

## Luke 24:13-35

### "From Forlorn To On Fire"

You recall the story; it was a time when his life suddenly took a turn for the worse. His name: John, His mission: to prepare the people for the coming Messiah. His problem: he was in prison. He'd made it known that what Herod was up to w/his brother Philip's wife was unlawful & in order to shut him up Herod had him arrested... & There he sat; this man who's mission was to make ready the way of the king, the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, preparing the way of the Lord...was locked up.

Of course by that time the ministry of Jesus had been ramping up, He'd been teaching the people, performing miracles & amazing things were happening. His fame was spreading & so John sent Him a message. "Are You the One we look for or do we await another?" Translation: "Jesus if You're the Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel why am I in prison? I'm Your opening act (so to speak) I'm the one who ready's people for Your appearance. Let's get Rome out of the way & Your show on the road."

Jesus sent word back to John, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."<sup>1</sup> Or to understand that another way, "John, I am the Man you've come to believe that I am. But don't become discouraged, or disillusioned because I'm not operating w/in the box, or the parameters that you'd like to see."

How often people have this preconceived notion of what following Jesus, or believing in Jesus is supposed to entail. 1<sup>st</sup> & foremost it's to be a primrose, problem free path that we journey on through life & if it doesn't go that way I'm immediately offended. I can't believe that problems would befall me, after-all I'm seeking to serve the Lord, I'm trying to lead a life that's pleasing to God! We become discouraged, disillusioned because we don't really understand what we thought we understood. Such is the story of the 2 followers of Jesus in the text before us & such is the story of so many today. But here's what we learn, Jesus wants to come *alongside* us, bring proper perspective *to* us, He wants to rekindle that 1<sup>st</sup> love relationship that once burned *between* us & He wants to do that as He simply walks *with* us and opens our understanding to the Word of God. Once we have balanced understanding of the Word, we will see Him for who He is.

Until then our eyes will be veiled to who He really is...notice.

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<sup>1</sup> The New King James Version. 1982 (Lk 7:22-23). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## Vs 13-16

Hey; I think it's safe to say there was a lot on their minds & today has been a day of confusion & emotional turmoil to say the least. It had been the Passover from hell, they'd watched their Lord, whom they'd hoped was the Messiah be filleted, nailed to a cross & die; they'd been in hiding for a couple days since then just hoping they wouldn't be brought into the same situation through guilt by association. **1<sup>st</sup> thing this morning these ladies came bursting into the place they were staying as though they were deranged w/fever talking about seeing angels & Jesus was alive...2 of the apostles had gone to the tomb but were unable to really validate the story because they didn't see Him.**

We get the picture that they were just like, "Hey guys ... we gotta go." They just needed to air out, couldn't take the turmoil of everything taking place so they set out for home & as they were walking, no different that you are or I am they were talking about all this stuff. Trying to do the math & add it up, trying to connect the dots & put the puzzle pieces together. **They're heart broken, hopeless, trying to make some sort of sense out of the whirlwind that had made for the last few days. On the one hand Jesus seemed to be a the peak of His popularity, He came riding into Jerusalem & everyone was shouting "Hosanna, save now, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" ... A week later, He's dead.**

Now people are all running around crazy; talking like He's alive, but no one has seen Him; & they're trying to sift through all this stuff, they're talking about the Lord, & what's gone on, they're debriefing one another so to speak. **Getting it out, trying to make sense of it all, but they can't... it just seems so... pointless. They didn't have the key that would unlock the mysteries of Messianic prophecy for them; Jesus was about to hand it to them as He walked alongside them.**

As you know it wasn't uncommon for people to travel in caravans at that time, especially around the Passover season & so this "stranger" sort of attaches Himself to their company & as they're walking He's simply silent & listening to their conversation.

**It's the risen Lord Himself! But they don't recognize Him, He's the last Person they're expecting to see, after all they've been disillusioned & dare I say discouraged because of Jesus and what's happened to Him. So they just carry on in their conversation.**

Here's what I want you to see; these 2 are speaking *of* Jesus, their fellowship is revolving around Jesus & so guess who shows up & attaches Himself to them?

God digs it when you speak *of* Him, when your fellowship w/your friends revolves around Him & invariably when you begin to talk w/each other about Him, He shows up. Oh you may not recognize it, but He's there trust me. Malachi Ch 3 tells us that God has a book of remembrance & when you begin to speak of Him, talk to one another about Him, He draws near to that, He listens in & takes note of that.

