

On the Emmaus Road (Luke 24:13-35)

One of the most delightful accounts of Jesus' post-resurrection life is found in Luke 24:13-35. Here we read about His personal encounter with two disciples who were making their way from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus. As these two disciples walked together they discussed and debated the events surrounding Jesus' death and the reports about His resurrection. Jesus came alongside these two individuals and questioned them about their concerns. He then taught them from the Scriptures that the Messiah had to suffer before being glorified. Finally, over a meal, these two disciples became aware of Jesus' identity. He disappeared from their presence and they quickly returned to Jerusalem to report this encounter to the eleven disciples. This Emmaus Road encounter reveals the tender, even playful way in which Jesus encourages those who seek truth. The risen Jesus reveals Himself to those who truly seek Him. This account demonstrates several practical ramifications of Jesus' resurrection.

The resurrection dispels our misconceptions about Jesus Christ (24:13-24).

The two disciples on the Emmaus Road held certain misconceptions about Jesus. But Jesus' resurrection answered their misunderstandings about His life, death, identity, and role as our redeemer.

Two disciples were debating the events around Jesus' death as they traveled to Emmaus (24:13-14).

On the same day that Jesus rose from the dead two of His disciples were returning to the town of Emmaus after the completion of the Passover celebrations in Jerusalem. Emmaus was located about seven miles from Jerusalem, although its precise location is uncertain today. These two were not counted among the eleven disciples who were closest to Jesus but were committed followers of Jesus nonetheless. They were talking and debating about the events that had occurred over the preceding days.

Jesus came alongside these disciples, unrecognized by them, and engaged in their conversation (24:15-18).

As the two disciples traveled along the Emmaus Road, Jesus came alongside and walked with them. In some way these two disciples were prevented from recognizing Jesus—certainly they didn't expect to see Him and, in addition, God may have clouded their eyes from the identity of their traveling companion in order to bolster their faith through the ensuing conversation. Jesus asked the two what they were discussing. They stopped momentarily, downcast in appearance. One of these two disciples was named Cleopas. It's uncertain whether or not this was the same individual called Clopas in John 19:25. Cleopas expressed his wonder that their newfound friend wasn't aware of the events that had taken place in Jerusalem.

One of the disciples described their disorientation and disappointed hope in Jesus who had been crucified and whose tomb was now empty (24:19-24).

Jesus teasingly asked, “What things?” The two disciples began to explain that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they regarded as a prophet who was “powerful in word and deed,” had been sentenced and crucified at the hands of the Jewish leaders. These events had dashed the hopes of these two disciples who had, with others, hoped that Jesus would be the one to redeem Israel, rescuing God’s people from the tyranny of Rome. To further complicate matters, on the third day since Jesus’ crucifixion some women had amazed them with their report of an empty tomb and an announcement from an angel that Jesus was alive. Others went to the tomb and found it empty, verifying the report of the women. No one to their knowledge, however, had actually seen Jesus. These two disciples had plenty of misconceptions about Jesus, misconceptions that the resurrection would dispel.

**The resurrection fulfills the
Old Testament prophecies about Jesus Christ (24:25-27).**

Jesus pointed the two Emmaus Road travelers to the Scriptures. He showed them how the ancient prophecies predicted the death and resurrection of the Messiah.

Jesus challenged the two disciples’ perspective by stating that the Messiah had to suffer before entering into His glory (24:25-26).

Jesus responded to the Emmaus Road disciples by describing them as “foolish” (uninformed) and “slow of heart” to believe. In other words, Jesus lovingly but bluntly stated that their problem was a spiritual one. Their hearts were unable to comprehend the teachings of the ancient prophets. They needed to understand that the Messiah had to suffer before entering His glory. The cross had to precede the crown.

Jesus explained from the Old Testament scriptures the true nature and work of the Messiah (24:27).

