



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

CLEOPAS AND HIS FRIENDS SEEING JESUS • • LUKE 24:13-35 •

MAIN POINT

When we see, know, and experience the resurrected Jesus, we will joyfully live on mission for the kingdom of God.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

When is the last time you were genuinely shocked or surprised? What was the cause?

How did you respond to the surprise? Why?

Regardless of how the excitement arrives, two things almost always correspond to unexpected thrills. First we feel joy, and then we tell somebody about it. In the passage we are going to study today, two followers of Jesus got an unimaginable surprise. While walking home from witnessing the tragic events of the crucifixion, they met a man with a seemingly poor knowledge of current events and an extraordinary knowledge of the Word of God. The mystery tutor walks them home, breaks their bread, and changes their hearts forever.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 24:13-24.

What were the disciples' expectations of Jesus? What about Jesus gave them this hope?

**Clearly these men knew who Jesus was. Why didn't they know He was raised?
Why wouldn't they expect that He would be raised?**

The men described Jesus as a prophet, powerful in action and speech. God empowered prophets to convey His message in word and deed. The term carried a positive connotation. Jesus' prophetic lifestyle and ministry received the approval of God and all the people. God's blessing affirmed Jesus' role in divine activity, and His popularity with people further confirmed His special nature. The two travelers acknowledged Jesus as a prophet. His disciples, however, expected more. Like other Jews of the day, they wanted a Messiah to exert authority in the political realm. The death of Jesus appeared to vanquish that hope for them. They found themselves in an uncertain situation. They had witnessed the death of their Teacher, but heard rumors of an empty grave. The men knew who Jesus was and what had happened to Him on the cross but failed to remember or believe that Jesus promised to be raised.

What emotions accompany uncertainty about the truth of Jesus' resurrection? Why?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 24:25-27.

Jesus responded to the disappointment expressed by the two disciples by calling them foolish. As followers of Jesus, these disciples had witnessed evidence and heard teaching that should have allowed them to understand the significance of what they saw in Jerusalem. Jesus' suffering and death led to the victory of resurrection and the triumph over sin, but the disciples were focused only on their disappointment. Their lack of spiritual perception cost them their confidence and their joy.

Have you ever had a similar experience in your life, when a lack of spiritual awareness led to a loss of joy? In what area of your life are you most susceptible to this?

How did Jesus combat their confusion? What Old Testament passages might He have used to teach about Himself?

The Bible said that Jesus taught through all the Scriptures the truth about Himself. He most likely explained the broad outline of the revelation of God's preparation for the events of Easter. He might have started in Genesis and explained the parallel between the first sacrificial lamb and the work He had come to do. He could have told of baby Moses hidden in the river, who would grow up to rescue his people. He could have reminded

them of David, the king of God's people and the man after God's heart who defeated the giant who threatened destruction. David and other prophets explicitly foretold that a Messiah would arrive, and die, and come back to life. All through the pages of the Old Testament, the stage had been set for Jesus to do exactly what He had just done, but these two disciples had somehow missed the point. Jesus Himself made sure they got it.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 24:28-35.

What significant realizations would the disciples have come to after their eyes were opened to who Jesus was?

The shift in the thought processes of these two would have been dramatic. After hours of confusion and despair, the revelation of Jesus in their midst meant that He really had risen from the dead, that He really was the long-awaited Messiah, and that somehow He really was establishing His kingdom. They had heard it prophesied and hoped the time was near, but now true hope of redemption was verified and He had just left their house.

What is significant about the two disciples' response to their experience with Jesus and their recognition of His resurrection?

After their doubt was replaced with confirmation and their despair was replaced with joy, the disciples had the irresistible urge to share their joy with others. They immediately went back to Jerusalem, shared their experience, and heard other testimonies from their fellow believers.

What are the benefits of sharing your spiritual life with other Christians?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

It's quite possible that like we often do, the travelers of the Emmaus road missed the point because they were primarily interested in their immediate circumstances. Because they were expecting a kingdom they could wrap their heads around, they almost missed the Messiah. He was on every page of the Scriptures and they still didn't get it. But Jesus, as He has done for us, opened their eyes.

How can you guard against the tendency to make the Bible about you rather than about Jesus?

How might you need to adjust your expectations of what God wants to do in your life in order to live on mission for the gospel?

Who do you know who needs to hear the good news of Christ's resurrection?

PRAYER

Praise God for the work of Christ and His cross which brings us back to God. Thank God that He has shown us the beauty of the death and resurrection of Christ. Ask God to show your group how they can share Christ to others in their families and in their everyday lives. Pray that God would use the body of believers in our church to proclaim His name and His work to the people of Birmingham and beyond.

COMMENTARY

| LUKE 24:13-35

24:15. The two followers failed to recognize Jesus at this time. Why? The Scripture implies a supernatural intervention to hide His identity. The resurrected Jesus was different, but He still lived in human form. So a connection existed between the crucified and resurrected Jesus. Jesus questioned His companions about their conversation (see Luke 24:17). This stunned them. Jesus feigned a lack of knowledge in order to spur a deeper discussion.

