

“Our Spiritual Journey” by E A Terry Delivered 4/19/20

Acts 9:1-9; Acts 10:9 – 23; **Luke 24:13 –36 (Sermon)**

We don't know much about the two travelers on the Emmaus road.

We do know the two travelers were disciples of Jesus and one of the two travelers was named Cleopas; but no other details are given.

What does all of this mean to us today?

The Emmaus Road represents our spiritual journey.

Our life on this earth was designed to be a journey; a journey that prepares us for eternity; a journey that leads us home to our creator God.

Our purpose while we are on earth is to get to know, to love, to trust, to depend upon, to enjoy, and to serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

While our scripture lesson for this morning assures us of the reality of our Lord's presence, our scripture also reveals the reality of our spiritual blindness.

Our risen Lord is present everywhere but sadly we often do not recognize our Lord's presence.

The account of the two travelers on the Emmaus Road is important since it provides us with several important teachings about the reality of Jesus' presence in our daily life.

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us as we go about our daily routine.

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven Jesus assured all believers by saying, ***“Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”*** (Matthew 28:20).

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us in our disappointments and when our world has been turned upside down.

In verses 14 and 15 we read that these two disciples were disappointed and discouraged.

They had placed their faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness, peace, power, and a purpose for the future.

Jesus' death on the cross and burial in the tomb plunged them into despair.

But as they were walking along the Emmaus Road, the risen Jesus came to them and walked along with them. (Luke 24:14-15).

So why didn't the two travelers recognize Jesus?

First they were preoccupied with the physical events around them.

They had all of the facts straight but they were victims of their own presuppositions.

They viewed the crucifixion as something that had gone wrong.

They did not understand that Jesus' death and resurrection were God's eternal plan for the salvation of all mankind.

And secondly, these two travelers were victims of their unbelief.

Look in verse 21. ***“But we had hoped He was the one who was going to redeem Israel.”*** and ***“What is more it is the third day.”***

They did not believe Jesus was going to do what Jesus said He was going to do even after the disciples found Jesus' tomb to be empty.

In verse 25 Jesus rebukes the two travelers for their unbelief.

The same thing can and will happen to us.

Our unbelief will spiritually blind us if we take our focus off of Jesus' resurrection.

Jesus walked with them to quiet their fears, to instruct their minds, and to restore their hope for the future.

But their lack of faith kept them from seeing Jesus.

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us when two or more believers come together in His name.

Jesus promised; ***“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”*** (Matthew 18:20)

Remember that the events on Emmaus Road took place on a Sunday night and verse 39 tells us that Jesus also appeared to the disciples on that first Easter Sunday night.

That is why all Christian churches had Sunday night worship services until recently.

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us as we study the Scriptures.

In verses 27 & 45 we read; ***“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself”. . . . Then He opened their minds so that they could understand the scriptures.”*** (Luke 24:27, 45)

The Bible is the inspired word of God. Jesus is the main character in the entire Bible.

Both the Old and New Testaments are centered on Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is only logical that God Himself gives meaning to the Scriptures.

It is only as we let the Holy Spirit lead and teach us that we will be able to understand the great truths of God.

Since faith comes by hearing The Word, (Romans 10:17) then it follows that God will speak to our

hearts as we read His Word.

When we neglect to study God's Word we are starving our own spiritual life.

The living Jesus wants to speak to us and give us guidance, hope, peace, and joy if we will reverently and prayerfully study God's Divine Word to us.

That is why we stress Bible study groups at Mt Paran.

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us in our homes.

Verse 29 says; ***"But they urged Him strongly, stay with us; for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over. So He went in to stay with them"*** (Luke 24:29).

These were two average ordinary believers and when they invited Jesus to come into their home, Jesus responded, and The King of Kings and Lord of Lords was their guest.

The living Christ will come into our homes and He will bless our families if we invite Him in.

Revelation 3:20 contains a wonderful promise, Jesus said: ***"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me."***

My favorite painting is Jesus standing at a door knocking.

The interesting thing about that painting is that there is no handle on the outside of the door.

The door must be opened from the inside.

Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart today.

Think about that. Jesus, the risen Lord, the Creator of the universe, wants to have fellowship with you today.

That is really good news.

Have you invited Jesus to be a part of your family today?

Hebrews 13:2 also reminds us; ***"Do not forget to entertain strangers for by so doing some have entertained angels without knowing it"***

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us when we tell the people around us what The Lord is doing in our life.

Notice in verses 33-35.

They got up and returned to Jerusalem, met with the eleven disciples, and told them what had happened.

In verse 34 we read, ***"It is true The Lord has risen."***

And their reward was recorded in verse 36.

“While they were still talking Jesus Himself stood among them and said; “Peace be with you”.

That is exactly why we encourage you to share your joys and what God has done in your life each Sunday during worship.

