

Intro: If you could jump into a time machine and go back in time to witness anything from the life of Jesus of Nazareth, what would you want to go see? (Feeding 5000? Raising Lazarus? Witness the Sermon on the Mount? Crucifixion?)

Phillip Ryken, “I would choose to travel the gospel road from Jerusalem to Emmaus, walking with two disciples on an Easter afternoon and listened to Jesus explain how everything in the whole Bible is all about him.”

Today, we’re going to take a look at this famous eyewitness account of the resurrection of Jesus. It is significant because Luke devotes more space to this account than to any other event, miracle, or teaching of Jesus with the exception of Jesus’ famous story about the prodigal son. If Luke has spent this much time and used up this much parchment, you can bet that this is extremely important.

This is significant because Jesus wants each and every one of us to answer the question, “Who do you say that I am?” And on this road to Emmaus, Jesus is going to both say something and do something that helps immensely in our understanding of him.

### **“On the Road to Seeing Jesus” ~ Luke 24.13-35**

So whether you are new to Christianity or have followed Jesus for decades, I want to invite you to go back in time and join two disciples who were leaving Jerusalem the Sunday following the brutal torture, crucifixion, and burial of Jesus.

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**13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. 16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.**

1. **These were two of the larger group of disciples** (cf. Acts 1:15).
2. **Sunday they set out on a journey and Jesus joined them.** Probably lots of folks returning to their homes after the Passover weekend. And Luke tells us Jesus joined them while they walked.
3. **“But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.”** How is this possible?
  - They certainly weren’t expecting to see Jesus; he had just been tortured and crucified.
  - Perhaps Jesus had a shawl over his head and they didn’t really pay that much attention?
  - Grief + disillusionment + anger = tunnel vision?
  - Supernatural? Perhaps God for the moment kept them from seeing that it was Jesus?

**17 And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” 19 And he said to them, “What things?”**

1. **Cleopas** - the husband of one of the ladies named Mary who was with Mary the mother of Jesus at the scene of the crucifixion of Jesus (cf. John 19:25)?
2. **Cleopas is stunned that this mysterious traveler coming from Jerusalem doesn’t know what had happened over the weekend.** The irony: “Instead of being the only person who did not know what was happening, Jesus was the only person who did!” (Ryken 645).
  - Jesus playfully asks, “What things?” And Cleopas answers by giving an excellent summary. One commentator called this “the gospel according to Cleopas” bc it includes almost all the basic facts about Jesus. Almost....

**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. 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.”

1. “...it is now the third day since these things happened.”

- Luke 9:22, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”
- Luke 18:31-33, “And taking the twelve, he said to them, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.’”
- Luke 24:6-7, The angels told the women at the empty tomb of Jesus, “Why do you look for the living among the dead. He is not here, he has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.”
- This should have lit them on fire, but for them it just seems to mean that the story of Jesus has come to an end.

2. **Disillusioned: The body of Jesus was missing.** Was this a cruel joke played on the Jewish people by the Romans?

- The women’s report “amazed” us = astonished; to be knocked out of position.

3. **Ryken**, “They had basically all the facts they needed about the cross and empty tomb, including the witness of the apostles, but in their confusion it did not yet add up to a gospel. It was like hearing the punch line without getting the joke... So the Gospel according to Cleopas was not really a gospel after all. The word ‘gospel’ means ‘good news,’ but there is no good news unless Jesus has risen from the dead.”

**Bottom Line: The Gospel is the Good News about the Crucifixion AND Resurrection of Jesus.**

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 the things concerning himself.

1. “O foolish ones....”

- Some interpret this a sharp, biting criticism: “You guys are idiots.”
- Some interpret this simply as an attention grabber: “You guys are clueless.”

2. “...slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!”

- Why? Because in their minds, the Messiah would not have to suffer; He’s a conquering king after all. They saw what they wanted to see in the OT Scriptures, but ignored the parts they didn’t like.”

3. “**And beginning with Moses....**” That must have been the most amazing Bible study ever!

- Spurgeon, “From every town, village, and little hamlet in England, wherever it may be, there is a road to London... and so from every text in Scripture there is a road to the metropolis of the Scriptures, that is Christ. Your business is, when you get to a text, to say, ‘Now, what is the road to Christ?’ and then preach a sermon, running along the road towards the great metropolis—Christ.”

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. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

1. **Communion?** I think that’s what Luke wants us to see: cf. 22:19...

- Wait a minute: Cleopas wasn't at the Last Supper, was he? Well, if you look at the paintings, you would certainly conclude that. But nowhere are we told that it was only the 12 disciples with Jesus. No doubt there were family members, the company of women who traveled with Jesus, and probably others at the Passover feast.

## 2. "And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him"

- Cf. John 20:11ff, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, but she mistook him for a gardener until he said, "Mary."
- Likewise, in the meal of what we now call "The Lord's Supper," the light bulb went off for them.
- Eph. 1:16, "I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened...."

## 3. "And he vanished from their sight." What's that about?

- The word can be translated "vanished" or "disappeared." The question is, what does this mean?
- It would simply mean, "And he was gone." As in, "He left." Or it could mean something supernatural is going on here. As we'll see next week, Jesus suddenly appeared to his disciples in a locked room and they were astonished. Maybe Luke is hinting at the extraordinary nature of his resurrected body.

## 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?"

- Martin Luther, "The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me."

## 33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. 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.

- They had been traveling, it was now dark and unsafe to travel, but this encounter with the resurrected Jesus was too amazing to just sleep on. They had to find the disciples and tell them that it is true after all. Jesus has risen from the dead, and they are eyewitnesses of it.

## Why did Luke choose to spend so much time and parchment to give us this particular eyewitness account of the resurrection of Jesus?

- CS Lewis, *On Obstinacy in Belief*, "You are no longer faced with an argument which demands your assent, but with a Person who demands your confidence."

## APPLICATION

### 1. Look to see Jesus in the Gospel.

1. Remember, the Gospel is Good News about something that happened.
  - Crucifixion + Resurrection
2. Juraslov Pelikan, "If Christ is risen, nothing else matters. And if Christ is not—nothing else matters."

### 2. Look to see Jesus in all of Scripture.

1. The Scripture is one long story about Jesus.
  - J. Calvin, "This is what we should seek...through the whole of Scripture: to know Jesus Christ truly, and the infinite riches which are included in him and offered to us by God the Father."

2. How is your appetite for reading the Scriptures? How is your appetite for Jesus?

**3. Look to see Jesus in the Sacrament.**

1. The Scriptures are not the only place where we long more and more to see Jesus, we also see him in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

- In this meal that Jesus gave his disciples, he is truly present to the eyes of our hearts. It is here where Sunday after Sunday when we gather to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus that we can experience afresh the reality of his resurrection in our lives.

2. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper helps the eyes of our heart to see Jesus in the mystery of his life-giving death on our behalf.

- Ryken, "The sacrament does not offer us a grace that is any different from the grace we receive by believing what the Bible says about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What the sacrament does is to give us the same grace in a different way—a way that helps us to see Jesus. When we participate in this sacrament, we remember the only Saviour whose body was broken and blood was shed for our sins."

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**NCC, may you long to see Jesus more and more,  
and may you be refreshed with the power of his resurrection today,  
knowing that God will raise you up as well.**

**Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!**