

**Luke 24: 13-35; "The Resurrected Christ's Interests", An Easter Sunday Afternoon Sermon, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on April 8th, 2007.**

This morning I ended the sermon that I preached to you with the idea that sometimes we are slow of heart to believe because our eyes are restrained from recognizing our Lord, when all the while He has been with us. Let us ask ourselves whether we recognize Christ speaking to us when the Scriptures are being opened up to us, in the preaching of God's Word? Do we pray that way in our spirit? In the passage that I just read to you, these 2 men on the road to Emmaus had this amazing experience of having the Risen Christ reveal Himself to them on the day of His resurrection, in the evening. Here on this great day, He chose to reveal Himself to some of his disciples in the early morning. But the longing of all the true disciples of Jesus Christ is that He would abide with them whether it is in the morning or the evening. We do not simply long for a short visit of our Lord to our souls. We desire an abiding of Christ with us. Stay with us, we pray. Remain with us, we tell Him in the secret place of our hearts. For us who know that Jesus Christ has ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the majesty on High, our prayer is that He would reveal more of Himself during the preaching of the Word and that He would abide with us spiritually, giving us a sense of His power, and presence and blessing as we go out from this place to do His will. It is a great and glorious thing when Christ chooses to reveal Himself to a person. In Matthew 11: 27 Jesus says, "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." And in John 14: 7 Jesus says, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." "Philip said to Him, 'Lord show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.'" "Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip.'" "He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" There is so much to the mystery of Christ. The two on the road to Emmaus wanted the Lord Jesus to abide with them physically, and to teach them more, now that He was raised from the dead. But they had Him with them only for a short time. But that short time did leave lasting impressions on their hearts. So the question I want to ask is afternoon is, "What is the Lord Jesus interested in, when He comes to reveal Himself to these men?" And then by extension, "What is He interested in when He comes to reveal Himself to us spiritually? There are a number of things that the Lord Jesus is interested in our seeing when He comes to reveal Himself to us as His believing people. Let's look at 3 which come to us from this text.

**1st- He wants us to see that He is interested in the subject of the conversations that we have with one another.** (Verses 13-18)

These two men were going from Jerusalem to Emmaus, a distance of about 7 miles. I think that they felt that they had to get away and think about things, now that Jesus had died. Now that He had gone, there was an uncertainty concerning the future of the "band of brothers". Was Christ's kingdom at an end? What should be done, now that the Master had died and did not appear to be coming back? These two were overwhelmed with all that had happened, and a little downcast and disappointed that Jesus had not risen from the dead as He had said that He would on the third day. Anyway, they felt that they needed to go home and think about it. I believe that the home of a least one of these disciples was Emmaus. They were journeying back the 7 miles distance and they were communing together, it says in verse 15. They were conversing and reasoning with each other, as they walked along, about all that had happened and the possibilities of things that they simply did not have answers for. And

then a stranger comes up from behind them somewhere, and overtakes them, and joins in on their walk with them. He even joins in with their conversation. It is the Lord Jesus, but verse 16 says, "Their eyes were restrained, so they did not know Him." In Mark's gospel it says, "He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country." Both are no doubt true. Jesus assumed a different form of appearance than that which they were used to seeing when they looked at Him during the days before the crucifixion. And also their eyes were restrained from making the connection of recognition that this was Jesus. You know how it is; when you go to another city some distance away, and you see someone in that city that you know from your home town. You look, and you look again, and then there is joyful recognition. This kind of recognition was blocked in their minds by the Lord the Jesus. These 2 men, Cleopas and his friend, were unable to perceive that this was their Lord, risen from the dead. Jesus was just a friendly stranger; and they didn't mind having Him join in on their conversation.

It is indeed a good thing for the disciples of the Lord to speak to each other about their joys and their sorrows, their thoughts on spiritual matters. It is good to commune with one another and to have fellowship with one another. This is something that the Lord Jesus takes an interest in as well. You may think that it does not make any difference to the Lord whether you have holy conversation with the people of God, or not; but you are very wrong if you think so. In the book of Malachi chapter 3, and verse 16 it says, "Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who feared the Lord and who meditate on His name." I have a plaque on my wall in the dining room of our home that says, "Christ is the head of this house, the unseen guest at every meal, the silent listener to every conversation." This is the truth of the matter. The risen Lord Jesus Christ is able to listen in on all the conversations of all His disciples in every place. It is obvious that the Lord Jesus not only chose to listen, but He chose also to participate in this conversation; for He was going to draw out the thoughts of these disciples of His. He was going to give ravishing joy to their halting faith. But they did not know this yet. The Lord Jesus was going to have this very conversation written down in the Book of Books, the Bible, the Book of Remembrance, for every generation after that, to be able to read till the end of the world. But they did not know it. They feared the Lord, but they were very discouraged. The Lord Jesus knew this as well. He says in verse 17, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

We should remember when we are discouraged that the Lord Jesus is concerned, He is interested in whether we are happy or sad. He is very tender and sympathetic when his disciples are sorrowful over anything related to Himself and kingdom, whether it is in regard to their hearts, or whether it is in relation to His gospel and kingdom flourishing upon the earth. He is concerned for what makes "the children whom God has given Him" weep. And He will minister to our sadness as well, through a passage such as this. If He cannot be here personally tonight in bodily resurrection form, He can be here by means of His Spirit working through His Word being preached to you. The Lord Jesus is One who makes careful inquiry here with these two by means of a direct question. The question is put with a loving gentleness, so as not to offend. He knows that He is going to have to reprove their faith in just a minute; but He enters into the conversation by giving them His full attention to hear exactly what is on their hearts. Cleopas says to Him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not know the things which happened there in these days?" Jesus plays dumb at this point so that they will tell Him all about their concerns. Sometimes in our holy conversations with others we need to be those who listen as though we did not know anything about the

things that are told to us, even though we may know more about those things than the person speaking to us. Jesus' interest in this conversation was very real and very deep.