Our Living Lord has promised to be with us as we praise Him and as we share our faith with other people (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus’ promises and Jesus’ commands are inseparably linked together.

Verse 33 is a reminder that faith is an action word.

Even though it was after supper and although these two travelers were tired they went back to Jerusalem right then.

You see, when we come face to face with The Living Lord, we are compelled to do something.

We are compelled to share the joy that is burning in our hearts.

Verse 34 contains the travelers’ declaration of faith.

“The Lord has risen ...”

What about us?

Do we proclaim that our Lord has risen with confidence?

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us as we serve each other

Jesus said; ***“whatever you did for one of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”***
(Matthew 25:40).

When we meet the physical and spiritual needs of those people around us, we are actually rendering service to Jesus.

That is why a large portion of our budget at Mt Paran goes to help other people and other churches.

That is why our church’s benevolent giving is so important.

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us when we face the reality of physical death.

While the road ahead may seem bright and sunny with a promise of success, sooner or later there will be sickness and eventually physical death itself.

But Psalm 23:4 assures us that The Lord is with us as we face physical death, ***“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.”***

The Living Lord Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever, will come to us and will walk the road of life and of physical death with us to provide us with comfort, protection, and joy.

Jesus' resurrection from the dead assures us that death itself is defeated and the grave will no have victory over us.

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us as we celebrate The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

In The sacrament of The Lord's Supper The Holy Spirit spiritually unites us with Jesus Christ and with all other believers.

According to Luke, ***"When our risen Lord was at table with his disciples, He took the bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him."*** (Luke 24:30, 31)

Our living Lord comes to us and is present with us 24/7.

Verse 16 is the key to us understanding this passage.

"But they were kept from recognizing Him."

It wasn't that they were physically blinded.

It wasn't that Jesus kept them from recognizing Him.

Their own lack of faith kept these two travelers from recognizing Jesus!

That is the message to us this morning.

Our lack of faith will keep us from recognizing our Living Lord being present with us each day.

Verse 21 tells us that these two travelers remembered Jesus' words that He would rise from the dead on the third day.

They wanted to believe that Jesus would redeem Israel.

But they said the third day has come and gone, which shows their disappointment and their unbelief.

Now look at the difference in verses 21 & 22.

"We hoped", in verse 21, but in verse 22, ***"the women amazed us"***.

Verse 23 and 24 tell us why they were amazed; they did not believe the women.

They did not believe the women because they could not explain what had happened.

You see we are called to believe even though we can not explain everything.

These two travelers wanted to believe but there seemed to be little hope; little to hang on to.

We need to remind ourselves that our God is the God of miracles; our God comes through even when the pressures of life are bearing down on us.

The two travelers on the Emmaus Road were already believers.

Jesus came to these two travelers to encourage them to take the next step in their spiritual journey.

Jesus came to Saul, who was a devout Jew, on the road to Damascus and Jesus revealed Himself to Saul.

Peter was one of the 12 Disciples and in Acts 10 we can read about Jesus coming to Peter to encourage him to take the next step in his journey of faith.

And this morning Jesus is present with us and Jesus is inviting and encouraging every one of us to take the next step in our spiritual journey.

Remember as Christians our goal is to become more like Jesus.

Our time on earth is a time of preparation.

We are preparing for spending eternity in heaven.

So the question is will you accept Jesus' invitation to respond in faith.

It does not matter where you are on your spiritual journey.

We all need to take the next step in our spiritual journey.

Verses 25 – 27 are interesting.

Jesus could have shown them His hands and the hole in His side but Jesus did not.

Notice that Jesus referred to the Scriptures.

That should be a red flag for us.

We need to take note of Jesus' attitude toward the Scriptures.

If we want to know Jesus, if we want to have more faith, if we want Jesus to be real in our lives we must to study our Bible.

Notice Jesus said they were foolish not to believe the scriptures.

Jerusalem and Emmaus are seven miles apart.

This is significant since the number 7 in the Bible is the complete number.

Complete in this text because our spiritual journey begins when we ask Jesus to be our savior and our

spiritual journey ends when Jesus calls us home.

The story on the Emmaus Road can be your story as well as being the story of the two travelers.

It is up to each one of us!!

If you want The Living Lord Jesus to come along with you and meet the deepest needs of your heart, and to bless you with all spiritual gifts, then you need to invite Jesus to walk along with you each day.

Trust Jesus for the forgiveness of your sin and receive Jesus as your personal savior so that you can receive Jesus' gift of new life.

Learn about Jesus each day as you study your Bible.

Enjoy fellowship with Jesus as you pray your way through your day.

Make Jesus The Lord of every aspect of your life so that you can experience the abundant life that God planned for you both now and forever more.(John 10:10)

God word to us today invites us and challenges each one of us to invite Jesus to walk along with us each day in our journey through life.

AMEN