

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Christ: The Living Expositor, Part 2

Scripture: Luke 24:13-32

Code: 42-294

Open your Bible, if you will, to the twenty-fourth chapter of the gospel of Luke. We have already read this wonderful story of the post-resurrection appearance of the Lord Jesus to two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Never have two people gone from such pits of despair to heights of joy, from believing that all their hopes and all their aspirations and all their expectations and even their redemption and their salvation was lost because Jesus had been crucified. All the way to realizing that all their hopes and aspirations and expectations, their redemption and their salvation was indeed accomplished because Jesus was alive. It would be hard for us to comprehend their disappointment. It would be equally hard for us to comprehend their exhilaration. The transition was from the depths to the heights.

There are so many important lessons for us for all people in this story. The primary one was Jesus rose from the dead. The secondary one is that His death and resurrection had been prophesied many times in great detail in the Old Testament. Knowing that Christ is alive is the first great lesson. The second great lesson is knowing that Scripture is alive. Those are the lessons that we want to learn as we look at this tremendous account.

This is Luke's first narrative on a post-resurrection appearance of Jesus. Matthew, Mark and John have already followed the chronology of the resurrection and told us that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, Jesus appeared to the women on the road, this is Luke's first account of a post-resurrection appearance of Christ. It is not to the Apostles, that will come later that same evening. We'll look at that next Sunday. This is an appearance of Jesus to two disciples who are, even though one is named, Cleopas, anonymous to us, we know absolutely nothing about them. In a wonderful act of condescension, our Lord makes this glorious appearance and teaches this incredible, perhaps unequalled lesson on the truth of the Old Testament regarding Messiah to two very obscure people. It reminds us of what the Scripture says about "Not many noble and not many mighty, the Lord has chosen the lowly and the humble."

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the most important event that has ever happened in the history of the world. His death and His resurrection are the events that seal salvation. If He doesn't die and rise, there's no salvation for anyone, the whole human race is damned to hell.

Because the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ are the most important events, the resurrection being the culminating and thus THE most important event, they are predicted in Scripture. Anybody who doesn't see that in the Old Testament is needlessly ignorant. It's not as if it's obscure, that's why Jesus says in verse 25, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Was it not necessary for the Messiah, the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" You should have known it. There is never an excuse for biblical ignorance to those who possess the Scripture. It is not the fault of the Scripture if you do not understand. It is clear. A failure to search the Scripture, to dig deeply, preconceptions, already hardened beliefs may obscure the truth, but nonetheless, the reader who possesses the Scripture is still responsible. The sadness and the confusion of these two on the road to Emmaus is because they didn't understand the Scripture which they possessed and had possessed all their lives as Jews living in Israel.

It wasn't that they didn't believe the Scripture. They did. It wasn't that they didn't think God wrote the Scripture. They did. It was because they had satisfied themselves with a limited understanding of Scripture. No doubt that the teachers who raised them in the schools of the synagogues and every other opportunity they had to sit at the feet of rabbis and priests would have emphasized only the triumph and the glory of Messiah because it wasn't just these two disciples who had a limited theology of Messiah, the whole nation had a limited theology of Messiah. They had only a partial understanding of the Old Testament, partial understanding of the Scripture, the Old Testament being all the Scripture that they had then.

By the way, a partial understanding of the Scripture, Old Testament or New Testament, is deadly. Damning cults all have a partial understanding of Scripture. Their sadness, their disappointment, their confusion and their distress was related to the fact that they didn't understand all that the prophets have spoken. That's why the Apostle Paul when he met with Ephesian elders in Acts 20 did not fail to give them the whole counsel of God. Because they had such a limited understanding of Messiah, all they really expected was the Messiah would come in glory, triumph would come militarily. He would come and redeem the nation Israel, redeeming them perhaps in a spiritual sense, yes, but more redeeming them in a sense of redeeming them from their enemies, from oppression and occupation and defeat at the hands of many enemies through history. Messiah would come and He would establish the throne, the throne promised to the greater Son of David in Jerusalem and He would reign in Jerusalem not only over Israel but He would extend His Kingdom over the world. That's the triumph and the glory. That part they believed. And they were so satisfied with that that they were literally blinded to the suffering and the death part.