God likes to fellowship & walk w/His children. He walked w/Adam & Eve in the garden in the cool of the day before the fall. Here, as they speak of Jesus He shows up & just begins to walk w/them, He's waiting for the right moment & He's going to minister to them.

Here's something these guys are going to learn. Jesus is w/us even when we can't see Him, or recognize Him in the situation. These guys are like bruised reeds, Jesus won't break them, He'll bind them up & bring healing to them. **They're like smoking flax, Jesus won't quench them, He'll fan those embers into a raging inferno. Jesus wants to minister to your life, He's waiting for the opportunity to take you from forlorn to on fire for Him. What that's going to take is for you to see Him for who He is.**

Now people often wonder why their eyes were restrained. Was it because the resurrection body of Jesus somehow looked different? Was it because His body had been so mutilated before His death that He simply looked different now so that they couldn't identify Him as they'd known Him before? **Was it because they simply weren't expecting to see Him knowing that He was dead so they didn't recognize Him? Perhaps, perhaps it was a bit of all of that, perhaps it was none of that. Ultimately we recognize this as an intentional restraining of their eyes because God had a few life lessons to teach these 2 & Jesus was about to take them to school.** Where it says that their eyes were restrained it's in the passive voice, the indicative mood meaning that the restraint was imposed upon them by something outside of them. In other words, God veiled their eyes.

Allow me to make an application from this real quick. **These guys aren't yet believers in the resurrection & you will never see Jesus for who He is until you believe in the atoning work of the death & resurrection of J.C. He drew near to them, but they couldn't see it, they couldn't sense it, they don't recognize Him because they don't yet understand the atoning work of the cross & the relevance of the resurrection.**

It's when (through the word of God) these things become real to you that the blinders will come off & you will see Him for who He is.

## Vs 17-24

Ok, # of things going on here but let me start w/this. Who exactly is Cleopas? Which book of the bible did he write? Oh yeah, none of them, whoever is w/him doesn't even get named. Yet Jesus seems to have spent more time w/these 2 than any of the others on the day of His resurrection... Here's the point; our Lord loves all His children equally. He didn't rush over to His high profile apostles & really reveal Himself & spend time sharing the word w/them. He found these 2 people of whom one doesn't even get mentioned by name & spends what seems to be hours w/these guys ministering to them & opening the scriptures for them. God's not into the "Who's who" club; He hangs out w/the "Who's he?" club. It doesn't matter if anyone else knows your name, or understands your struggles, God knows your name, He's aware of your struggles & Jesus wants to draw near to you, He wants to minister to & encourage you & set you on fire for Him.

Jesus is walking next to them He eventually broaches the topic of conversation w/them & says, "Hey, what's got you guys so down? What are you guys talking about?"

Cleopas says, "Are you kidding me right now? Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who doesn't know what's been happening around here over the last few days?" (I envision the corners of our Lord's mouth crowning upward just slightly right about here as He says,) "What things?" (I think He was fairly well aware of what had gone on 😊).

But Cleopas makes us aware of the fact that what had happened to Jesus wasn't a small article on the back page of the Jerusalem gazette. This was headline information & everyone was talking about it.

But check it out, Jesus wanted them to share w/Him their heart. He knew exactly what was going on, what had happened but He wanted to hear it from them. Any of you who have children know exactly what this is like. Maybe after church you quiz them on what they've learned & they begin to recite a bible story that you're well aware of but you want to hear their perspective on it. God knows what's going on in our lives, but He wants us to share it w/Him. He wants us to share the matters of our heart w/Him.

As they do that Jesus meets them there but then He takes them beyond. They basically indict themselves as having a limited understanding of who Jesus is. They see Him as a man (Jesus of Nazareth), they see Him as a Prophet (which isn't enough btw, you can't see Jesus as just a prophet, He is *the* Prophet, "the Christ" (Vs 25) as Jesus draws their attention to. They recognized the fact that He was mighty in word & in deed.

That He'd been delivered up, condemned & crucified. They'd *hoped* (past tense, now they're hopeless) that He was Israel's Redeemer (in a national materialistic way), those hopes died w/Him. Other's (a few hysterical women) had spoken of His resurrection but to their knowledge it wasn't true, no one (that they knew of) had seen Him...

