely that they were there through that week, and were intimately aware of the events.
- v.15 Their conversation is emotional, and the Greek words indicate a dialogue which is highly emotional. It is in the midst of this conversation that Jesus draws near. We can picture the scene vividly.
- This is the first post-resurrection appearance of Jesus in Luke's account. Long before the two travelers realize who it is, we already have narrative insight: it is the Lord.
- v.16 Though they had been with Jesus, heard Him teaching and preaching in the Temple, they do not recognize Him. There are a couple of reasons that are sometimes given as to why this was so. Some say that there is a kind of psychological blindness do to there utter lack of anticipation of seeing Him, and the thought only of what a normal man would look like after the crucifixion. Another answer given, particular by groups like the Jehovah's witnesses, is that Jesus didn't actually look the same because He was in a new and different body (essential to their view of the resurrection of the body).
- Luke doesn't leave us to guess. He specifically states that their eyes were restrained. This word means to seize, hold back, or keep from something. It is in a passive form, which means that it wasn't something they were doing themselves (i.e. by their psyche), but something that was being done to them. We'll see later who it was that was restraining their eyes.
- Sometimes the word "eyes" is used in a spiritual sense, but in this case it is clearly their physical eyes. They didn't recognize them because their physical eyes were kept from being able to see Him as He was.
- One of the things this tells us is that there was nothing spectacular about His appearance. There was no halo, no glow, at this point to post-resurrection glory.

**II. THEIR CONVERSATION WITH JESUS – vv.17-27**

- v.17 As Jesus approaches and comes near to them, he enters into the conversation. He asks what kind of conversation they were having with one another that was causing such intensity, and even sadness. This is obviously a rhetorical question, one that He already knew the answer to. His purpose is to engage them and enter in.
- v.18 Luke tells us that one of the men, whose name was Cleopas, answered. It could be that the reason for the naming of this man, who is not known anywhere else in Scripture, is that it identifies the source of this account. Luke, as a historian, collected first hand accounts, and this event is only recorded by Luke.
- Cleopas responds with some shock and surprise. His response that Jesus came from the same direction as they, from Jerusalem. He was obviously a Jew, and they would expect was also leaving Jerusalem after the Passover.
- He asks the Lord if it were even possible that He could have been in Jerusalem and not know of the events over those previous several days. This indicates to us just how widely known Jesus had become, as well as His trial and crucifixion.
- v.19 Jesus again draws Cleopas out by asking "what things?" They both respond by giving a brief description of the life and ministry of the very one they were walking with.
- They refer to Him as Jesus of Nazareth, and common descriptive name of the Lord distinguishing Him by His place of residence from other men named Jesus (a common name). They confess Him as a prophet of God who was mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. In this they confess their belief in the truthfulness of His teaching and the miraculous powers of His works.
- v.20 They move on to tell how the leadership of the Jews gave Him over to Roman authorities, and the result was condemnation by the death of crucifixion. This they confess to be disappointing, and not what they expected.
- v.21 The reason for this disappointment was that they were hoping for something else. This was the One, they believed, who would redeem Israel. It was this one they hoped was the promised Messiah, a socio-political leader, who would take the throne as King of the Nation and lead them on in victory against their captors, the Romans.
- Then, in a bit of irony, they mention that it had been three days since His crucifixion. This was ironic because it was that phrase "third day" that Jesus had used again and again in referring to His resurrection from the dead.
- v.22-23 The next thing they explain is how certain women disciples ("of our company") shocked them by reporting that when they went to Jesus' tomb that His body wasn't to be found, and that they had supposedly seen a vision of angels who reported that He was alive!
- v.24 Then some of the men went to the tomb and found it empty, just as the women had reported. But they didn't see Him, that is didn't see Him alive.