At that point Jesus unfolded what must have been the greatest Bible lesson ever taught! “Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets,” Jesus explained what “all the Scriptures” said about Him. It’s tempting to conjecture what passages Jesus emphasized in this conversation. We would suspect, of course, that Genesis 3:15, Numbers 21:8-9, Deuteronomy 18:15, 2 Samuel 7:16, Psalm 22, Psalm 110, Isaiah 9:6-7, Isaiah 53, Daniel 2:44-45, Daniel 9:25-26, and Malachi 4:2-6 would have been among the Scriptures that Jesus identified as pointing to Him. His resurrection fulfilled Old Testament prophecies and prepared for the fulfillment of prophecies about His future reign.

**The resurrection reveals our opportunity
for fellowship with Jesus Christ (24:28-32).**

Because Jesus is alive we, like the two disciples on the Emmaus Road, can have spiritual fellowship with Him.

The two disciples urged Jesus to reside with them for the night (24:28-29).

As these travelers approached Emmaus, Jesus acted as if He would continue on His journey alone. However, because the day was drawing to an end the two disciples strongly urged Jesus to abide in their home for the night. They offered the typical hospitality of that culture, encouraging Jesus to stay with them. No doubt these two enjoyed Jesus' company and His insights into the Word of God. Jesus willingly consented.

While they shared a meal together Jesus broke the bread and blessed it, opening the eyes of the two disciples to His true identity (24:30-31).

The three took their places around the dinner table to share a meal together. Although He was not the host, Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the two disciples. At that moment the eyes of these disciples were opened—for the first time they recognized that it was Jesus who was eating with them. The breaking of the bread is reminiscent of Jesus' feeding of the five thousand (Luke 9:16) and His institution of the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19). These two disciples were not necessarily present for these events, but this practice sparked an awareness in their minds. They had been walking and talking with the risen Jesus! At that moment of recognition Jesus disappeared (became invisible, vanished) from their sight. In His resurrection state, Jesus' physical body could apparently move through space in ways both mysterious and miraculous.

The two disciples reflected on how their hearts burned within them when Jesus had opened the Scriptures to them along the way (24:32).

The two disciples were understandably stunned and realized together how their hearts had burned within them as Jesus taught them from God's Word. Searching hearts will discover the warmth of God's truth in the teachings of God's Son. The resurrection made it possible for these two disciples to enjoy fellowship with Jesus and learn from Him. His resurrection also opens the door for us to enjoy fellowship with Jesus.

**The resurrection instills in our hearts
a longing to tell others about Jesus Christ (24:33-35).**

The two disciples on the Emmaus Road were eager to report that they had seen the risen Jesus. We who have encountered Jesus by faith will likewise want to tell others about Him.

The two disciples immediately returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven disciples (24:33).

As soon as the two disciples realized what had taken place—that they had encountered the resurrected Jesus—they wasted no time in returning to Jerusalem. Although it must have been dark when they arrived in Jerusalem they found the eleven disciples (the twelve minus Judas Iscariot) and others who were gathered together on that night of the resurrection. There was an uncertain excitement in the air.

The eleven disciples declared that Jesus was alive and had appeared to Simon Peter (24:34).

Before the two Emmaus Road disciples could tell their story, those who had already gathered declared, “The Lord was really raised!” Jesus was alive. In fact, He had appeared to Simon Peter. First Corinthians 15:5 records this early, individualized appearance of Jesus to Peter as well. While Jesus had appeared to some of the women earlier in the day (Matthew 28:8-10), this appearance to Peter carried special significance since Peter would become the primary leader in the early church.

The two disciples described their own encounter with the risen Jesus (24:35).

Then the two Emmaus Road disciples were able to share their story. They explained to the gathering of Jesus’ followers that Jesus had appeared to them and made Himself known when He broke bread with them. Jesus was alive. He was appearing in various places to various people. The resurrection was a story worth sharing. Because Jesus is alive we, as His followers, are eager to tell others. His resurrection is good news indeed. We have the awesome privilege of telling people that the risen Jesus reveals Himself to those who truly seek Him.