

Last Words: Burdened, Burning, Bursting

Luke 24:13-35

INTRODUCTION

He is risen! He is risen indeed! **Resurrection Sunday** reminds us of that truth every year. But it doesn't end with **Resurrection Sunday**, either. Too often we build to this great climax on **Resurrection Sunday**, and then things go back to normal until the next Easter cycle comes around. But the amazing things that happened on **Resurrection Sunday** were not the end... they weren't even the peak of the crescendo... they were but the beginning of things. **For 40 more days Jesus walked the earth, appearing to and talking with His disciples and potential disciples.** We learned a lot by examining the sayings of Jesus from the cross, but now I want us to consider the things He said and taught during those 40 days... His sayings **AFTER** the cross. In these sayings we will find words for the brokenhearted, the confused and discouraged, the doubting and unbelieving, the defeated and failing, and even for those resolutely set against the faith. Of course, we will also be reminded of His instructions to all who would faithfully follow Him - His great commission to us all.

Please turn in your Bible to **Luke 24:13-35**. No one can forget the images associated with **September 11, 2001**. Most of us remember exactly where we were when we heard about the first jet crashing into the World Trade Center in New York. We remember the numbness we felt as we realized that thousands of people had died in the rubble of that terrorist attack. We remember the feeling of helplessness as we watched pictures of rescue workers trying to save those still alive. We remember the sadness and numbness as our nation mourned.

Try to imagine how you would have felt if someone had come up to you a couple of days after **September 11** and said, *“Hey, why so glum?”* You would have looked at the person in disbelief. You might have asked where they had been the last few days. **How could they not know about the horror that had taken place?**

This morning I want you to see how men who begin with burdened hearts end with bursting hearts. Why? The resurrection changes everything.

First, please note...

I. _____ hearts: The men were _____ (24:13-24)

We must acknowledge, although we may not want to admit it, is that, like these men we all face times when we are disappointed with God.

Why does this happen?

1. We may be disappointed with God because our _____ do not match His sovereign purpose

It is hard when we have prayed and hoped for something that we thought was God's will, but then it does not happen. These men had prayed and hoped that Jesus was God's Messiah who would redeem Israel. No doubt they were thinking about political redemption from Israel's enemies. But that was not God's will for His Son at that time. When our expectations do not match God's sovereign purpose, we will have to wrestle with disappointment with God.

2. We may be disappointed with God because we have focused on _____ of His Word, but not the whole

The disciples were all quick to focus on the glories of Christ's kingdom, but they were slow to grasp the sufferings that had to precede that glory (24:26). They often thought, *“Won't it be great when we're all there, reigning in glory with Jesus!”* But somehow, they overlooked the Scriptures that predicted the suffering and death of Messiah as the sacrifice for the sins of His people. They thought rightly that Jesus would redeem Israel, but they didn't understand that redemption required the offering of Himself as the Lamb of God!

Here we meet disappointed and discouraged disciples. They were disappointed disciples who felt their faith slipping away with every step on the road to Emmaus. They had heard the rumors of an empty tomb, but what did that mean? No one had seen Jesus yet, or so they assumed. ***There comes a time in life when you have to face the facts and deal with reality.*** So ends the sad tale of Jesus, a story that had such a promising beginning. They believed in Jesus, and He let them down. The third day was almost gone, and Jesus was nowhere to be found. Bring down the curtain, it's all over now. **This is what Good Friday looks like without Resurrection Sunday.** Without the resurrection, the cross is nothing but a tragedy, a story without a point, a drama that ends before the final act.

But it doesn't end here...please note that their burdened hearts are replaced with...

II. _____ hearts: The Lord was _____ and the disciples _____ the benefit (24:25-32)

Second, notice the patience of the Lord. He listened to their complaints and He took time to understand their discouragement. He didn't yell at them, rebuke them, or make fun of them. He met them at their point of understanding and went from there. **Jesus understands where you are in your life.** He knows your struggles. He understands your heart. He comes to you where you are and relates to you with kindness and compassion.

We see His patience of our Lord also in the fact that explained to them the plan of God. As the two disciples pour out their confusion and despair, Jesus listens patiently. When they are finished telling of their broken dreams and dashed hopes, He begins to speak. **He calls them fools, which simply means they were slow to apply the truth they already knew.** And he says they are "*slow of heart*" to believe what the prophets had said. **He rebukes them for one thing and only one thing—for failing to understand and apply the Scriptures.** He doesn't upbraid them for leaving Jerusalem and walking back home. He doesn't criticize their doubt nor condemn their confusion. All of

that was perfectly understandable, given the circumstances and the fragmentary information they had received. But He tells them they should have known and believed what God had said. That leads to what we might call the ultimate Bible conference. He tells them plainly that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and die on the cross. **What seemed like the ultimate miscarriage of justice turns out to be the Father's plan to glorify his Son.** Christ was no victim being led against His will to the cross. No one took His life. He laid it down.

The cross was not an accident. It was part of God's plan from the beginning. That's why the prophets and the poets wrote about it. There are clues throughout the Old Testament that the Messiah would suffer and then would enter His glory. It was not enough that these men believe that Jesus had arisen from the dead; they needed to understand why He died in the first place.

Don't miss the point. The whole Bible testifies to Christ. And as the afternoon of the first Easter Sunday wore on, the two disciples listened with spellbound attention as the third man, the stranger they did not recognize, explained how the Scriptures all pointed to Christ. **We must not make the same mistake these two disciples made or else we too will be fools and slow of heart to believe.** The Old Testament is full of Christ. He is on every page. He is the true theme of the Old Testament—by type, teaching, sacrifice and prophecy.

His patience is also revealed because Jesus did not force Himself upon them. Look at verses 28-29. We are told that, (read verses). If these men had not invited Him into their home, they would not have learned about the resurrection until later. They may never have seen and talked to the risen Christ. Don't despise the kindness and patience of the Lord. **Today is the day to draw close to Him.**

On that day, these men began with burdened hearts, then experienced Christ and their hearts became burning hearts...now, please note...

III. _____ hearts: The _____ changes everything

Despair was replaced by joy. When the two men arrived back in Jerusalem, they found the disciples and other believers who had gathered. The room was filled with excitement. They were talking about an appearance of Jesus to Peter (in addition to Mary Magdalene). The men from Emmaus told their story and the room became even more alive.

The room that just hours before had been filled with sadness and gloom, now was filled with joy and celebration! **What made the difference? Jesus is alive!** These disciples, who were hiding from the world, now were eager to share the gospel with the world. **Hope replaced despair, boldness replaced fear, confidence replaced confusion, and sorrow was erased by celebration.** These two men (witnesses) proceeded to tell others about their experiences with Jesus and who He is. They serve as models of what disciples of the risen Christ should do. **The manner in which they came to recognize Him clearly made a life-changing impression on them.**

While they were still discussing these things, Jesus appeared among them. He showed them His hands and feet and even ate some food (showing He was not a ghost). He opened the Scriptures to them, and I suspect answered dozens of questions so they could understand the plan of God. It must have been a wonderful reunion.

CONCLUSION

The account of the men on the road to Emmaus is for you and me today. **What can we take with us this morning?**

- The resurrection is _____
- Our Savior has overcome the _____ of the unknown; He is more than able to also _____ you
- On the Emmaus Road, _____ can make our faith a past tense faith
- The resurrection _____ confidence, witness, and worship
- The biblical account of the men on the road to Emmaus brings us to a point of _____