And it wasn't that Jesus didn't tell them. He told them repeatedly but the old adage is true, "He that is convinced against his will is unconvinced still." It's amazing the mental barriers that people put up when they are satisfied with what they already believe. Peter is a classic illustration of that. Jesus said to the disciples in Matthew 16 that He was going to die. Peter said, "No, no, no, Lord, that's not going to happen. No, no, no." Jesus responded by saying, "Get behind Me, Satan. Get behind Me, Satan."

There was just no place in their Messianic theology for a dying Messiah. It wasn't that the Old Testament didn't say it, the Old Testament said it in detail. It was that they weren't interested in believing it. They didn't follow Jesus, the Apostles and the disciples, because they thought they were going to get persecuted. They followed Jesus because they thought they might get to sit on His right and left hand in the Kingdom. They really didn't want to die with Him. They wanted to reign with Him. That's why they were so upset, you remember, when He said, "I'm going to go to Jerusalem." And Thomas, the pessimist said, "Well, let's all go and die with You, because that's liable to happen to You, they hate You there so much."

So they had no room for the death of Christ in their theology. And when Jesus was crucified, it confounded them not only because He died but because their leaders killed Him. How could this possibly be? And they used the Romans as the executioners. So they, these two at least, reflect the same attitude that all the rest had. The disciples were in hiding, the Apostles were in hiding. They forsook Him and fled. Only John stayed around at the cross. They thought it was over. And they were scratching their heads about how they could have been so wrong.

So here are two of them heading home, convinced that all their hopes are gone. It's over. Verse 13 says, "They were walking seven miles to the little town of Emmaus." We don't know anything about it. They were talking about all the things that had taken place. Verse 15, "While they were conversing and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and began traveling with them." He just appeared and walked along with them, listening to their conversation.

Their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him, verse 16 says, and that was the way it was in every case after His resurrection. Though He was human, He wasn't dazzling like an angel. They didn't fall over in a dead faint. He was human, there was enough different about Him in His glorified form that they were not able to recognize Him. And, I think, that recognition was perhaps only available to them if the Lord granted it to them because every time it talks about it, it says they were prevented from seeing Him, or their eyes were opened so they could understand, as it says about these two. Same was true with Mary Magdalene who thought He was the gardener. They don't know who it is, He just walks along with them.

And He said to them, "What are these words that you're exchanging with one another as you're walking? What are you talking about? "

"And they said still looking sad, they stopped in their tracks, and one of the men, Cleopas, answered and said to Him, 'Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things that have happened here in these days?'" This is to say that what was on everybody's lips in Jerusalem, the massive crowds that were there for Passover, was Jesus. Jesus...the triumphal entry on Monday, cleaning the temple out on Tuesday where all of them would be spending their days, Passover week. Then the mock trials, the march to the cross, the execution, the whole story was on everybody's lips

and Cleopas says, "On behalf of the other one, it is possible that you're the only person visiting Jerusalem who has no idea what is going on?"

Anybody who had hope that Jesus was going to redeem Israel and be the Messiah had those hopes smashed when the Sanhedrin passed sentence on Him and the Romans crucified Him. But Jesus knows all of this, obviously. He just wants to hear from them. He wants them to articulate their ignorance, their dilemma, their confusion to raise the stakes on how much they need to understand. So we call this first point the need for understanding. They're confused about how this could happen.

And verse 19, "They said, the things about Jesus the Nazarene who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people. That's not arguable. But how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death and crucified Him, but we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. And He had said on the third day He would rise. And it's been the third day for a long, long time." The third day started the night before at six o'clock and this is in the late afternoon on Sunday. It's been the third day a long time. And they were honest enough to say some women among us amazed us, verse 22, when they were at the tomb early in the morning and didn't find His body. They came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. They didn't believe that for a minute, none of the apostles believed that.

The grave was empty. The women said that. They believed that. The next verse says that some of us went, Peter and John namely, and they said it was as the women said it but they did not see Him either. The whole thing is too bizarre. If He is alive and if He's been alive since morning, since six o'clock this morning, ten hours ago, maybe, where is He? The whole thing is confounding.

