

Easter 2024

On the Road - Luke 24 verses 13 to 27

We have recently been looking at the scriptures that Jesus looked at with the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus. Now we take a look at the events that led to that pair walking on the road and what Jesus did to reveal himself.

Any writer would surely have written about the huge relief and celebration that would follow the discovery of the risen Jesus. Luke picks out a couple of disillusioned people walking AWAY from the action.

1. Why would Luke highlight these two? They were clearly aware of the rumours but they've walked away from the event.
Should we be critical of their response. Surely, they should have stuck around to find out more?
Would you have done?

They appear to have a lot of evidence.

- They recognise that Jesus was a prophet powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. (v19)
- They knew the Jewish authorities were responsible for his death (v20)
- They had been amazed by the reports from some women that Jesus was alive (v22)
- The tomb was empty (v23)
- Others had been to the tomb to confirm the women's report. (v24)

2. Should this evidence have been enough to keep them in Jerusalem?
An empty tomb that had been sealed by the Roman authorities is almost unheard of. Why not stay and follow up on the information?

Perhaps the reason is their perception of the Messiah. They hoped he would 'redeem Israel' (v21). Since the Romans occupied Palestine (Palestina was the Roman name for this province of the empire) most Jews longed for the restoration of the Davidic kingdom which they saw as the pinnacle of their kingdom. That is still the longing of some today as we see in current events in the area.

3. Is it possible for us to have the wrong expectation of God?
Do we just want a gentle Jesus meek and mild?
Do we want a God without his anger against sin?
Do we want a pain free Christian life that is never even hinted at the Bible?
Do we sometimes want to shape God to what we want rather than accept that he is the suffering servant who paid the price for sin?

Jesus calls these men 'foolish' and 'slow of heart to believe'. This implies that, with their knowledge of the scriptures, they had the evidence just as we saw in our series before Easter. Remember that, at this time, the New Testament wasn't written – The Old Testament was a body of work known well by first century Jews. Jesus referred to it as 'the Law and the Prophets'.

4. Was Jesus too tough on them?
Was he simply saying if you read the Old Testament you'll find the Saviour?
Are we similarly inclined to ignore the OT so we don't get the full picture of who God is and realise his purpose in saving his people?

The suffering of Jesus is unpalatable to some. The two disciples had clearly witnessed it (v20) but Jesus makes it clear suffering was essential (v26) – read Isaiah 53. The suffering of Jesus was the great exchange -his life stands in the way of God's anger against sin that we might be free from the condemnation that sin brings.

The cross is not just Jesus identifying with our suffering. It is an atoning sacrifice so that our sin is covered by Jesus' action on the cross (Psalm 32:1)

'Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit'.

5. Do we see the action of Jesus on the cross as crucial to our salvation?

Do we accept that there can be no restoration of our pre-fall relationship with God without Jesus taking the punishment for our sin?

Perhaps a pause in your talking to give thanks to God for allowing his Son to tread the pathway of suffering.

Do we fully realise that Jesus' actions mean that our 'sin does not count against us'?

How should that change the way we live?

Having called them foolish, Jesus then gives a great explanation. This is one of the passages of scripture I wish had been recorded on video !!!!! Jesus clearly believes that a survey of the Old Testament scriptures will be enough help them realise the true nature and purpose of God in Jesus.

6. As they approached the village, it appears that God has not removed the scales from their eyes (Some think that Emmaus is as far as 20 miles from Jerusalem so they'd had a long sermon).

But their only response is to ask the still un-revealed Jesus to stop by for a meal.

Surely, they should have got it by now but God chooses not to reveal his risen son until later.

Does this help us understand that modern people, faced with all the evidence we can offer, still don't understand the gospel?