

Midweek Reflection - The Road to Emmaus: [Luke 24: 13-35](#)



Imagine the defeat, confusion and utter desolation and which must have been weighing down each step of Cleopas and his friend as they walked along the Emmaus road. One of them is sharply suspicious when a stranger approaches, apparently utterly ignorant of what has happened in Jerusalem.

Their downcast faces speak for them. “We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.” All their hopes for a new era, freed from the Romans’ tyranny, led by this amazing prophet, Jesus of Nazareth, “powerful in word and deed before God and all the people,”; turned to dust and ashes.

This third day since Jesus’ crucifixion has been strange. They cannot believe the testimony of the women who went to the tomb at dawn to find it empty, their words about angels saying he was alive are just idle chatter; after all, a woman’s word has no weight under the law. They tell the stranger that men went to inspect the tomb for themselves and they too found that it was empty. This is all too much of a puzzle for them. They will keep on keeping on at home, keeping a low profile, keeping their disappointment as a bitter souvenir.

Their travelling companion is energised and critical of them: “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!” How come they did not recognise him as Jesus straight away? He unfolds the Scriptures as they walk, steadily spooling out the story which leads to himself.

Yet still they do not recognise him. As they approach the village, he seems ready to journey on, and they beg him to come and stay and eat with them, offering hospitality and company, the actions which their great Father Abraham had modelled when he invited travelling strangers to eat with him at Mamre, and found he had entertained angels instead.

Suddenly, in the act of sharing broken bread, they recognise their companion as the risen Jesus. In that one moment, everything comes together. They realise that the stories which the women and the disciples have told about the empty tomb are true. This risen Jesus is the same and yet mysteriously different: he can meet people anywhere, even on the dusty Emmaus road. He appears to them, and then is gone. He is risen. He is risen indeed.

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened up the Scriptures to us?” Jesus brought the words of Scripture to new life for these two people. His presence brought new life to them.

As you move on after a very peculiar Easter Sunday in this period of isolation you may feel downcast and far away from the presence of Jesus. We have only been able to watch the breaking of bread and drinking of wine at Holy Communion on YouTube. I know I found that difficult.

Yet we are called to be faithful in prayer and reading the Bible, to keep ourselves close to the source of our life and warmth – Jesus Christ himself. Even though we are having to keep physically distant, the risen Lord Jesus is not far off from us.

Ask him to stay with you, and spend time in his presence. Be nourished and warmed by his presence.

Alleluia. He is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

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