They would have assumed though they didn't expect a resurrection that if there had been a resurrection on the third day as He said, He would have shown Himself to the apostles. But clearly, the end of verse 24, the Apostles didn't see Him. And apparently they had not heard the testimony that the women gave that they had in fact seen Him, including Mary Magdalene. All they got was the part we didn't see the body in the grave.

So they're totally confused. And the great teacher, as all good teachers do, uses questions to elicit their confusion. And it puts them back in their dilemma and crystalizes their dilemma so that He can bring the answers.

That leads us, secondly, to the source of understanding. The need for understanding was generated by ignorance of the Scripture. The source of understanding was generated by the Scripture itself. They had no understanding because they didn't know the Scripture. They're about to have understanding because they will know the Scripture. And at this point, the whole scene does a 180 when the stranger tells them the whole story as the Old Testament presents it.

Verses 25 to 27 are just magnificent, magnificent verses. First comes the rebuke in verse 25, “O foolish men and slow of heart, to believe in all that the prophets have spoken.” Secondly comes the statement of fact, “It is necessary for the Christ, the Messiah to suffer these things and to enter into His glory.” And then comes the proof beginning with Moses and with all the prophets He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Again, their confusion is because they only understand part of the Old Testament. They only understand part of the prophecies regarding Messiah. They have a limited view of Messiah. In a sense, they're like Apollos, you know, that great Old Testament preacher who didn't know anything about Jesus Christ and yet he was skilled as an Old Testament preacher, he was a powerful, great Old Testament preacher but he didn't know anything about Jesus Christ.

They were right to expect Christ to reign and rule. They were right to expect Messiah to conquer and triumph and establish the Kingdom over the nation Israel and over the whole world. They were right about that. But that was only part of it. Was it not necessary, *adai*(??) in the Greek, divine necessity for the Messiah to suffer these things and to enter in to His glory? You missed the first half. And again, they weren't interested in that. They were swept up in this Kingdom fever and had been for generations. And the more difficult life was, the more oppressed they felt, the more they longed for the Kingdom. They didn't want their Messiah to come and be killed by their oppressors, they wanted the Messiah to come and defeat their oppressors. They didn't want their Messiah to come and be rejected by their religious leaders, but rather to be accepted by their religious leaders. And they had this blazing glory theology that blinded them to the part that talked about suffering.

So first is the rebuke and He calls them fools, *anoetos*, dull and He says slow of heart, that's one word, *bradus*, means stupid. It's a blunt way to address people. “O dull, stupid men.” He doesn't blame the Scripture, folks. He doesn't say, “Well, the Old Testament is a really hard book.” He doesn't do that. Does not blame the Old Testament. Doesn't say, “I feel your pain, I feel your pain, it's so hard to understand the Old Testament.”

Remember, look, He's speaking to first-century people who are thousand years removed from David who wrote the Psalms, who are 1500 years removed from Moses who wrote the Pentateuch. They're almost two thousand years from Abraham. And Jesus still assumes that if you don't understand the Scriptures when you have it in your hand, you're dull and stupid. The fault is not with the Scripture. He never says the Scripture lacks clarity, Scripture is never to blame. Jesus says things like this, “Have you not read? Have you not read the Scriptures? You're wrong because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.” Or in a positive He says, “Search the Scriptures for they are they which speak of Me.” The Old Testament is clear. It is clear for Jewish believers. It's even clear for Gentile believers. Paul writes to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 10, and says, “These things are written to you as examples.” What things? “The Old Testament.” Most of the New Testament epistles are written to Gentiles with no Old Testament background. They didn't know anything about Judaism,

didn't know anything about the Old Testament. Most of them wouldn't even know an Old Testament existed. The church at Corinth, the churches in Galatia, church at Ephesus, the rest of Asia Minor, church at Philippi, but Paul writes them and many of his arguments are based upon interpretations of the Old Testament. And he expects them to understand it because the Old Testament is revelation. And so He says, "You should have know, you're dull, you're needlessly stupid, you're blind." And what blinds them is this blazing Kingdom expectation that has dominated them so that they don't want to see anything but that. Very, very selective. Now He's going to give them the full story.

