

April 15, 2018
#22
Luke 24:13-35
“Life giving Table”
“We had hoped”

³ Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles^[a] from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad.^[b] ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” ¹⁹ He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth,^[c] who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. ^[d] Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. ²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed 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 they did not see him.” ²⁵ Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah^[e] should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us^[f] while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Have any of you learned to ride a bicycle without falling down once? I think it is safe to assume that most of us fell down quite a few times before we learned how to ride a bike. I was watching our Ella learning how to balance and ride a bike without

support wheels. She has fallen down. It hurt, but I am not sure I know any other way to learn to ride a bike.

In our faith journey, we will fall down. I am not sure there is any other way to learn humble servanthood, true discipleship without many falls. I also believe that it takes some learning and the work of the Holy Spirit to recognize Jesus as we walk in this life. The only way is to continue by getting back on the bike and start riding it. What a joy is to be able to ride a bike and feeling you have managed it.

The un-named

Two disciples, Cleopas and another one, are traveling to the village name Emmaus. Let us stop for a moment here. First of all, who is Cleopas? He is not one of the 12. We know that because he is not listed in Luke's list of disciples, along with the fact that when he leaves Emmaus to return to Jerusalem, he finds the 11 there (no Judas, of course). So who is he? We know nothing about him.

The second one is un-named. I think it is so powerful that Jesus chooses not very well known disciples to join in their walk and conversation. He comes along with them so He can reveal himself, so they also will be able to see. I am grateful for what I learn from Peter, Matthew or John. But I rejoice over these little people with weird names like Cleopas and people who don't have a name. Jesus joins not very famous people to reveal himself. He is willing to join you too.

Eyes were kept from seeing and then opened

These two are talking about what just happened. Nothing made sense: they witnessed Jesus from Nazareth crucified, dead and buried. Now people are saying they have seen Him risen. Jesus comes along and these two disciples do not recognize Him. Why would they not recognize Jesus? Did Jesus look different? Were they so busy with their talking that they were not really paying attention? In verse 16: "their eyes were kept from recognizing him". The passive tense verb suggests it was something higher not letting them to see. Maybe these two needed to learn in a process and to come to the point where they can see. The passive tense implies that they had no choice and that it was prevented from them. Again, in the same way, the same passive tense of the verb, appears in verse 31: Their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. So, even if it is a higher power, that prevents us from seeing the same power does opens our eyes. We have to make choices along the way.

How well I do recognize Jesus in my own walk today? Maybe your eyes are also kept from seeing. Let us continue to walk with these two disciples so we would be able to finally reach the point where our eyes are opened.

Cleopas and the other one is telling all about what happened and they are amazed that this man does not know about these events. Listen what these two know

about Jesus: “He was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over 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

But we had hoped. We had hoped that the Messiah would be different. They have imagined and created the image of Jesus according to their own perceived need. They had hoped for something different. Jesus Christ did not fit into their messianic theology. How can you have a dying Messiah. They created an imaginary Jesus who would do what they wanted Him to do.. Jesus was to be a military messiah who would give the Jews political freedom. He would have a throne without suffering, a crown without a cross, a government without humiliation, power without pain. He was an invented Jesus.

What kind of God do you have? What is it that you cannot fit in your theology? Are you experiencing hardship and suffering, even when you are seeking to follow Jesus? Are you being misunderstood or rejected by those who call themselves Christian? Is God not answering your prayers? Is God not being where you want Him to be and not doing what you want Him to do in your own chosen time? It is hard to see Jesus when we have unrealistic expectations.

It is still very hard for us to understand and see the loving God in some of the stories. But what do you do when the things you would like your God to be is not the God you find? Do you turn away? Do you continue to accept, to walk and wait until your mind, by the Holy Spirit will be able to see and understand what God is love. His ways are not our ways. Are you able to accept and say, “He is God, not me. I am in His power not God in my power. He knows all. I know partially?” Humble yourself and realize your limitations of knowledge. Continue to be open and hear, do not harden your heart. We are so good at turning ourselves off. If we do not like what we hear, we do not listen. I believe when the Word of God is shared the Holy Spirit is with us and in us to help us understand in God’s time and His way. I can guarantee you that God is good and very loving. Stick with Him. Let it His will be done not yours.

So Jesus, himself, explains all the OT and that it was all pointing to the Messiah who will have to die. It was not that the Old Testament did not say it. The Old Testament said it in detail. It was that they were not interested in believing it. They followed Jesus because they thought they might get to sit on his right and left hand in the kingdom. They really did not want to *die* with him. They wanted to *reign* with him.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.”

They have learned so much from that stranger and they have received all that knowledge. There comes a time we must choose: is knowing enough? Is learning about the Bible is enough for me? There are many exciting things you can find in the Scriptures. It is fun to learn more and more. Learning can help to grow in your knowledge. There are so much good stuff in the Bible that even non-believers use the wisdom.

The questions always remains. Would you invite Jesus to stay with you? Would you invite Him into your home, at your table and in your life? Learning is easier. It does not require total change of your life. When you learn you feel smarter than others. Knowledge puffs you up. Living with Jesus in your mind, heart and soul requires dying to self. It means changing the purpose of your life. You have to die to become new in Him and enjoy the new Life. The the book "Dangerous Wonder", says it this way: "The Christian life is more than just finding Jesus; it is following Jesus."

It is much easier not to go search too deeply in our lives. In our Bible study, and bless all the people who still come to our Bible study on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, it can be tough. Spirituality will shake your world of how you think and feel. If you think your practice of being very spiritual person turns out you just hiding, denying, minimizing and missing the whole point of being true disciple of Jesus.

But do not worry if you did not join us this time. We are making plans for more opportunities for you to join us as we go deeper with our emotions and being more truthful to God, yourself and others.

Cleopas and other urged Jesus to stay with them. We are coming my favorite part. You will not be able to guess. Yes, the climax of the story is at the table. Yes, Jesus reveals and they eyes are opened at the table. He agrees to stay when He is invited. From our reading today I can hear that Jesus was waiting for that invitation. He planned to stay with them, but Jesus wanted that they would invite Him. These two men did invite. Suddenly, the Jesus is not a guest anymore. He becomes the host. At the table things are not the same when Jesus is invited.

Are you longing for things to become different in your life? Have lost the hope that things will never change? Are you tired of all those bad things going on in the world? Cleopas and other one were very frustrated with the world, with high chiefs, with the Roman government. They were frustrated with God. Too. Where is God? How can you have Messiah who dies on the cross? Really? That is not the way we wanted things to be

Jesus himself arrives and joins us in our foolish thinking. Yes, he does that today too. He lets us talk but He also points us toward the truth. The only way we can totally recognize Him is at the Table. We must invite Him and we come to sit. He took the bread. Blessed and broke it. Communion is the pinnacle for all our gatherings in His

name. Sadly, it is hard for us, to realize, to believe, to accept and be transformed as we come to the Table. Jesus is the same as He was with these two disciples. He is the same today. He opens the eyes of those who open themselves and come with the faith. Jesus comes to any table when we invite Him, when we realize the need of His presence and what He is giving to us.

At the table we get all we need to be able to proclaim and live a new life. Jesus disappeared after they have received the food from Jesus. By the Holy Spirit we receive all what we need to proclaim and live life in Jesus.