24:18. One of the travelers, Cleopas, responded to Jesus. Luke provided no name for the other person. Some Bible students suggest the individual was Cleopas's wife, who also might have been one of the women present at the crucifixion when Jesus died (see John 19:25). This much is clear from the larger context: Cleopas's fellow traveler was not one of the Eleven disciples in Jesus' inner circle. They had remained in Jerusalem (see Luke 24:33).

24:19. Jesus continued to probe. He asked, "What things?" He sought to draw the travelers out. He worked to ready them to receive the revelation of His true resurrected nature. The two clarified the Person of their discussion as the Man called Jesus from Nazareth. They described Jesus as "a Prophet powerful in action and speech." God empowered prophets to convey His message in word and deed. God's blessing affirmed Jesus' role in divine activity, and His popularity with people further confirmed His special nature. The two travelers acknowledged Jesus as a Prophet. His disciples, however, expected more. Like other Jews of the day, they wanted a Messiah to exert authority in the political realm. The death of Jesus appeared to vanquish that hope for them.

24:20. The disciples blamed the events on the Jewish chief priests and leaders, who handed over Jesus to the Roman authorities for execution. Although the religious leaders manipulated the Romans to carry out the deed, the people saw through the deception.

24:21. The followers of Jesus desired a different result. But His death quashed their hope that Jesus was the “One who was about to redeem Israel.” Redemption meant to pay a price to set someone free. The people held out hope for liberation from Roman oppression. At this point, the disciples still misunderstood Jesus’ purpose. He offered freedom for people enslaved by sin. This deliverance trumped any temporary military victory.

24:23. The women didn’t find His body. They discovered an empty tomb. The women returned to the disciples with some astounding news. They reported seeing a vision of angels. Heavenly representatives explained the missing body: Jesus was alive! The tomb minus His body raised questions in the disciples’ minds.

24:24. Apparently this news stirred the possibility of resurrection. Some of them went to the tomb to confirm the report. The vacant tomb proved to be true, yet they didn’t see the risen Lord. Since no sightings of Jesus existed at this point, the disciples hung between hope and dejection. They struggled with what to believe.

24:25. Jesus responded to the disappointment expressed by the two disciples. He asserted that they were being “unwise” (or foolish) and “slow” (or sluggish) of heart. As followers of Jesus, these disciples had received evidence previously that should have enlightened them as to the recent events. His suffering and death led to the victory of resurrection. The followers’ lack of perception translated to their inability to have heartfelt confidence in all that the prophets have spoken. Jesus referred to Old Testament prophecies related to the Messiah’s fulfillment of God’s purpose of salvation.

24:26. Jesus refreshed the disciples concerning prophecies about the Messiah. The prophets had declared the Messiah would have to suffer these things. God’s plan of redemption included the “have to” or necessity of suffering preceding victory. God provided salvation through the Messiah’s sacrifice.

24:27. Patiently Jesus expounded on Bible passages beginning with Moses and all the Prophets. Presumably He recalled sections from the Old Testament that supported His premise. Nothing indicates which specific passages Jesus used. The whole of the Old Testament, however, points to God’s working out His salvation purpose that culminated with Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection.

24:30. A meal enabled recuperation from the journey. Jesus reclined at the table with them. The typical setting included a low table surrounded by couches or cushions on which diners reclined as they ate.

In a twist to tradition, Jesus acted as Host at the meal. He took the bread, blessed and broke it. This intimate act of fellowship jogged some familiar thoughts in the disciples' hearts. Although these two were not among the Twelve who ate the Lord's Supper prior to Jesus' trials and crucifixion, they likely knew of the event from those present.

24: 31. As they ate, the two companions' eyes were opened. Just as God limited them supernaturally from knowing Jesus at the beginning of the journey, now God revealed Jesus to them in the same way. With God's help, they recognized Him. They became eyewitnesses to the reality of the resurrection.

24:32. Certainly Jesus' disappearance stunned the two disciples. Upon reflection, they said, "Weren't our hearts ablaze within us while He was talking with us on the road?" The journey's enlightening conversation warmed their hearts in a unique way. At the time, they had failed to understand why. Now the fog of doubt gave way to spiritual insight. The disciples realized that clarity came as Jesus explained the Scriptures to them. His words sank into their open hearts, and they acknowledged Jesus as Lord.

24:33. Recognition of Jesus spurred the two disciples to action. The realization of what happened got them moving again that very hour. The news of Jesus' resurrection could not wait. Immediately they went back to Jerusalem. Upon their return, the two found the Eleven.

24:34. Before the Emmaus residents reported, the others confirmed, "The Lord has certainly been raised." They had received evidence via the eyewitness experience of Simon (Peter). This confirmed the best news possible—Jesus was alive!

24:35. The Emmaus disciples added their testimony of Jesus' appearance to them on the road earlier that day and later during the breaking of the bread. These encounters with Jesus changed the hearts of all believers. They rose from a state of despair to utter joy.