

A Walk to Remember

Luke 24 v 13-35

Context:

The account of the encounter between Jesus and two disciples on the road to Emmaus is one of the best known and most loved of the resurrection appearances. It is referred to briefly in Mark 16 v 12-13, but the fullest account is found in Luke 24 v 13-35. It was Easter Sunday and early that morning some of the women received the shock of their lives when they went to the tomb of Jesus. The tomb was empty and two angels delivered the jaw-dropping news that Jesus had risen. The women ran to tell the rest of the disciples who didn't believe them because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, typically, ran to the tomb, saw it was empty and walked away in a daze trying to make sense of it all. It is now early evening and we pick up the story on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus.....

Observation:

1. How far was Emmaus from Jerusalem (v 13)?
2. What were they talking about as they walked (v 14)?
3. Who joined them as they walked and talked (v 15)?
4. Did they recognise him (v 16)?
5. What did Jesus ask them (v 17a)?
6. How were they feeling (v 17b)?
7. What was Cleopas's reaction to Jesus (v 18)?
8. What question did Jesus then ask (v 19a)?
9. How did they reply (v 19b-24)?
10. What was Jesus's gentle rebuke to them in v 25-26?
11. What did Jesus then do (v 27)?
12. When they arrived at Emmaus, what did Jesus initially do (v 28) and what was the reaction of the two disciples (v 29)?
13. What did Jesus do in v 30 and what was the effect on the two disciples in v 31?
14. How had they felt when Jesus talked with them on the road (v 32)?
15. What did they do next (v 33a)?
16. Who did they see, what did they hear and what did they tell (v 33-35)?

Meaning:

1. It is very likely that the two disciples were Cleopas and his wife, Mary. They are mentioned in John 19 v 25 and they were clearly sharing a home according to Luke 24 v 29. What range of emotions do you think they were feeling as they walked home? (see v 17b, 19-24 for clues)
2. What possible reasons are there for their failure to recognise Jesus? (see v 16 and Mark 16 v 12)
3. Jesus asked them two questions in v 17 and 19 – do you think he already knew the answers and, if so, why did he ask?
4. What tone of voice do you think Jesus used in the rebuke of v 25-26 and why?

5. What do the words '*have to*' in v 26 imply about who was ultimately responsible for the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus? (see also Luke 24 v 7 and 44 for further support for this point)
6. Jesus led a Bible Study with the two disciples on the road. In the study he taught them that the Old Testament prophesied all that had happened to Him. In v 27 his study focuses on the first two sections of the Old Testament or Tanach ('Moses' i.e. the Torah which was written by Moses, and 'the Prophets' i.e. the Nebiim). Later that evening, in yet another Bible study, described in v 44, he also includes the third section of the Tanach, which he refers to as 'the Psalms' because that was the largest book in the third section, the proper name for which was the Chetuvim or Writings. So, what specific references in the Old Testament do you think Jesus spoke about in these Bible Studies? Where specifically in the OT do we find prophecies of or allusions to the suffering, the death and the resurrection of Jesus?
7. Why do you think Jesus acted as though he were going further when they reached Emmaus (v 28)?
8. What accounts for their sudden ability to recognise Jesus in v 30-31?
9. What do you think is meant by the phrase '*opened the Scriptures to us*' in v 32?
10. When they arrive back in Jerusalem they discover that Simon Peter has also seen the risen Jesus. The Bible doesn't give an actual account of this meeting between Jesus and Simon Peter, though Paul refers to it in 1 Corinthians 15 v 5. When do you think this happened and what do you think would have been said in the encounter?

Application:

1. Have you ever felt disappointed and/or confused about Jesus, like the two disciples? What happened and did anything change the way you felt?
2. There is a great emphasis in this passage on the sovereign power of God in the way He works in the world and in our lives – He kept the two disciples from recognising Jesus on the road (v 16); He planned that Jesus should suffer, die and rise again (v 26, 44); He opened their eyes to recognise Him in the house (v 31); He opened the Scriptures to them (v 32); and He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (45). This doctrine of the sovereignty of God (i.e. that God is in active control of everything in the universe without overriding or undermining human accountability) is controversial and some Christians reject it. Why do you think it is important that we hold on to this doctrine? What is gained by it and what is lost if we reject it?
3. Have you ever experienced your '*heart burning within you*' as you've read the Bible or listened to a sermon?
4. What does the suffering, death and resurrection mean personally to you? What difference does it make to your life?

Pray:

- That God would open the eyes and minds of those we know who don't yet believe in Jesus.
- That God would give us a greater hunger for the Bible and make our hearts burn within us as we read it.
- That God would come and walk alongside us in our disappointments and confusions.