**2ndly- Jesus wants us to see that He is interested in our hope and faith in relation to what we think He ought to do.** (Verses 19-27)

"What things are you talking about?" says Jesus in verse 19 "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him." "But we were hoping that it was He who going to redeem Israel." "Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened." Jesus now knows that these disciples are both very pained in their hearts that everything that Jesus had promised to do; redeem Israel and rise from the dead on the third day, had not been fulfilled. Their boast had been in the Lord. He was "a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God." His good deeds even went before His good words and He was mighty in both. This was a good and commendation of Jesus. Jesus sees clearly that they had great hopes for the redemption of Israel, but He also sees that they do not understand the whole subject of His redemption rightly. They believed that Jesus would deliver them from the Roman rule and domination as a nation. But they did not understand the spiritual redemption of their souls and bodies unto God as involving the sufferings and death of their Lord. They were indeed hoping for Jesus to be raised from the dead. But then they thought, He would restore the kingdom to Israel. They were looking at the things that Jesus came to do and to accomplish as applying more to their earthly state, than to their spiritual salvation and progress in holiness. This is an error that many people have fallen into. This is why the Lord reproves them in the way that He does. He is very interested in what His people hope for from Him. He is very interested in our faith in relation to what we think that He ought to do.

I think that they were hoping that Jesus would do something far more impressive in a political sense for them than He did. I do not think that they were at all expecting His resurrection to be so private, and so personally related to only certain ones among His disciples at first. They seemed to be very reluctant to believe the testimony of women and their vision of angels. They seem to want to go along with the skepticism of the apostles, to the truth of His resurrection, in relation to the testimony of the women. They seem to be caught up in trying to be judges of how Jesus should reveal Himself in His resurrection. So Jesus says to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" He is telling them that if things were supposed to be the way that they were saying that they should be, then He should not have to have suffered at all, which is a direct contradiction of the Scriptures which had prophesied these things from the beginning. "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." What a Bible Study this must have been. Not only were many, many verses of Scripture from the law and the prophets opened up to these men, but also they were opened up with convincing warmth and power to the minds and hearts of these disciples. How wonderfully personal does Jesus make the Scriptures concerning Himself come to life in our minds and hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures are not meant to be simply a systematic theology of objective truth. But we should hope to be taught and hope to study the Scriptures in such a way that Christ is seen in them in every book of them. This is what good preaching is, this is what good Bible study consists of; this is what makes being Christ's disciple so very wonderful. It is that Christ is risen! And He by the power of His Spirit, makes Himself known to us through His Word so that we read Him and see Him in every line.

**And then 3rdly- The Lord Jesus wants us to see that He is interested in our recognizing His power and presence in the everyday things of life.**

(Verses 28-35)

By this time, they are drawing near to Emmaus, the village where Cleopas and his friend were going. It appears that perhaps they lived there. When they drew near to the village, it says, He indicated that He would have gone farther." The Risen Christ, having all power in heaven and upon the earth, is on such a great mission in revealing Himself to His disciples, teaching them, and working in their lives by His grace, that He does not need to take time out for rest and food in the way that we would think that He should. He was going to go on further. But the text says, "But they constrained Him, saying, 'Abide with us; for it is toward evening and the day is far spent.'" "And he went in to tarry with them." Christ knows when we are longing that He stay with us; He knows and will respond to the urgent, longing prayers of His people that He "abide with them." "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." "If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and dine with him, and he with me. (Revelation 3: 20) "O how I would have you to understand this afternoon that Christ is lover of your soul, O believer! He will come to your soul and satisfy your longings for fellowship and communion with Him! It is because He is Risen from the dead! He is Alive forevermore! It says in verse 30, "And it came to pass, as he sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them." "Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight." Christ lifted the restraining veil that He himself had placed upon their eyes until this point, and they knew Him in the way that He broke the bread.

Will you not take notice of the fact that this incident was not a celebration of the Lord's Supper, but it was just a simple meal. It was something that they did a number of times in the day. But the common, the everyday, and the ordinary intake of food was sanctified by a blessing from the Lord. The Lord is interested in our recognizing His presence and power in the everyday things of life. Will you not look for Him there? Will you not see the importance of seeking His blessing in such a simple thing as having prayer before you take your daily bread? You see, this is what causes us, His beloved people, to know that He as our strong and mighty Redeemer; the One who will be with us until the end of the age. It is His resurrection power exerted toward us who are undeserving. But He does and He will give us great grace and power to live this Christian life to His glory. "Did not our hearts burn within us?", they say after He vanished from their sight. The question to ask ourselves as we read this, is; "Does my heart burn within me for more of the gracious experience of Christ coming to my soul to make His spiritual things real to me?" This is what a taste of His resurrection power is like. We want Him to abide with us. And we long for others to have a sense of it as well. "So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, , saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" "And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread." Those who have this kind of understanding; that Christ is interested, He is personally interested in them; interested in our conversations, our hopes and the strength of our faith in relation to what we think He ought do, and in our recognizing His power and presence in the everyday things of life; these believers will not only find His grace to be sufficient, but they will know the reality of Christ becoming more personally precious to them as the days go by, and as travel the road of life to the Celestial City where they will meet their resurrected Lord face to face. This they will openly confess, as did these disciples.