

Burning Hearts ▪ Luke 24:13-32

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Recently, my wife asked all of my children an excellent, basic question: What does it mean to believe in God?

Is believing God just saying, “I believe there is a god”, or is there more to it?

- The same man who wrote this gospel, Luke, also wrote Acts and tells how Paul the apostle helped people with that....

Acts 17:24–25 ESV

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

Acts 17:30–32 (ESV)

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

Notice believing in God is not just that he exists.... Resurrection is central to believing.

Believing in God means having eyes opened and heart transformed to the reality of Christ’s resurrection.

D.A. Carson: “There is no suffering that the resurrection cannot fix”.

- Every form of suffering will be fixed at the return of Jesus.

Revelation 21:4 ESV

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

- But the resurrection begins by fixing the *two* main problems that every human being has:

—A sight problem and a heart problem.

I'm not referring to the 63.7% of Americans who wear glasses or contacts.

And I'm not referring to the 695,000 Americans who will die of a heart disease.

I'm talking about the sight problem of not being able to see spiritual truth.

And the heart problem of not believing.

- We will look this morning at the sight Problem and Heart Problem that is central to this story
- Before we jump into this text, it's good to get ourselves oriented with Luke's Gospel quickly—at least the *reason* he wrote it.

Luke 1:3–4 ESV

it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

**This resurrection account is the apex of that certainty.

› *Believing in the resurrection is the apex our certainty and hope.*

- One commentary captures this story well “On the ironic journey to Emmaus, living disciples talk about a dead Jesus, while a living Jesus speaks with lifeless disciples”. (Edwards)

The sight problem (13-24)

- The story begins with two disciples who are walking 7 miles from Jerusalem to a town called Emmaus.

We know one guy's name is Cleopas.

—Some think this is the same guy mentioned in [Jn. 19:25](#).

—The other disciple was his wife Mary....we don't have certainty on this....our certainty is centered on other things!

- V15 sounds like there might have been a friendly discussion; but the word translated “discussed” can describe an emotional, heated exchange. A debate or argument.
- But Jesus suddenly appears (15b)

Jesus joins them—yet they do not recognize.

Two options:

- Either his resurrected body looked so entirely different...
- Their limited ability to see showed their spiritual limitations...

- V16—that makes more sense since “their eyes were kept”
- A similar statement about *spiritual limitation* is in [Lk. 18:34](#) when Jesus talks about his death and resurrection.

Luke 18:34 ESV

But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

- V17 Jesus enters the conversation, and another emotion surfaces: sadness.
- Now Jesus told his disciples that this would hit them between Good Friday and Sunday—

John 16:20 ESV

Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.

*There is actually a lot of emotion going on here. Blood pressure was raising in their discussion; now sadness as they reflect on the empty tomb.

- There is more to this than just describing what happened that day.

This paints the picture of what it looks like to have a spiritual sight problem.

.....there is not abiding true Joy apart from Christ.

Q: What is behind this sadness?

The dialogue continues as the disciples seek to inform Jesus of what had been happening (19-20).

Keep reading and we find what lies underneath their sadness: unfulfilled hope (21).

Proverbs 13:12 ESV

Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

Or we can put it another way... “disappointment”.

There are a lot of things that can disappoint.

I remember the first big one that hit me when the pastor who was a big influence in my own life was arrested and removed from ministry due to scandal.

Maybe you feel the same; someone or some leader in the church failed. I get it.

Maybe it's closer to the source—you are disappointed with Jesus.

Maybe you think he has not delivered on something you thought he should.

American Christianity can become so consumer driven that if you are not completely satisfied, you start writing your poor review, at least in your heart.

- › *Jesus promised to deliver on one thing: our sin...its punishment and power. That's enough!*
- These disappointments and disillusion usually say something about us: we have a sight problem.

The heart problem (25-26)

- Now you might wonder why Jesus was not talking much and just asking a few questions. He is drawing out their heart.

- Notice one thing that's important: (v19-23)...they recount some facts about Jesus...facts that were true about his public ministry...and the empty tomb.

**Any person can state facts about Jesus ...and even believe them....but that does not mean the heart problem is fixed*

› *Christianity is not merely about just getting facts right...it's about getting a heart fixed!*

- (v25) Foolish ones... slow of heart to believe; it's a rebuke.
- Notice where the rebuke hits: How they read scripture—their failure to connect what they read with what they believe...
- *The remedy for fixing the heart: Seeing & Believing the gospel as foretold and unfolded in all the Bible.*
- First, notice how Jesus stayed centered on the Bible (v27)

The words of Dale Ralph Davis are helpful:

For our own benefit I think we should pay attention to Jesus' method here. At this point it was more crucial for these two disciples to hear Christ than to see Him

We live in a highly visual age; a screen is almost always in front of our eyes. It's almost like a photo or video for us carries real authority.

How do I know a bridge collapsed in Baltimore this week? I saw countless pictures.

› *When it comes to Jesus...what's crucial for our faith right now is not to see a picture or video....but to hear the Scripture about him.*

Dale Ralph Davis: "Jesus didn't give them a neat experience—He rubbed their noses in the scripture".

We will do well to follow his method!

- Second, the content.
- Jesus does not go down rabbit trails, or get derailed—does not get stuck in the "back and forth"—he gets straight to the scripture that foreshadows him:

—Gen. 3:15; Gen. 12

—Exodus 12

—Is. 53

Suffer/glory = that describes the Cross and Resurrection.

These disciples needed to see the whole panorama.

Open Eyes and Burning Hearts (28-32)

- The story ends with the disciples inviting Jesus for a meal.
- Meals in the Bible represent fellowship and friendship; you don't eat with an enemy.
- Meals in Luke-Acts come right before some major revelation.
- Yet there is something else just basic: The meal proves the reality of the Resurrection.

Jesus came back to life on the 3rd Day—with a real, living body.

› *Proving that he has gained the victory over Sin, Death, and Satan!*

**One thing that is really surprising: the guest becomes the host.

Think about it. You invite someone from church for your Easter dinner. They gladly accept. But when they come to your house, they tell you to get out of the way—they set the table, serve you the meal.

—I don't think we read too much into the meal trying to decide if it represents the Lord's Supper or Messianic banquet.

—I think the point: Jesus rules and he provides. He is the one in total control.

*The key takeaway is to see:

**Everything changes when he lifts the veil! (v31)

2 Corinthians 4:3–6 ESV

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the

gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Who blinds? Satan

Who lifts the veil? God

God alone opens eyes to see and shine truth into the heart.

The most important thing to be certain about today is the truth of this gospel.

The basic gospel.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

Do you believe? It's not about being smart enough...or having spent so many years in the church, or a drastic life changing-story.

It's about having your eyes opened by God.

Conclusion:

When eyes are opened and hearts transformed there *is certainty*.

Our final challenge for the believer comes from the last verse. (v32):

- › *They had hearts that burned for Christ —as they saw him at the center of the Bible...the foundation*
- › *The Word of God came alive and set their hearts aflame.*

**Is this true for you?*

- *We are at our best when our hearts burn for Christ—and not distracted and divided over small things.*

Q: What is burning in your heart today? What are you most passionate about? Who or what you are devoting your life to?

There is only One worthy of our heart's affection: Our King who suffered, died and rose again!

May our hearts burn for him!