

Luke 24:13-35 The Road to Emmaus

The story of the road to Emmaus is a very special one. First because it really happened and second it teaches disciples and us to know that Jesus is with us without actually seeing him.

We enter here the time between the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ and the disciple's realisation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In reality it was only 2-3 days, (40 days as whole) but in what we can refer to as emotional time scale it would have felt like an eternity. This is exactly what it feels like when we face uncertainty and don't know what is coming next and what to expect.

So what really happened on this road to Emmaus?

The story starts with the two men walking to Emmaus which was about 11km or nearly 7 miles from Jerusalem. The events of the last couple of days in Jerusalem were what they discussed. They experienced very unique Passover that year. It happened in real although they did not yet understand.

As they walk and talk, Jesus joins them. Luke emphasises that they "were prevented from recognising him." This makes a point. Why did Jesus choose to be incognito? Jesus is still a teacher in this story and he is helping them and us today to recognise him not by sight but by heart.

We live by faith not by sight. 2Corinthians 5,7

Firstly, he appears to make a fool of himself by claiming not to know the news. Luke strengthens this point by recording that they "stood still, with their faces down". Is it possible that there is somebody who doesn't know about the current news? This pattern is often repeated when God is going to tell us something. At first we think he is irrelevant, doesn't know what we are going through.

Secondly, he listens. This is the time for a diagnosis. There had been false hope and they needed to be liberated from it. I wonder what our false hopes and expectations are today that cause us to suffer and be blinded to God's ways.

Thirdly, he explains by opening scripture. All of scripture is employed here to create the beautiful fabric of God's revelation. From Moses all the way through. While he was talking to them their hearts were burning! *"My heart felt strangely warmed" J.W*

They may have laid their coats down for Jesus to walk on as he entered Jerusalem. Now Jesus is laying down in front of them the tapestry of God's plan and revelation through scripture.

The final part of this lesson is in the breaking of bread. This communion extends through the time and we still benefit from it today. Cleophas and his friend fully recognised Jesus at this point. For the first time, they recognised Jesus by his actions and not just by facial recognition. This is important. They just could not hold it for themselves and run back to Jerusalem just to find out that they are not alone.

We face a time of uncertainty, yet we learn that Jesus is with us even though we do not see him. The way we recognise him often goes through similar stages as we read from the story today.

- by learning how his wisdom differs from our way of seeing things
- by getting rid of false hopes
- by experiencing a burning heart as a response to the word of God
- by breaking bread with Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer.

John Wesley's last words were: *"the best of all is that God is with us"*

Jesus said to Thomas "Blessed are those who do not see, yet believe."

Amen