Now there were a few that Jesus appeared to so that they would believe. But as He told Thomas, "Because you have seen Me you believe, blessed are those who have not seen yet believe." Jesus wants to know if they can believe w/out seeing. Right now they're *failing in that*. Now Jesus is going to reveal Himself to them but pay attention to the order. Because before He reveals Himself to them personally, He shows them who He is scripturally; faith comes by hearing & hearing by the Word of God.

Once they see Him for who He is in the Word, they'll realize He's right there w/them.

**Vs 25-27**

Wow; undoubtedly the single most insightful bible study given of all time & Cleopas didn't write it down... ☺ Why!? I'll tell you why, because Jesus wants to have the same talk w/you & me as we walk through life w/Him & He reveals Himself to us through the word of God.

Now there's a few things we need to see here. When Jesus calls them "Foolish" don't think of it in a derogatory since as in "You idiots when are you gonna get it!" The word translated "Foolish" speaks of a lack of understanding & judgment & the word "slow" speaks of a dullness of heart. *The idea being, "Listen, you guys aren't getting it, that is you're not understanding the fullness of scripture & here's why, there's a dullness & slowness of your hearts to apprehend it."*

2 Things w/that #1, the reason people don't believe has nothing to do w/the intellect. People want to mask their refusal to believe as a matter of the intellect. Jesus says it has nothing to do w/a man's mind, it has to do w/their heart. They are slow of *heart*. Again the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart. Obstacles of unbelief aren't in your head, they're in your heart.

#2 It wasn't that they didn't believe God's word, it's that they didn't believe it *all*. Oh they held tight to the portions that promised blessing, power & might, that a redeemer would rule w/a rod of iron & all of that. But as for the sections that involved the suffering of the Savior, they just sort of let those areas roll off their back.

Didn't really pay much attention to that stuff & because of that they didn't understand the fullness of the Messianic roll in redeeming (not only Israel) the world, not from the bondage of Rome but from the bondage of sin & death. Jesus places things in perspective when He says, "Ought not the *Christ* (not a prophet, the Christ) to have suffered these things & to enter into His glory?" In other words, "If you would place your passion into understanding the whole counsel of the word of God you would realize that the Messiah was bound for glory that much is true, but He would enter that glory through the gate of suffering.

We can't pick and choose which parts of the bible we're going to believe, it's all true & it's all applicable & we do well have a grip on the fullness of God's Word. When you exclude certain portions you wind up like these guys, confused & full of grief. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by (what) *every* word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

That's where Jesus takes them. That should tell you the priority that Jesus places on the Word of God. He could've gone, "Hey guys! I'm right here! It's Me!" But He didn't do that, He wanted them to see Him in the word of God before they realized He was right there w/them. Rather than point them to His nail prints He points them to the scriptures. "You should've believed *everything* the prophets said about the Christ." Only a fool doesn't believe the whole counsel of the word of God (that's what Jesus is says).

Then from Moses to Malachi, Genesis, through Samuel, through the psalms, through all the prophets He *expounded*, He *explained* (our Lord was an expository bible teacher) in *all the Scriptures* the things concerning Himself.

You guys this would've taken hours, & I'll guarantee you they weren't nodding off, they weren't bored & they weren't ready for it to be over.

This means He started in Genesis explaining that He was the Seed of the woman who would crush the serpents head, that He was the Seed of Abe in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. He explained the fullness of the foreshadowing of Abe offering his only son whom he loved on Mt Moriah & as to where God w/held Abe He didn't hold back Himself but offered His only begotten Son, the Lamb of Sacrifice. He explained to them the Passover & how the shedding of the blood of that lamb again pointed to the Shedding of the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. He showed how He was the Rock smitten (by Moses) & that living waters could flow forth just by asking now that the Rock was smitten.

He showed them how every material, every article, every metal used in the building of the tabernacle pointed to Him. He's the light of the world, the bread of life, our Great High Priest, our Mercy seat. He explained how He's our sin offering, our trespass offering, our peace offering. He demonstrated Himself in the brass serpent that Moses raised up in the wilderness. He's the Son of David who will rule forever on the throne of David, our kinsman Redeemer in the book of Ruth.

