

Hope Resurrected – Luke 24:13-35

Introduction – What happens to your faith when the direction you thought life would go, the direction you thought the world would go, because Jesus Christ is King and Lord, isn't what is taking place at all. If you've read the Scriptures, if you know the story of Jesus, if you call yourself a disciple, you know what it is to do so and yet find yourself disappointed, even to the point of losing hope. If you have lost hope, then you, like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, need a fresh encounter with the resurrected Christ.

Overview of the Text – On the day of the resurrection, two of Christ's disciples were leaving Jerusalem, traveling to Emmaus (v13). Recall that ever since His arrest, the disciples had scattered, possibly afraid of being rounded up as followers of this blaspheming insurrectionist. While discussing what had happened (v14), Jesus Himself drew near, walking with them (v15) but keeping their eyes restrained from recognizing Him (v16), something He did on numerous occasions during His forty days before His ascension.

Jesus asked them about their conversation and why they looked sad (v17), and one of them named Clopas thought it strange that this man had not heard of the things that had publicly happened over these days (v18). Jesus probed, "*what things?*", and the disciples spoke of Jesus of Nazareth, declaring Him to be a prophet, proven so by His mighty deeds and words done before God and all the people (v19). He had been crucified (v20), but they had been hoping He would redeem Israel (v20). This was the third day since this happened and yet strange words from some of their women said they had found his tomb empty (vv21-22) who then saw a vision of angels saying Jesus was alive (v23). Some from our company went to the tomb and confirmed their story "*but Him they did not see*" – they said to Jesus whom they did not see (v24).

Gently, Jesus admonished them as "*foolish ones*" and "*slow of heart*" for not believing the prophets (v25). They clearly taught that the Messiah would suffer these things and enter into His glory (v26). Then Jesus expounded through all the Scriptures these things (v27). They arrived in Emmaus and the disciples offered their hospitality to this traveler (vv28-29). As they sat at the table with Him, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them (v30). At that moment, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, and then He vanished (v31). They testified to each other that their hearts had burned during that Bible Study (v32). They rose up and returned to Jerusalem to tell the apostles (v33) who announced that the Lord had risen and appeared as well to Simon (v34). And they gave another witness to His appearing (v35).

Restraining Eyes – Jesus restrained their eyes to reveal to them that they were blind men walking by sight and not by faith. He restrained their eyes to show them that they were not seeing what the Scriptures actually said. There is a way of reading the Bible, looking for what you want to find, missing what is actually there, missing what is far better for you and for the world. Sin blinds us. Worldliness blinds us. Circumstances distract us and rather than looking back at what the Word has told us, we start reinterpreting the world by sight and not by faith.

"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe..." – Moses had redeemed Israel, delivering her from Egyptian oppression. God had promised another Prophet like Moses and so they expected another liberation from pagan domination (v21). This is why the crucifixion was so devastating. If Jesus was to defeat the pagans, He wasn't supposed to die at their hands.

But dying at their hands was how Jesus intended to redeem Israel and the whole world, and the resurrection made all the difference (Rom 1:4). Someone who defeats death has defeated the curse over this world and is therefore the King over it all. And this had always been the plan. Jesus led them through a Bible study, showing them that the Messiah had to suffer these things (i.e. Isaiah 53, Psalm 22). The story was not a story of how God would redeem Israel *from* suffering, but rather how God would redeem Israel *through* suffering, and in particular the suffering taken on by Israel's covenant Head, the Messiah.

Proper Bible Reading – Jesus makes clear how important it is that we read and understand the Old Testament; His story requires it. He illustrates for us how important it is that we receive the Old Testament typologically and not only as a series of stories (see also vv44-45). Christ was the substance of every Old Testament sacrifice. He was the true deliverer and king of whom all the judges and deliverers in Jewish history were types. Christ was the greater Prophet, the greater Moses. Christ was the true seed of the woman who would bruise the serpent's head, the true scapegoat, the true bronze serpent, the true sacrificial lamb, the true High Priest, the true Shepherd of His people. He is the greater Joshua, the greater David, the greater Solomon, the greater Elijah and Elisha. He is the second Adam, humanity 2.0.

Opening Eyes – Jesus had restrained their eyes to show them that they restrained their own eyes. After a perfect bible study, they still did not fully realize Who it was that was with them. The Word by itself is not enough. It is not until He broke bread with them that their eyes were opened and they really saw Him.

The Meal of the New Covenant – There was a meal in the old covenant, and in the first pages of Genesis we see these words, “...she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened...” (Gen 3:6-7). Luke, echoing that story, describes another meal and another opening of eyes (v31). Instead of Eve giving to Adam, Adam is now giving to Eve. Instead of fruit being eaten that opened eyes to ashamedness, to sinfulness, to rebellion, bread is given that opened eyes to salvation, to the new creation with the resurrected Christ.

Word and Bread – It is the same for the church of the new creation, for us, today. The Word without the Bread too often becomes merely intellectual, abstract platitudes, moralistic teachings, detached from the things of real life. On the other hand, the Bread without the Word turns into a magic act void of proper instruction. Together, you have the center of Christian life, communion with the Word made flesh, nourishment and nurture, and kingdom living.

Hope Resurrected – If you don’t “see” Jesus in the preaching, if you don’t “see” salvation for you in the message, if you don’t “see” communion and fellowship with Christ at this Table, your eyes have been restrained. Your disappointment will vanish, and hope will be resurrected (or granted for the first time) only when He is kind to open your eyes, turn you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the power of God.

Seeing Jesus – Just as with the disciples on the road, seeing Jesus is up to Jesus. But if you are living in despair, worry, shame, doubts, it may be that He has restrained your eyes to show you that you are restraining your eyes. You are a blind man walking by sight. See Jesus in the declaration of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:3-8).

Seeing Suffering – Walking with Christ is not easy on the one hand (Luke 9:23) and yet it is easy (Matt 11:28-30). He will have to open your eyes to show you that both are true.

Seeing Resurrection – If Jesus is risen, then our hope is to be fixed, not on the immortality of the soul, but on the resurrection of the body (1 Cor 15:20-23) which means none of our labor on this earth is in vain (1 Cor 15:58). Jesus will have to open your eyes to show you that both are true.

Seeing Word and Bread – And Jesus says He will do this, by His Word and through Communion with Him at His Table where He repeats, not His once for all crucifixion, but His ongoing encouragement, discipline, sustenance and love.

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