So, verse 27, "After having said, 'Wasn't it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into glory?'" Can you remember that? Wasn't it necessary? The assumption here is they would recall that there are indeed some things in the Old Testament that speak of the Messiah suffering. That would indicate that that's obvious. And then to make it clear, verse 27, so wonderful, beginning with Moses, of course Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament and with all the prophets all the way to the end, "He explained the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures."

First of all, Jesus is the theme of Scripture. He's the theme of the Old Testament. All 39 books look at Him either explicitly or implicitly, starting with Moses, Genesis, He sweeps through as they walk along the road, the whole Old Testament, 39 books, and speaks about Himself.

Now obviously, they knew the Kingdom parts. What He wants to communicate to them is before the glory comes the suffering. Was it not necessary for Christ to suffer? Did you...is there some question about whether sin necessitates death? Is there some question about that in your minds? Was there not enough in the Old Testament on blood atonement to make that clear? Starting with Genesis where God Himself slays an animal to make coverings for Adam and Eve. You have a picture of the death of an innocent to cover the sin of a guilty sinner. Wasn't that clear there? Did you forget that God accepted Abel's sacrifice because it was a blood sacrifice and rejected Cain's? Was it not clear to you that when Noah came out of the ark, the first thing he did was offer a blood sacrifice after a whole world had been destroyed by divine judgment? What about all the Levitical offerings? And what about the Day of Atonement? And there was just a constant slaughter of animals, the priests were butchers, morning sacrifice, evening sacrifice, every day of the year they just slaughtered animals and that escalated at Passover and the great Day of Atonement as well. The bloody death of an animal substitute filled the entire history of God's people.

And what did it tell them? Leviticus 17:11 spelled it out. Life of the flesh is in the blood. I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement. They knew that sin caused death and that God would accept the death of a substitute. But they also knew that no animal ever offered satisfied God completely because they had to offer another animal and another one and another one and another one and another one and another one. And no Day of Atonement sacrifice satisfied for the nation because the next year they had to do another one and the next year another one, and another one, and it was absolutely relentless. Every Jew knew that sin

brings death. The soul that sins, it shall die, said the prophet. Every Jew knew that God would provide a substitute. Every Jew knew that there was never a final substitute. But they had to be pictures of that final substitute that would come.

But there had never been a final substitute, never been a sufficient sacrifice, never been satisfaction on God's part. That's the part they needed to know and then having suffered, Messiah can enter into His glory. There wouldn't be anybody else in that glory if Messiah didn't suffer, right? There's the only way we'll ever enter into glory with the Messiah is through His death for us.

So they were pretty good on the glory part. And they were terrible on the suffering part. Verse 27, "Beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." I love this, so beautiful, so simple, the verb "explain" means to open up, it's used twice, once by Him, once by them in verse 32. He grounds them in a true biblical understanding of the Messiah's suffering. I wish there was more here, don't you? I wish I knew what He said.

But, you know, I think...I think I can help you with that because I do know what the Old Testament says about the suffering of Messiah and He had to go to those places. So let me give you a little survey of what the lesson might have been like, okay?

He might have started in Genesis 3:15. He might have told them, "Do you not know that I am the wounded seed of the woman who crushes the serpent's head?" He might have stayed in Genesis 3 and said, "I am the true and only covering for the sinner's guilt pictured in the covering of the skins provided by God at the price of the death of an innocent substitute." He might have gone to chapter 4 of Genesis and said, "The one sacrifice God will accept in the way He accepted Abel's and rejected Cain's is Me. That pictures Me, the acceptable sacrifice."

Probably He went to Genesis 6 through 8 and recounted the history of the Flood. And as Peter does, said, "I am the true ark of safety into which sinners enter and sail through the waters of divine judgment." And surely He went to Genesis 8:20 to 22 and described the altar built there by Noah and the sacrifice offered and said, "That sacrifice offered after the judgment against the world is a picture of My sacrifice. I'm sure He stopped at Genesis 22 and reminded them of the story of Isaac who was to be offered as a sacrifice on the altar and was a willing sacrifice which is, in a sense, a picture of Christ, but a ram caught in a thicket was used in Isaac's place which is a true picture of Christ, the substitute.