You guys on & on He went. He's the Messiah cut off, but not for Himself (Dan 9). The despised & rejected One of Isaiah 53, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. He's the One in Zechariah whom they would look on having pierced. He explained Ps 22, Ps 23, He's the Lion of the tribe of Judah, The High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek & the Prophet Greater than Moses. Time would fail us to even *touch* all of the things that He *expounded, explained* concerning Himself.

Here's the deal, in the volume of the book it is written of J.C. It speaks of Him, points to Him, revolves around Him, it gives insight & to Him, revelation of Him, it's all about Him & here Jesus blows their minds w/a bible study that we'd give anything to have. He expounds on the entirety of the OT in all the scriptures that pertained to Himself.

But let me say this, people often criticize the bible for lack of certain details, be they scientific, or historical, archaeological or whatever. The bible is not a science book; because it deals w/creation there's scientific data in it, but it's focus isn't upon science. **It's not a history book; because it starts w/creation it deals w/historical data, but the point of the bible isn't to explain to all of us what happened to dinosaurs, or where every city it mentions is located.** If it doesn't point to, revolve around or speak of Christ, it quickly falls to the wayside & picks up again on the path that will lead us to Jesus. He's at the heart of it all. The point of your bible is to teach you about & take you to the person of J.C. that you might know Him, be saved by Him, then be equipped to minister on behalf of Him so that others might be saved, sanctified & grown up in Him as well.

This is a walk that they would never forget believe you me. How would you like to have Jesus walk w/you physically/personally and take you book by book, point out & explaining to you all the scriptures that pertain to Him, drawing out every part, & every passage on who He is, it would blow your mind.

Vs 28-29

Let me just say this. Jesus will minister to you, open His word to you & reveal great & wonderful things about Himself to you. But at the end of the day He'll move on unless you ask Him otherwise. Jesus will not force Himself upon you, if you don't "constrain Him" if you don't ask Him into your life. He'll move on, the choice is yours.

And dare I say that even if you've received Him into your heart/life, if you don't seek Him, if you don't desire to know Him more, He won't impose upon your life. Seek Him, ask Him pursue Him, it's a discipline you guys. You don't just wake up one day & know the word of God. You have to seek the Lord & study His word. He won't make you listen *to* Him or learn *of* Him or be *w/Him*, that's up to you.

### Vs 30-32

A few hours ago they were forlorn, now they're on fire! They' been won by the word of God, a few hours ago they were moping, now they're ready to be missionaries! Something happened as Jesus took the bread, blessed it & broke it; their eyes were opened. Was it the manner in which He ministered, was it the print of the nails, we don't know what God used but the veil came down & they saw Jesus w/their eyes & then "BOOM!" He was gone...

Now they're like, "How could we've missed it! The whole time He was talking, man my heart was burning w/in me, the word of God was resonating in me!" The other one was like, "Me too man, that was amazing!"

Now we need to realize that understanding God's word & seeing Jesus for who He is, is a gift from God. In Vs 31 we see that their eyes "were opened" & in Vs 32 "He opened" the scriptures to them. Spiritual revelation is a gift of God's grace to sinful humanity.

### Vs 33-35

Translation: they went another 7 miles back & when they burst in, before they got to share the news the other guys were like, "The Lord really has risen! He's appeared to Simon!" They're like, "We know, He appeared to us to... & you won't believe the things He revealed to us... & we didn't even know it was Him until we began to break bread..."

Now listen to me, at *that moment* everything changed. It's the same for us today, you may hear others tell of the risen Christ, you might hear of Jesus through the teaching of the word. But it's when you see Him in truth that everything changes; & when you've met the risen Christ, you will have something that you want to share w/others. From forlorn to on fire, from sad to excited, let Jesus set you on fire; that you might burn bright in this otherwise dark world for the glory of His name.

Prayer Points:

Lord Jesus we glorify Your name today. We're so thankful that far from simply being a prophet from Nazareth You are the Christ, the Son of God, the Lamb of God who has taken away the sin of the world. Teach us what it means to walk w/You. To seek after You & to "constrain" You, to invite You into our lives consistently persistently, daily. Reveal Yourself to us in greater ways for the glory of Your name.

Perhaps as we were going through the word today Your heart began to burn w/in you. God is dealing w/you & the question that confronts you is: **Do you desire the risen Lord to be made real to you?** Do you want to be forgiven of your sin & see Jesus for who He is? He was crucified for our sins, and He was raised again that we might be justified before God by faith in Him. Believe on the Lord J.C. & you *will be* saved.