The Road to Emmaus
LUKE 24:13-32

I couldn’t think of a more appropriate way to bring this Easter Sunday to a close than to go back and look at an event that occurred on the Sunday evening of the day Christ resurrected from the dead. And that is the encounter our resurrected Savior had with the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus.

If you have your Bibles with you, please turn with me to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 24, verses 13-32.

READ: LUKE 24:13-32

PRAYER

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INTRODUCTION

Of all the appearances our Lord made after His resurrection, none seems to hold a place so dear to our hearts as the one we are looking at here this evening.

*Christ revealed Himself to Mary in the garden* and that will always be a precious moment to every true believer.

*And what a touching moment it must have been when Jesus appeared that very first time to His apostles* who had followed Him throughout His ministry until they “scattered like sheep” just a few hours before their Shepherd was crucified on the cross.
*And who can forget that first time “doubting Thomas” got to see Christ after having missed him a week earlier when Christ appeared to the other ten.

But it is this encounter Jesus had with two disciples on the Road to Emmaus that holds a special place in the hearts of so many Christians.

WHO WERE THESE TWO DISCIPLES?

Who were these two disciples?

We know very little about these two disciples other than three things we can glean from the text.

(1) We do know these two disciples on the Road to Emmaus were not apostles, because in VERSE 33 we learn that after these two came to the realization that the resurrected Christ had been in their presence they hurried back to Jerusalem to tell the Eleven apostles about their experience.

(2) We can also gather from Verse 33 these two disciples must have been fairly close to the apostle because they knew where to find them. Remember the apostles were hiding behind locked doors in a secret place for fear they too might be executed. And yet these two who had walked with Jesus on the Emmaus Road knew the location of this secret place.

(3) The only other thing we know about these two disciples is the name of one of them was Cleopas. (Clee-uh-pus)

Some commentators have stated this is the same as CLOPAS, the husband of one of the Mary’s who stood near the cross. We read about this in John 19:25. But we can’t be certain these two names with different spellings belong to one man.
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT EMMAUS?

Now what do we know about EMMAUS, the place where these two disciples were headed?

1. We know it must have been a small populated area because verse 13 refers to it as “a village.” By definition a village is a sparsely populated rural area.

   I grew up in the village of New Brunswick, Indiana, seven miles south of the town of Lebanon. Over the years when asked about where I grew up, I have told people:

   “I grew up in a little place called New Brunswick, Indiana, which at that time was 32 people…….six dogs…….and one gas pump.”

   EMMAUS wasn’t a city. EMMAUS wasn’t a town. EMMAUS was just a village. In fact, VERSE 13 is the only time Emmaus is mentioned in the gospels. This village does not even exist today.

2. The only other things we know about EMMAUS is that it was located seven miles from Jerusalem. Most commentators agree Emmaus was likely WEST of Jerusalem.

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For a few minutes let’s travel this ROAD TO EMMAUS with Jesus and these two disciples and see what valuable lessons we can learn.
First of all, I would have you to notice The Road to Emmaus was……

I. A Road of Despair

1. As these two disciples were traveling the ROAD TO EMMAUS they were discussing the events that occurred the last three days.

   Verse 14 “They were discussing everything that had
   happened.”

   Analogy: Remember some of the conversations you had with people right after the terrorist attacks of September 11th? If you were like me, you probably recalled every single detail about that tragic event.

   - Where you were when you first heard about it.
   - The images of those airplanes crashing into the Twin Towers.
   - The sight of people jumping out of the buildings.
   - The sight of the Twin Towers crashing to the ground.
   - The sight of survivors roaming the streets of NY covered from head to toe with ash and dust.

   You “discussed everything that had happened.”

2. This is exactly what these two disciples were doing. Only the tragedy they were discussing in detail was “the crucifixion” of Jesus.

   The sight of Jesus hanging on that cross….. every word Jesus spoke from the cross……..the brutality of the Roman soldiers…… the insensitive mockery of the crowd……the heartbreaking sight of Jesus’ mother standing near the cross……the darkness ……..the earthquake…….THEY RECALLED EACH AND EVERY DETAIL!
3. And while they are reliving every detail of this horrible experience, *verses 15 and 16* tells us……

*Jesus Himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing Him.*

That phrase: “*they were kept from recognizing Him*” tells us Jesus’ identity was concealed as an “act of God” rather than an act of “ignorance” on the part of the two disciples.

4. Now notice the question Jesus asks these two disciples in *VERSE 17*……

“What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

5. Notice carefully their response to Jesus’ question, beginning in the latter part of *VERSE 17*……

17b  They stood still, their faces downcast.

18  One of them, named Cleopas (Clee-uh-pus) asked Him, “Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

19  “What things?” He asked. “About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.

20  The chief priests and our rulers handed Him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified Him;

21  but we had hoped that He was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.