I'm sure He must have gone to Exodus 12 and said, "Don't you remember the Passover lamb, the Passover lamb had to be without blemish and without spot. And if his blood was shed and splattered on the doorpost and the side beams, the angel of death would pass by that house. I am the true Passover Lamb who protects the sinner from divine judgment. I think He probably went to Exodus 16 which is the story of God providing manna and told them that He was the true manna from heaven. He says that in John 6.

I think He went in to Leviticus still in the writings of Moses, first seven chapters, there are five main offerings there. There's the burnt offering, the grain offering, the peace offering, the sin offering and the guilt offering. And I think He showed how He is the fulfillment of each of those offerings. The writer of Hebrews makes it clear that He is the true offering, superior to all others.

I think in the Pentateuch every reference to the Day of Atonement pictured Him and He made it clear that He was not only the sacrifice on the altar, but He was the scapegoat who took away sin. I think He probably went in to Exodus 17 and Numbers 20 and said He is the true rock to be smitten once in death to release the water of life.

I think He must have stopped at Deuteronomy 18:15 and said, "I am the prophet like unto Moses who is to come. He probably went to Deuteronomy 21, 22 and 23 and said, "I am the one hanged on a tree, cursed by God and taken down and buried before sundown."

Surely He spent some time in Psalm 22. He is the one the psalmist hears when the Psalm begins, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" The very words He spoke on the cross. Psalm 22 says, "He will be a reproach. He will be sneered at. His bones will be out of joint. His strength will be gone. His hands and feet will be pierced. His clothes will be divided up by lots as He dies. Details in Psalm 22.

Perhaps Jesus took the two of them to Psalm 69:21 and reminded them...reminded them of Messiah's cry of thirst. Then He was given vinegar to drink. Maybe He went to Psalm 40 verse 7 which says, "Behold, I come in the scroll of the book, it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O God, Your law is within My heart," which the writer of Hebrews says applies only to Messiah.

Perhaps He went to Isaiah 50 verse 6 and said, "I am the one who gave His back to the smiters, His cheeks to those who plucked out His beard and covered His face with spit." Perhaps He went to Daniel 9 and reiterated to them the wonderful prophecy of 69 weeks of years, 69 times seven, which added up to the years between the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild the temple and the coming of Messiah will be 69 years. If you calculate that, the very date when the sixty-ninth year is completed is Nissan 9, 30 A.D. the day Jesus walked into Jerusalem on that Monday.

Perhaps He went to Zechariah 12:10 and reminded them that Zechariah had said, "One day Israel would look on Him whom they had pierced." They were the ones who really did the piercing though the spear was in a Roman soldier's hand. Without question, and you can look at it with me for a moment, they would have gone to Isaiah...without question.

Perhaps Jesus would have begun in verse 13 of chapter 52. "Behold My servant," "My servant" is a technical identification of the Messiah throughout this section of Isaiah. "Behold, My servant will

prosper. He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted, just as many were astonished at you, My people. So His appearance was marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men.” Isaiah said this magnificent exalted Messiah would be marred more than any man. And then in to chapter 53 where it says in verse 2 in the middle, “He had no stateliness, form or majesty that we should look upon Him,” this views Him on the cross. “His appearance would not attract us to Him. He was despised, forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief,” all speaking of My servant, the Messiah. “Despised, we didn’t esteem Him.” What’s He doing? “Surely our griefs seem self-bore, He’s bearing our griefs, our sorrows He carried. He is stricken, smitten by God and afflicted, pierced through for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, chastening for our well being fell on Him and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, the Lord has laid iniquity of us all on Him.” This is the final substitute. This is a picture of Messiah. It’s non-mistakable. My servant, the servant of Jehovah in the book of Isaiah is the Messiah. The Messiah will come and be the final sacrifice. “The Lord will cause the iniquity of all of us to fall on Him...to fall on Him.”

The end of the chapter, “He will bear the sin of many, intercede for the transgressors.” It was clear that the Messiah was going to die as the final sacrifice, the substitute.

Philip understood this, turn to Acts 8. After this instruction, Philip learned his lessons. By the way, the same instruction that Jesus gives to these two on the road He gives to the Apostles that night. We’re going to look at that next time.

