

[Luk. 24:13-35 ESV] 13 *That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. 16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. 22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, 29 but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" 33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

General Commentary:

The story begins with two unbelieving disciples journeying away from Jerusalem, and it ends with two believing disciples sprinting back to Jerusalem. Throughout Luke's Gospel, *haste* is a sign of faith. To believe is to act now! But how does their faith arise?

Differently than we would think. Stories of the empty tomb from Peter and the women do not convince these "foolish" disciples; neither does the story about angels saying Jesus rose from the dead. Now they are speaking with the risen Christ and still not convinced! No amount of proof will persuade them Jesus rose.

Only Scripture can do that. Faith is borne, not of proof, but of the seed that is God's Word (cf. 1 Pet. 1:23). This is why Jesus journeys with them on the dusty road of disappointment and opens the Scripture to them. He shows how it all points to Him.

Their hearts burn so powerfully that they invite Him over for dinner. Faith has not yet ignited, but these are the first sparks. Had they not invited Jesus, He would have kept going.

The same is true for us. Jesus wants a friendship, so we have to invite Him in. Good friends don't barge in, and Jesus is a good friend.

It's not until they share a meal that the disciples recognize Jesus. Their story is one of gradual revelation. On the road, Jesus opens the Scripture; at the table, Jesus opens their eyes. But why does He wait till dinner to open their eyes? First, because their eyes can't possibly be opened until they understand who Jesus is in the story of Scripture. Second, because Jesus is more than a doctrine; He is the Second Person of the Trinity. As a Person, He is inherently relational, and He wants a friendship with us. This is why He opens their eyes at the table.

Structure:

- I. Jesus rises from the dead, but the disciples don't believe (24:13-16).
- II. Jesus *opens the Scripture* as they journey on the road (24:17-27).
- III. Jesus *opens their eyes* as they fellowship at the table (24:28-31a).
- IV. Jesus vanishes from sight, but the disciples respond in faith (24:31b-35).

Verse-by-verse commentary:

13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

--"That very day":

- This story takes place on "the first day of the week" (24:1), Sunday, when "Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women" (24:10) went to the tomb with spices only to see an empty tomb and two angels announcing His resurrection (24:1-7).
- The women saw an empty tomb and angels but not the risen Lord (24:1-7); Peter saw the empty tomb and linen clothes but not the risen Lord (24:12). In Luke's telling, it is the two disciples on the road to Emmaus who first see Him risen.

--"two of them": one is named "Cleopas" (24:18), but we are not told the identity of the other. Cleopas was not one of the twelve. Throughout church history, "Cleopas" has often been interpreted as "Clopas" from John 19:25. If so, it's possible that this was a husband-and-wife pair, since Clopas's wife in John 19:25 is named Mary. This is NT Wright's guess, but at best we can only guess.

--"going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem": Emmaus was west of Jerusalem. To travel away from Jerusalem seems to be symbolic.

- It shows their depth of disappointment. Jerusalem was to be the praise of the earth because of the Messiah's ministry. Instead it had murdered their hope on a Roman Cross. Their departure from Jerusalem represents the death of hope.
- It foreshadows the Gospel's outward journey from Jerusalem after Christ's ascension, which Luke details in his second volume (Acts). Roads are symbolic throughout Luke-Acts of our journey with God.
 - Jesus' parents realize *while on the road away from Jerusalem* that Jesus is missing, and they find Him in the Temple three days later (Lk. 2:44-46). (Furthermore, like these disciples, they are estranged from Jesus for three days, worried and anxious, until they discover He is okay. In Luke's storyline, the stories complement one another.)

- A disciple offers to follow Jesus wherever He goes as He walks *down the road*. Jesus tells that person to count the cost. From 9:51 onward Jesus sets His face toward Jerusalem. Jesus' road to death is our path of life.
- Jesus heals the blind man *along the road* (Lk. 18:35)
- In Luke, the road is the journey of discovering Jesus. In Acts, this idea is continued, as both the Ethiopian Eunuch and Paul discover Jesus *on a road* (Acts 8:26; 9:17). Not incidentally, Paul's eyes are opened on "*Straight Street*" (9:11-12). Jesus makes the crooked paths straight.
- This fits with the broader motif that Christianity, before it is called by that name, is identified as, "*The Way*"—which can also be translated as, "*the road*" or "*the journey*." Christianity is a way of life, where the Lord Jesus Christ, meets us on our journey of doubt, disappointment, and even antagonism. On our own, we cannot find our way to God. All our roads lead away from Him. That's why Jesus meets us on the way.

