

Eye-Opening

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Helping Others Follow Jesus

Luke 24:13-35

April 19, 2020

The Bible is a book about real people and real stories. Something incredible started happening after the Resurrection. Jesus started appearing to people in all kinds of places and situations. His bodily presence demonstrated He was physically alive and present. The Gospels have various accounts of these post-resurrection appearances. Luke goes into detail about Jesus appearing to two disciples who were walking on the road to a village named “Emmaus.” Luke says their *“eyes were kept from recognizing him.”* Jesus spoke to them, beginning with Moses and the prophets, and explained the Scriptures and how they all pointed to Himself. They were crushed by the crucifixion and confused by the post-resurrection appearances they were hearing about. Jesus opened their eyes. The Old Testament (or Hebrew Bible) are “the Scriptures” Jesus described. The New Testament had not been written yet. These Scriptures pointed to Jesus. All the stories of the Old Testament culminate in the Resurrection of Jesus. The Old Testament becomes a new book when we look for Christ in all of it. There are many troubling and confusing parts in the Hebrew Bible (names, places, violence, warfare, dietary laws, etc.) but it is only the first act of a two-part play. Without the Old, the New is without foundation and doesn’t make sense. Without the New, the Old is incomplete. The last word in the Old Testament is “destruction” (or “curse”). The last sentence of the New Testament is: *“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen.”* (Revelation 22:21) I’ll take the grace of Jesus over “destruction/curse” any day.

APPLICATION: Our daily readings are New Testament verses emphasizing the authority of the Old Testament. Jesus, Peter and Paul appealed to it. Methodism’s founder, John Wesley, prioritized Scripture when he said, *“I am a man of one book.”* How often do you study Scripture? With whom do you study? How have your eyes been opened by the Scriptures in the past week, month and year? Asbury offers numerous opportunities to learn, including weekly Discipleship Communities. *Helping Others Follow Jesus* is incomplete if we do not direct people to the Scriptures. That’s how Jesus helped others follow Him.

That very day refers to the Easter Sunday events. Breaking news. Something (or Someone) was up.

1 Corinthians was probably written before any of the Gospels, so Paul's description of the post-resurrection appearances in was the first time this story had been written

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

(1 Cor. 15:3-8)

*two of them were going to a village named **Emmaus**, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.* The disciples have scattered ("Get out of Dodge"). Jesus' movement collapsed. Caiaphas won. They were **CONFUSED**. What happened? This is strange. They were **THINKING** and having a rational, intelligent conversation about the meaning of Jesus' life. They were processing information. It was like a Post-Traumatic Stress Moment. Some of us remember the Kennedy assassination or the Murrah Building Bombing 25 years ago today (April 19, 1995) or 9/11/2001 or COVID-19 now. In confusion, they are modeling what disciples are supposed to do – trying to understand the life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus. "Talking" appears twice in this text and "discussing" is here also. They needed to process their grief. Talking (and listening).

*¹⁵While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶**But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.*** This is a great **opportunity** for Jesus to communicate truth.

¹⁷And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?"

And they stood still, looking sad. **DESPAIR**. They hoped Jesus would be the Messiah and redeem Israel, but a crucified Messiah was a contradiction to the Law. He was cursed (Dt. 21:23). They didn't understand Jesus was cursed for OUR sins, not for His.

*¹⁸Then one of them, named **Cleopas**, Some think this is "**Clopas**" of John 19:25 (standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene). Clopas was Jesus' earthly father, Joseph's brother. He was a blood relative of Jesus – "Uncle Clopas." Most likely Clopas was traveling with his wife, Mary. In a culture that esteemed men and negated*

women, that would explain why the unnamed person is a woman. We don't know for sure, of course.

answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" The earliest manuscripts Cleopas says, *"What, buddy, have you been in a cave the last 3 days?"* 😊 Like someone saying today they'd never heard about COVID-19.

¹⁹ *And he said to them, "What things?"* Jesus has a great sense of humor. After all that happened, He "plays dumb." He must have been in a VERY GOOD mood.

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, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.*

²¹ *But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. "But we had hoped...Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ 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.*

²⁴ *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."* ²⁵ *And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"*

²⁷ *And **beginning** with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the **Scriptures***

Jesus began with scripture. He walked His companions through scripture. The Law/Prophets. But I think He also told them about the Wisdom literature. Job (how to suffer), Psalms (how to pray), Proverbs (how to live), Ecclesiastes (how to enjoy) Song of Solomon (how to love).

the things concerning himself. We study the Old Testament because it points to Jesus. Without this foundation, the New Testament doesn't make much sense.

Vaughn Story does a wonderful job teaching the Bible at Asbury. His "Disciples Bible Study" on either a Tuesday or Thursday night during the school year. The 1st semester is a study of the Old Testament. It is essential.

²⁸ *So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.* This sounds like the Last Supper. These were the first to experience the post-resurrection transformation of bread at table.

³¹ *And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. **Genesis 3:7***

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Maybe their eyes were opened when they saw His nail-pierced hands..

Jesus, in His resurrected state, has reversed the fall. Instead of sin being a new reality, now He brings salvation. Instead of being naked and ashamed, they are now able to be forgiven and brought into Christian community.

³² *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?"* Note that it wasn't during the meal their hearts burned, but while Jesus taught scripture.

³ *And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem.* Sensible people would not have traveled near dark at that time – too many robbers. But they had such good news to share.

*And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord has **risen indeed**, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.* This is the text where we get the Easter tradition of saying: HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED! (Maybe Cleopas/Mary were in the room when Jesus appeared to the disciples.) **Reason, Scripture, Experience, Tradition**

APPLICATION

Disruption – things had to change. For Jesus movement to go worldwide, He couldn't be limited to a physical body. It does not end with the disruption. The important thing? Keep **walking** with the Lord.

*Even though I **walk through** the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.* Psalm 23:4

*Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk in him**, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.* Colossians 2:6-7