He showed up where they were and gave them the same instruction from the Old Testament. Philip...Philip, one of the deacons in the early church, became an evangelist and he was called by God to go south to a road, verse 26, Acts 8:26, descending from Jerusalem to Gaza, the desert, he went there. Ran into an Ethiopian eunuch, court official of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. This man was the treasurer, in charge of all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship. This is a very unique story.

In the Old Testament, eunuchs were shut out of worship. But this was a eunuch who had received grace and been seeking to know the true God and was coming to know the true God. Came to worship. Wish we knew the background of that story. “Sitting in his chariot, reading Isaiah. And the Spirit said, ‘Go up and join this chariot.’ And when Philip had run up, he heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, ‘Do you understand what you’re reading?’ He said, ‘How could I, unless someone guides me.’ And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.”

Can Philip help this Ethiopian? This foreigner who's desirous of worshipping the true God and just finding his way in the Scripture and lands on Isaiah? The passage of Scripture which he was reading was this, “He was led as a sheep to slaughter, as a lamb before its shearer, is silenced so he doesn’t open his mouth. In humiliation his judgment was taken away...that is he had an unjust trial. Who shall

relate his generation for his life was removed from the earth?" He was killed.

"And the eunuch answered Philip and said, 'Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this, of Himself, or someone else?' And Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this Scripture, he preached Jesus to him." Jesus started with Moses. Philip started with Isaiah. Jesus started with Moses and went toward the prophets. Philip started with the prophets and probably went back to Moses.

The Old Testament was crystal clear about the Messiah's suffering. A lot more. He may have reminded these two on the road that the Messiah, according to Zechariah 9:9 would ride in to Jerusalem on a donkey. And he had done that. He may have reminded them of Psalm 69:4 that the Messiah would be hated without a reason. In other words, He would be sentenced to death without just cause. He may have reminded them of Psalm 41:9 that says Messiah would be betrayed by a friend, Judas. Or He may have reminded them of Zechariah 11 verses 12 and 13, that the Messiah would be sold for 30 pieces of silver. Zechariah also said that money would be thrown on the temple floor, it would be picked up and used to buy a potter's field. Every one of those details came to pass.

He may have reminded them that Isaiah 53:7 said He would not open His mouth to defend Himself at His trial. And He did not. He may have reminded them that Isaiah 53:12 said He would be included with criminals in His death and there was one on each side of Him. And He was supposed to be buried in a criminal grave but Isaiah 53:12 said He would be with the rich in His death and He would remind them that He had been in the tomb of a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea. He may have reminded them that He was the final Passover Lamb who died on Passover day at the very times when Passover lambs were being executed. He may have reminded them, surely He did, of Psalm 16 where that great messianic promise is given, "Thou wilt not permit Thy holy one to see corruption but will show Him the path of life." No corruption in the grave and resurrection.

The lesson must have been stunning and staggering. And those are just parts of what He could have said. And as I said, He will repeat it later. Look at verse 44. When He comes to meet with the Apostles that night, having identified Himself to them, He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures and He said to them, 'Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day.'" Same thing. They all had that very limited partial understanding.

You know, by the time you get to verse 28 as they approach the village, you know what their attitude is. Because verse 32 says what it is. Their hearts were literally burning. And I'll say more about that when we get there. Their hearts were on fire with the exhilarating joy that was overwhelming them. Scripture was true. This was the Messiah. It was exactly the plan and He is alive. How could they have been so foolish? So dull? So stupid?

Now when I was a little kid, school seemed to me the most painful of all experiences. Every class seemed forever till I could get out of there. This would have been one class that passed very quickly..very quickly. Once in a while a teacher showed up in my life who could make a class move a little faster. This would have been warp speed, hearing Jesus give this instruction.

Now that brings us to the final point. We started with a need for understanding and then the source of understanding...the need, ignorance of Scripture; the source, exposition of Scripture. Now we come to the response to understanding, knowledge of Scripture...knowledge of Scripture produces joy.

Now I want to mention this 'cause I think it's really important. They don't know who He is yet. They still don't know this is Jesus. And what is firing their hearts is not Jesus yet. What fires their hearts is to understand the Scripture. It's the truth, not the person. Anyone who explains accurately the Scripture can expect to see that kind of response. Understanding the truth fulfills the true believer's deepest longing because to understand the truth, it all makes sense. When you understand the Word of God, it all makes sense. All your faith is anchored in reality, produces profound joy. To understand the Scripture is to know God and to know the things are the way the Scripture says they are and that God's plan is unfolding and God is sovereign and His purpose is being accomplished. This is exhilarating...exhilarating.