6. *Their faces were downcast………”we had hoped”……*(notice the past tense!!) “we HAD hoped.” Meaning, “we no longer hope!”

For these two disciples, the ROAD TO EMMAUS is a ROAD OF DESPAIR.
7. Have you ever noticed that most of our negative human emotions all begin with the letter “D?”

* D-ESPAIR
* D-EFEAT
* D-ISCOURAGEMENT
* D-ISLLUSIONED
* D-EPRESSION
* D-ESPONDENT

Perhaps its because the name of the one who attacks us with all these negative emotions also begins with the letter “D” ...........the DEVIL.

8. Let’s not miss this very important point here.

Sometimes you and I can be so overcome with DESPAIR ............and feel so DEFEATED.... so DISCOURAGED.... so DISILLUSIONED.....and so DEPRESSED with things that are going on in our lives that we don’t even realize JESUS IS WALKING WITH US.

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Secondly, I would have you to notice the Road to Emmaus was……..

II.  A Road of Discipline

1. After telling this “stranger” about the tragic events that had occurred in Jerusalem within the past three days, Cleopas went on to tell the “stranger” about a report they had heard before they left Jerusalem.

   The report came to them from some women who had gone to the tomb of Jesus early that same morning and found the tomb empty. Cleopas continued, “these women told us they had seen a vision of angels who told them HE (meaning Jesus) is alive.” And some of our companions went to the tomb and found it empty just like the women had reported.

   But notice what these two disciples said to Jesus in the last part of verse 24: “but HIM we did not see.”

2. In VERSES 25-27 we see Jesus sternly rebuking these two men.

   READ: VERSES 25-27

   Notice Jesus didn’t rebuke them because they didn’t believe the report the women had given to them back in Jerusalem. He rebuked them for failing to believe what the Old Testament scriptures had said regarding the things that must happen to this JESUS.

3. As they walked along this “STRANGER” gave these two men a Bible Study lesson from the Old Testament.

   Book by book, verse by verse, beginning with Genesis and going through each prophecy of the Old Testament, Jesus proceeded to “rekindle the fire of faith” that obviously died out in the hearts of these men.
4. **VERSE 32** tells us these two disciples would recall later how “their hearts burned within them as Jesus talked to them and opened up the Scriptures” while they were traveling the road to Emmaus.

5. Nothing cuts to the very heart of our doubt and unbelief like the Word of God!

   The Hebrew writer tells us, “The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow, it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

6. No doubt those two disciples experienced the powerful discipline of God’s holy, eternal word as they traveled the Road to Emmaus that Sunday evening.

   The Road to Emmaus was: **A ROAD OF DESPAIR**

   **A ROAD OF DISCIPLINE**

   And finally, it was...........

**III. A Road to Divine Revelation**

**READ: VERSES 28-31** (Note: pay close attention to vs.31)

1. Just as God had prevented these two men from recognizing Jesus up until this point, it is now **GOD who opens the “spiritually blinded” eyes of these men so they can recognize the resurrected Christ.**

2. I want to share with you **John MacArthur’s** explanation of this divine revelation in his commentary on the Bible.
MacArthur writes, “They had been sovereignly kept from recognizing Jesus until this point. His resurrection body was glorified, and altered from its previous appearance. We can read John’s description of Christ’s glorified body in Revelation 1:13-16. This surely explains why Mary did not recognize Jesus at first.”

Luke tells us Jesus disappeared from the sight of these two men He had traveled with on the Road to Emmaus. MacArthur explains, “His resurrection body, though real and tangible and even capable of ingesting food, nonetheless possessed certain properties that indicate it was glorified and altered in a mysterious way.

Christ could appear and disappear bodily, as seen in this text.

His body could pass through solid objects such as grave clothes or the walls and doors of a closed room as we read in John 20:19,26.

He could apparently travel great distances in a moment, for by the time these two disciples returned to Jerusalem, Jesus had already appeared to Peter.

The fact that He ascended into heaven bodily demonstrated that His resurrection body was already fit for heaven. Yet, it was HIS BODY, the same one that was missing from the tomb, even retaining identifying features such as the nail wounds in his hands. He was no ghost or phantom.
CONCLUSION

There are many valuable lessons you and I can learn from this account, but perhaps the most important lesson is this:

It is possible to walk with JESUS and still not really know Him.

These two on the road to Emmaus were NOT unbelievers. They had been following Christ. They had heard Christ teach. They had probably seen Christ perform miracles. They were DISCIPLES. And yet they still didn’t know Jesus as He walked beside them on the Road to Emmaus.

Many of us have been “walking” beside Jesus most of our lives.

- For years we have gone to Sunday School and heard lessons from the Bible about Jesus.
- For years we have sat through Worship Services and heard hundreds of sermons about Christ.

We know so much about Christ, but do we truly know Christ?

Just as the eyes of those two disciples were opened that Sunday evening, may our eyes be opened to the true glory and majesty of our resurrected Lord!