“Walking with Jesus”

Luke 24:13-35

The Walk to Emmaus

**13**Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24%3A13-35&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-25995a)] 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](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24%3A13-35&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-25999b)] **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](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24%3A13-35&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26001c)] 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](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24%3A13-35&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26003d)] 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](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24%3A13-35&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26008e)] 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](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+24%3A13-35&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26014f)] 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.

In our Gospel Lesson for this morning we find, on Easter day, two of Jesus’ disciples walking on their way back from Jerusalem to Emmaus.

And as they are walking, Jesus comes and walks with them.

At this point, they thought Jesus was dead, and they didn’t recognize the Resurrected Christ.

Many people, over the years, have wondered, “How couldn’t they recognize Jesus when He was walking there on the road with them.”

I don’t know for sure, but I do know it can be difficult to recognize people in unusual settings or in places where we are not expecting them.

As a teacher I have kids even at s the older level see me outside of school and not know me.

And I know when my dad was in the hospital then in hospice care he wasn’t the man I once recognized.

I would imagine many of us have experienced this sort of thing at wakes with open coffins or with family members who are terribly sick.

In any event, the last time these disciples had seen Jesus, His body was bloodied, ripped to shreds, hanging from a wooden Cross.

And that, no doubt, was the image which was seared into their memories as they walked the Road to Emmaus, faces twisted in grief.

And so, even though Jesus Himself came up and walked along with them…they did not recognize Him.

I wonder how often we walk through life not knowing or remembering that the Risen Christ is walking with us?

I know it happens to me.

And when I do forget that Jesus is with me, that is when fear, panic and loneliness threaten to take over.

It also tends to be when I slip up and fall into sin.

Perhaps I lose my temper more easily.

Maybe I hurt someone with my words or actions.

And when this happens, I tend to lose the “peace of God which transcends all understanding.”

It is so important for us, to, at all times remember that Jesus Christ walks with us always—even during times of isolation, stress, loneliness and pain.

On the road to Emmaus the disciples’ faces were downcast.

And Jesus basically asked them why they were so sad.

And they told Him the whole story about what had happened.

And they were able to tell Him a lot.

It was, after-all, a seven-mile walk.

And Jesus listened.

They were absolutely heart-broken.

They had put all their hope in Jesus being the Christ.

And now, in their minds, Jesus was dead.

What was there to live for?

Like the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus, there are many times when we put our hope in one thing just to have it dashed and left to wonder not only what might have been, but also where do I go from here?

And that is a question our Gospel Lesson leads us to wonder today.

Where do we turn when things fall apart?

Fall apart not only for us personally, but also for the world?

What do we do when the when the things we have trusted in, believed in, hoped in, seem to have failed us?

And so, the two disciples in our Gospel Lesson for this morning were headed to Emmaus, to do what, we don’t know and they probably didn’t either.

And Jesus was with them.

And they were telling Him their story, and Jesus was listening quietly, intently.

When you think about it, we all walk the Road to Emmaus with our faces twisted with grief” sometimes.

Perhaps you feel that way today.

Maybe this COVID-19 stuff has got you down.

Perhaps you miss your church family so much it hurts.

This is your road to Emmaus

Recently, I received an email from someone who told me about being laid off from their job due to the coronavirus and their feelings of discouragement and disappointment.

This was their Road to Emmaus.

“We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel…”

They were grieving and they were angry.

But Jesus was with them all along the way.

Have you ever been angry with God?

You know, I think it’s alright to be angry and it’s alright to be honest with God about how we feel.

God is big enough to understand.

It’s alright to be angry and frustrated with God.

We don’t understand everything, not even close. That not understanding causes us to be angry and frustrated in life…. In fact, it may be the very root cause of a lot of anger…

And God knows that we don’t understand everything and that we are going to get angry or frustrated and sometimes it will be with Him…. And God loves us and wants to listen to us, console us and let Him know we can confide in Him.

If you are ever angry with God; talk to Jesus about it.

Tell Him how you feel.

I do and I have.

Let it out and you will find peace; for God is the Great Comforter.

So, these two disciples, their faces twisted with grief, disillusion and perhaps anger were joined on the road by Jesus.

And notice that Jesus came to them, not the other way around.

That is the way it always is with God.

He is the Good Shepherd Who searches for the lost sheep.

He is the One Who cares for us more than we can imagine.

He is the one who travels with us on the Road to Emmaus.

When the disciples got to where they were headed, they invited Jesus in to stay with them.

And during the meal, their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus.

Then they said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while talked to us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?

This kind of thing still happens today.

Wherever you may be, wherever you may be doing, Jesus comes and walks beside us.

He opens the Scripture to us.

And if we invite Him into our hearts, we recognize Him for Who He really is—the Resurrected Lord of the Universe.

And we experience new life as we are born again!

I want to go back to where the disciples ask one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

Have you ever experienced your heart burning within you as Jesus has opened the Scriptures to you…

…as you have experienced new insights about God and about life when reading God’s Word and then, even applying it to your life?

I must say, when I read this passage, I am reminded by how much I love the Scriptures.

And I need to be reminded.

They are a part of me.

I am in love with the Word of God, but sometime, I think I forget this.

It has changed my life and continues to do so.

Everything I do revolves around it.

Where would I be without God’s Word?

The Bible is my favorite subject I love learning about.

And it’s my favorite subject because it reveals God.

It reveals Jesus.

It holds the key to salvation and love.

How much time do we spend reading God’s Word?

Do we have a personal devotion time?

I think this time of isolation, of sheltering in place, is a perfect opportunity to shut off the 24 hours news cycle and pick up the Bible.

One of the great ways to read the Bible is to journal as you read.

Read, for example, a book like Romans.

And allow Jesus to speak to you through the Scripture.

And when the Jesus speaks to you through Scripture, write down what He is saying.

This can be so exciting.

And it changes our lives.

It transforms us and the way we look at our situation, the world, and the needs of others.

We are told, in Luke Chapter 24, that as Jesus “took the bread,” as He did what He had done so many times before, they “recognized him.”

And after this experience with Jesus with Jesus, the two disciples went running back to Jerusalem…

…back to the other disciples proclaiming: “It is true! The Lord is risen…”

Their encounter with Jesus—their recognition of Him changed their sadness into joy.

Have you experienced this kind of joy?

If nothing else comes out of this Coronavirus Pandemic—if we all grow in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ…

…if we all open our Bibles and speak and listen to Christ—and feel our hearts burning within us as Jesus opens the Scriptures to us—then that is the most important thing that can happen.

It is true! The Lord has risen…

…and He walks this life with us, every step of the way.

Psalm 116: 1-4, 12-19

I love the Lord, because he has heard  
    my voice and my supplications.  
**2**Because he inclined his ear to me,  
    therefore I will call on him as long as I live.  
**3**The snares of death encompassed me;  
    the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;  
    I suffered distress and anguish.  
**4**Then I called on the name of the Lord:  
    “O Lord, I pray, save my life!”

What shall I return to the Lord  
    for all his bounty to me?  
**13**I will lift up the cup of salvation  
    and call on the name of the Lord,  
**14**I will pay my vows to the Lord  
    in the presence of all his people.  
**15**Precious in the sight of the Lord  
    is the death of his faithful ones.  
**16**O Lord, I am your servant;  
    I am your servant, the child of your serving girl.  
    You have loosed my bonds.  
**17**I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice  
    and call on the name of the Lord.  
**18**I will pay my vows to the Lord  
    in the presence of all his people,  
**19**in the courts of the house of the Lord,  
    in your midst, O Jerusalem.  
Praise the Lord!