- After all this, the men were not expectant. They weren't anticipating seeing Jesus again at any time. They were unbelieving and, more than that, sad and gloomy and disputing as to what all this meant.
- v.25 After hearing all of this, Jesus doesn't leave their comments alone. He responds first by a rebuke. He calls them foolish and of a sluggish heart to believe. Notice Jesus doesn't first go to His own testimony about Himself (i.e. "you didn't believe me"), but to the Scriptures. They should have understood by the words of Hebrew Scripture what the deal was. The prophets have spoken in the Word, and it is not their lack of clarity, but your spiritual dullness which is keeping this from making sense to you (this is often our own problem).
- v.26 What did the prophets speak about? How the Christ, the promised Messiah, had a two-stage ministry. First, He had to suffer these things. It was necessary, for Him to accomplish His purpose, to be rejected by His own people that He came to and be put to death. This was necessary to satisfy the justice of God. Then, the second stage, to enter into His glory.
- v.27 The Lord didn't just state this fact, but then beginning in at Moses (the Pentateuch) and all the prophets (together constituting the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures) expounded (Gk. to explain or interpret) to them the things concerning Himself. What a marvelous thing that must have been to have heard that personal teaching of Scripture. We will read, a few verses on, what kind of impact this had on them.

### III. THEIR MEAL WITH JESUS – vv.28-32

- v.28 They continue on (without yet understanding who they were speaking with) and came near to the village of Emmaus. Jesus acts as if He will go ahead further, but they will not have this. v.29 They constrain Him (Gk. urge, persuade) to stay with them. This stranger has become someone that they do not want to see depart, so precious has become their interaction with Him. He is instilling hope in them, and brought light back into their dark world.
- They plead with Him to stay, pointing out that it is getting late in the day. He agrees to stay with them instead of moving on. It seems probably that this is one of their own homes.
- v.30 Something important happens here. It was the custom that the host of the home would, at the time of dinner, bless the food, break it, and distribute it. Yet, Jesus is said to do it in this case. This indicates that they viewed Him as an honored guest, and asked Him to do the honors. So He sits at table with them (who had not been at the Last Supper) and takes the bread, blesses it, breaks it, and gives it to them.
- v.31 In the process of this event, two amazing things happen. First, their eyes were opened and they knew Him. The restraint that had previously been there was suddenly removed. Some have suggested that one of the things that happens is that in the breaking of the bread they look at His hands, which still bore the scars of the nails from the cross (John 20:27). However it happened, they suddenly realized who He was. What an astonishing moment that was. Then, as quickly as they realize this, He vanishes from their sight. We're not given explanation, but apparently Jesus' resurrected condition enables Him to appear and reappear (John 20:26). While He is not a purely "spiritual being" (He could be touched and eat food), He is able to do something like this.
- v.32 Notice their response. The focus of their comment was not on His being there physically with them, but rather what had happened when he had explained the Scriptures to them. They say that their hearts "burned" within them. The heart in the Scripture doesn't mean merely the emotions, but includes the mind and thinking. As He explained the Word of God to them, their response was inward understanding and evoking joy and hope.
- This is the goal of all biblical preaching and teaching, and was the result of the presence of Christ in the Word.

### IV. THEIR REPORT TO THE APOSTLES – vv.33-35

- v.33 Though it was already late, they immediately rose up and headed back to Jerusalem. They must give report of what has happened, and return back to the apostles and other disciples who were still there.
- They return to where those men and women were gathered, and there was already excited conversation going on.
- v.34 This conversation included the fact that Jesus had, sometime during that same day (before or after the Emmaus appearance) also showed Himself to Simon Peter.
- The two men then told their story, of how Jesus appeared (but didn't) on the road, opened the Scriptures to them, and how He became known in the breaking of bread.
- More will happen among that group of brothers and sisters, but that will have to wait until next week.

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### APPLICATION

- The reality of this time/space historical event will become central to the Christian message that will lay the foundation for the Church throughout all time. Those who only believe in a historical Jesus who taught and did good deeds are incomplete. The resurrection is absolutely essential for His ministry to be understood.
- This account reminds us of how Jesus, though He has ascended to the Father, still meets with His disciples. We see the importance of the Word of God, even when Jesus was physically present with them.
- Do our hearts burn when we hear Christ preached from the Scriptures? Do we see Jesus when the bread is broken in the Lord's Supper? These are the visible reminders of our resurrected Lord.
- This is one reason the church has continued to recognize the first day of the week as significant in our worship of God. All three of these things together, the first day of the week, the breaking of bread, the preaching of the Word, are to be to the Christian precious, evoking faith, hope, and love.