And that's how they feel. They're literally on fire on the inside. They have been dead dry and no fire burns as bright as that one lit of dry kindling. And their dry hearts are now on fire. And here's their response. "As they approach the village," verse 28, "where they were going, Emmaus, He acted as if He would go farther." For the same reason that He had asked questions, He wants them to initiate. He wants them to inaugurate what happens, to elicit their response, to demonstrate that their hearts had been so fired that they wanted more. He doesn't want to impose anything, He wants all of us to understand that this came from them. So He acts like He's just going to keep walking. "And they urged Him, very strong word, saying, 'Stay with us, for it's getting toward evening and the day is now nearly over. This is a perfect time to settle down, spend time with us.' And He went in to stay with them."

Why did they invite Him in? You say, "Well it was getting dark and He needed a place to stay." Well hospitality would have been a minor element, that would have been common kindness, not leave a stranger out in the dark, but they didn't really know where He was going. The way He acted, as if He were going further would give them the impression that He had a place to go, would it not? It would to me. It wasn't as if He was standing there wringing His hands saying, "Where am I going to spend the night?" This isn't about hospitality. This is about more teaching. They've had enough to know they want a lot more. Stay with us. They don't even put a timing element in there. For the night? For the evening? For an hour? Stay. And He went in to stay with them.

Evenings were spent reclining at a table and filled with hours of conversation. And this could have gone on endlessly as far as they were concerned. Their lives were totally turned upside right.

And then He did something in the midst of the further conversation. “And when He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it began giving it to them.” Now that’s very odd. This is not a communion service, there’s no wine here. Breaking bread was just a way to describe a meal and the way meals were prepared in those days, you had some kind of gravy type in a bowl, some kind of soup or pasty kind of mixed fruit and vegetables and whatever and you dipped bread in it and you ate it and that was a common ordinary meal.

But the breaking of the bread and the distributing of the food was the responsibility of the host. If you went to somebody’s house for dinner, a total stranger, you walked in, you wouldn’t say, “Now sit down while I go in the kitchen and serve you.” It would be ridiculous. In fact, it would be inappropriate. In fact, it might be a bit rude.

Why does He do this? Well we aren’t told but the only assumption I can make is because they didn’t have any interest in eating, and Jesus was just being kind to them. They didn’t want to stop long enough to do anything. Get the bread, break the bread, pass the bread or put the bread in their mouths. I don’t know if you’ve had that experience, it’s a rather common experience to those of us who dive down deeply into the Word of God to have little or no interest in eating. It’s not some kind of spiritual experience in itself, it’s just that the Word becomes so rich and so wonderful that there’s nothing that can draw you away. And I think He did what needed to be done for their sake in an act of kindness. And also, to let them know that He wasn’t...they weren’t intruding on Him if they ate. They don’t know who He is yet.

And so, He does the very unusual thing of breaking the bread, blessing it and began giving it to them. Verse 31 says this, “And their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.” Passive verb again, their eyes were opened in the same way that their...verse 16...eyes were prevented. This is something that happens to them. Again, nobody who saw Jesus after the resurrection really recognized Him unless God opened their eyes. But there are some elements that aid them in the process. Why would they have recognized Him in the breaking of the bread?

Well the simple answer is because God let them recognize Him. But I think added to that simple answer is in the familiar confines of this little house, seated at a table, as Jesus broke the bread and prayed, can’t you imagine that they began to see and hear some things that sounded familiar? That there was familiarity in the way He did it? And we would have to wonder what the prayer was like. And I can tell you how it started. “O...what’s the next word...Father,” 'cause all His prayers did.

Did they recognize Him in the familiarity of the table and the customary way in which He did that? Did they recognize Him in the prayer and the blessing? I think maybe more than that, in the flickering candlelight. Did they 'cause He had a robe that was loose, did they see some fresh wounds in His

hands or His wrists? I think they probably did. And they knew He was alive.

