

**Luke 24: 13-35; “Abide With Us”, A Message for the people gathered at Birkwood Village Assisted Care Facility, by Pastor Paul Rendall, on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

We have a story here of two disciples who were at first disappointed and then sorrowful on the day of Christ’s resurrection from the dead. But by the end of the day, they were very joyful and encouraged because they had met the Risen Christ Himself. They had left Jerusalem and went back toward Emmaus where they lived, when suddenly Christ joined them. And He began talking with them about what their greatest concern was. They did not think that He had risen from the dead. But Christ would lead them gently to a different conclusion and He would even reveal Himself to them at the end of the day. He spoke so well that they wanted Him to abide with them.

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead. And if we know Him we will want Him to abide with us as well. Perhaps you are sad today because you do not have relatives to visit you. Or perhaps you do not sense God’s presence in your life at this time. Perhaps you don’t know the Lord at all yet. And yet you can, even today. For the Bible says in Romans chapter 10, verse 9, that if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. I can assure you that it is the greatest source of joy in my life to realize that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead. It can be the same for you. Let me give you some encouragement from this passage.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – The Lord Jesus listens to your every conversation.**

Verse 13 says – “Now behold two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.” “And they talked together of all these things which had happened.” “So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.” “But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.” “And He said to them, ‘What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?’” You will notice here that our Lord Jesus had a particular concern for these dear brethren. It was that they were sad. And He would converse with them about it.

They did not know that it was Him. They thought that he was just another man; a stranger who happened to be walking on the same road with them. Their eyes, it says, were restrained, from recognizing Him for who He really was. Notice that they had been talking with each other about the most important of things as they walked. They were talking about Jesus. Jesus was intent on ministering to their greatest need, which was their sadness and their unbelief. They were thinking that His death was the end of all their hopes. They were thinking that all was lost in relation to the redemption of Israel.

These men were not only sad, they were also disappointed. They were disappointed because the One whom they thought was their Messiah had been crucified and buried, and yet He had not shown Himself alive to them or to the apostles. He had said that He would rise from the dead, but they had not seen it yet. Verse 21 says, “But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.” “Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.” So, since Jesus did not show up to reveal Himself quickly to them on the morning of the third day, as He had said that He would, they wrongfully concluded that He had not been raised from the dead at all.

And so, they decided to return home to Emmaus. Let me apply this to all of us here. I want you to remember that God’s timing in everything that He does is perfect. Don’t let your own expectations of what you believe the Lord ought to do in relation to you, or where you are living, or the state of our country, lead you into the sin of unbelief. Do not let your disappointment in relation to these things cause you to think that the Lord is doing nothing, just because you cannot

immediately see a change. Do not think that the Lord Jesus is slack concerning His promises, that He will not come and make His presence known to you in relation to the greatest concerns of your life. For the Lord knows how to build your faith! But you should understand that this building of your faith always comes according to His timetable.

No doubt these men did have a legitimate concern. They really did have the highest of motives in their having this concern that they had. They were hoping, as they said in verse 21, “that it was Jesus who was going to redeem Israel.” Well Jesus had redeemed Israel when He went to the cross. And yet they did not know it yet. Perhaps you have had trouble with coming to full assurance of your salvation. You may be truly converted to Christ and yet you do not sense Christ’s presence, His blessing, and the working of His Spirit in your life. You have read in the Scriptures about the witness of the Spirit, and you have thought that you should feel something very profound taking place in your heart if the Spirit was there.

You think that it will take a profound manifestation of the Lord’s Spirit speaking to your heart to convince you that He is for you, and that He is with you, and that you truly belong to Him. I hope that you will understand that it may not be that kind of experience, coming in the time and in the way that you want it to come, that will give you the assurance that you are looking for. It will be enough for you to be actively trusting in the Lord at all times. “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for....the conviction of things unseen.” “Trust in Him at all times, at all times, O peoples; pour out your heart before Him.” “God is a refuge for us.” (Psalm 62, verse 8)

He will, in His own good time, come to your soul and say unto your soul, “I am your salvation”. Psalm 35, verse 3. That will be the right time. These brethren also had heard the women tell of His resurrection when they came back from the tomb. The women had told them that they had seen a vision of angels who had said that He was alive. They even mentioned Peter and John’s visit to the tomb; that they had seen the grave clothes, but that they had not yet seen Jesus. So Jesus knew that their sadness was something that He needed to address. For they were trusting in Him, but they did not understand.

He knew what He needed to say to them. He knew that if they had been strong in faith at that time, they would have stayed in Jerusalem and waited a little longer for Him to appear. Instead, they were too quick to jump to their own conclusions. They wrongfully thought that if He would not make Himself known to the Apostles, Peter and John, first off, on the third day, then why was there any reason for them to stick around? Jesus knew how to minister to this sadness of heart. It was to converse with them. He would pretend as though He did not really know what had been going on in Jerusalem in those previous days. And then they would have to reveal their hearts to Him.

This is what they did. And then He says this to them: “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!” “Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” He reproves them for their slowness of heart, their reluctance to believe in all that the prophets had spoken. The prophets had spoken of Christ’s glory and His kingdom. But they had also spoken of His sufferings coming before His glory. “Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things?” That is the death on the cross? And should He not also have then entered into His glory, beginning with His resurrection? Jesus had to explain to them a good many things about the nature of His sufferings, His glory, and His kingdom from Moses and all the Prophets.

He had to show them the nature of His redemption. It was not to come and deliver the nation of Israel from being under Roman domination. It was to deliver His people from their sins by His suffering on their behalf. We learn from verse 32 that this preaching and teaching them these

things caused their hearts to burn within them to know more. And they were going to know much more in just a few more minutes of His speaking with them. He was going to reveal Himself to them as raised from the dead.

The Lesson we should learn, is this: O how much you and I need to see that the remedy for our all of our sadness, all of our disappointment, and all of our unbelief comes in our be able to believe in Christ's being raised from the dead, even though we do not see Him now. I have a plaque on my wall in the dining room of our home that says this: Christ is the head of this house, the unseen guest at every meal, the silent listener to every conversation. By this I remind myself that it is indeed true that by His Spirit, He still draws near to listen to the conversations which I have with other believers about how sad or disappointed or discouraged I am.

The reason that I am that way is because I wrongly think that He is not going to do what I am looking for Him to do in my heart and my life, in relation to the things which He has promised in the Scriptures. But that is simply raw unbelief. Remember, dear Christian, that Jesus is even today still well able to minister to every one of your heart's needs. He still listens carefully to all of the conversations that you and I have with other Christians, and He would have you to remember that all power and all authority in heaven and earth have been given to Him. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, and do not despair. He will never fail you nor forsake you. If you will trust in Him, He is always with you, as your Helper in everything.