Again, from the depths of despair to the transcendent heights of joy, they recognized Him. And He vanished out of their sight. Whist...gone. After His resurrection He could do that, still can.

They had hoped He would be their Redeemer and turns out He was. And all the Scripture now made sense. By the way, these are the two most brilliant scholars on the planet, at least in the afternoon on Sunday because nobody else knows what they know. Nobody in Judaism knows it, no priest, no rabbi, no scribe, nobody. You talk about your moment in the sun, this was it. This was it. And that's why, verse 33 says, "That very hour they returned to Jerusalem and found gathered together the Eleven and those who were with them." They went back to tell them everything they knew.

Since we saw you last, we have become Old Testament scholars. We can tell you the whole thing. And by the way, He's alive.

But I love the final comment in verse 32. "He vanishes." And they don't comment on Wow! Wasn't it neat to see a glorified body? Wow, amazing. He vanished. Never seen that before. And by the way, where did He come from when He showed up on the road?

That's not what they talk about. They talked about something that we can talk about. Here's what they said to one another, verse 32, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road? Namely while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

What lit their hearts on fire was an understanding of Scripture. That's why I say, the most important thing in the world is the Scripture and therefore the greatest service that could ever be rendered to anybody is to explain to them the Scripture, the meaning of the Scripture. This is the only thing you could call Christian ministry, gospel ministry, explaining the Scripture. And it produces a burning heart.

What is that burning? It's the burning of joy and the joy is so overwhelming and overpowering that they jumped up from the table when Jesus disappeared, turned right around in the pitch black and headed back to Jerusalem to declare that He was alive and that it all made sense...it all made sense.

Jesus is alive and the Scripture is alive. Their fired hearts came from Him explaining, opening up the Scriptures. And it turned in to zeal to preach the message, proclaim the message. What we're talking about here is joy and testimony. Two things that flow out of this, when your heart's on fire because you understand the Scripture, you have an internal joy because you know it's the truth and your salvation is secure and you can't contain it so you run to spread the fire.

It was Henry Martin, the great missionary to India, who said, "Now let me burn out for God." His heart was set on fire by the truth of Scripture. David Brainerd, that young missionary to the American Indians who died in his youth, said, "O that I were a flame of fire in the hand of God." And it was John Wesley at the time of his conversion who said, "My heart was strangely warmed."

When the truth of Scripture comes clear to us, the heart is set on fire for joy and for testimony. And that can be our experience. We'll never be on the Emmaus Road, we'll never have that experience. That was only two people. But we can be part of the fellowship of the burning heart, can't we? And we can enjoy the exhilarating joy that comes from understanding the Word and how it motivates us to proclaim it. And that's what they experienced.

Father the Word is described by the prophets as a fire, a judgment fire, but it is not just a judgment fire, it is a burning exhilarating joyous warming kindling of dryness, it sets the heart aflame in love for Christ and love for the lost and love for the truth. It makes us joyful and it motivates us to ministry, gospel proclamation, to say as these said, "He's alive, He's alive. It's true; the Scripture is true. He is our Redeemer." Lord, fill us with that same fire, that same exciting joy, all absorbing joy that defines us. We thank You for Your truth. We thank You that it was written to be understood, that we can embrace it, confident that as we search the Scripture we will know the truth and that truth will come for us the flame of our own hearts that drives us to worship and praise and thanksgiving and witness as well.

Lord, we pray that for those who, perhaps this morning, are just beginning, like Wesley said, to have their heart warmed by gospel truth, we would pray, Lord, that You would bring that to its fullness, give them life in Christ, we pray in His name. Amen. Amen.

Next Sunday morning we are going with those two disciples into the meeting on Sunday night with the Apostles and hear what Jesus has to say to them there. It's great, great text.

By the way, this is how it's going to go. We have three more messages in Luke, the final one will be Christmas Sunday...Christmas Sunday is the ascension. Most people come to church on Christmas thinking they're going to hear a story about how He came, they're going to hear a story about how He left. Okay? That's the final one. Just so you can plan for that.

The prayer room is open to my right and we welcome you if you have any spiritual need at all. If you want to know about church membership, salvation, baptism, any spiritual help, we're there to serve you. God bless you.

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