--"talking with each other about all these things that had happened": they were talking about the crucifixion and reported resurrection. They were talking about the angelic appearance and announcement. They were talking about the women's diverted mission and about Peter's discovery. They were talking about the empty tomb—but not the hope it spawned (cf. 24:21: "we *had* hoped...")

15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

--"talking and discussing": the first word conveys ordinary communication, but the second can be translated, "debating." It's a lively word. I imagine the two disciples going back-and-forth about the range of interpretations of the various reports.

--It is not happenstance that Jesus appears "while they were talking and discussing". He could've arrived at any moment, but He chose to enter their discussion and debate. This theme continues in the subsequent story: "*As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace to you!'*" (24:36). Why does Jesus show Himself WHILE people are talking about Him? He's such an eavesdropper!

- It seems that Luke is emphasizing both the nature and importance of fellowship. In both stories, it is in the context of a meal that Jesus' identity ultimately understood (24:30-35, 41-45). Luke has spoken often of fellowship meals throughout his first volume, and it will become a massively important feature of the early church (Acts 2:42-47).
- The nature of fellowship: it is not just potluck dinners and ice cream socials. Fellowship is a deep sharing of life. More than that, it is a sharing of the Jesus-life, of eternal life, of spiritual things—in the context of ordinary things. In the context of an ordinary journey or an ordinary meal, we talk about the things of God. As we do, Christ shows Himself to us. This is the nature of fellowship.
- The importance of fellowship: Jesus still reveals Himself in the context of a seeking and speaking community. Together, we seek Jesus and speak about Him, and as we do, Jesus reveals Himself to us.

- Ultimately, Jesus is not interested in the lone-ranger Christianity embraced by western churches. Jesus wants to meet us around a table as we gather and talk about Him. I think this is the best explanation of why Jesus reveals Himself (1) in the context of dialogue about Him, and (2) in the context of a shared meal.
- Christianity went from a despised cult to the official religion of Rome in the span of three centuries. What we often overlook is that the message spread at least as much over dinner tables as it did through pulpits.

--“drew near (Gk. *engizo*) and went with them”:

- [Luk 10:9-11 ESV] *“9 Heal the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God **has come near** (engizo) to you.’ 10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 11 ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God **has come near** (engizo).’”*
- Jesus had told the apostles to preach and demonstrate how “the kingdom of God has come near” (*engizo*). Now King Jesus Himself draws near (*engizo*) to some disappointed disciples. In both cases, the kingdom has come!
- We would not draw near to the kingdom on our own. All our roads led away—“there is none who seeks God, no not one” (Rom. 3)—but King Jesus meets us on the road away. We sprinted far from the reign of God in our lives (the “kingdom” is not a castle in the sky; it is the reign of God). Therefore, in fulfillment of the Scriptures, the kingdom of God drew near to us. The kingdom is at hand because the king is alive, walking with us on our road of disappointment.

16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

--This is undone in verse 31, where “their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him.”

--It’s not that Jesus necessarily looked different than normal. He wasn’t wearing glasses and a fake mustache. They couldn’t recognize Jesus because they “were kept” from it.

--Why did God keep them from recognizing Jesus? Wouldn’t it have been better if they recognized Him right away? Why couldn’t Jesus just pop out of a bush and say, “Tada! I’m alive guys! Look, I rose from the grave!”???

- Jesus actually does do something like this in the next scene. In verse 36, Jesus shows up out of the blue and says, “Peace to you!” And what was their reaction? Not worship. They were “troubled” and “doubts” arose in their hearts. The disciples knew well that dead people don’t come back to life. Some thought He was a ghost (24:39).
- It’s not until Jesus “opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (24:45) that things changed for them.
- We are reminded of the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, where both die, and the rich man goes to Hades (a pre-cursor to Hell) but Lazarus to paradise:
 - Luke 16:22-31: *22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on*

me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' 27 And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house-- 28 for I have five brothers--so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' 29 But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

- This is the point Luke is driving home! Faith in God, at it's core, is faith in God's Word. The rich man thought if only his family had "proof," they'd believe, but Jesus shows we need more than proof—we need truth!
- We can have all the proof in the world—the disciples were shown convincing proofs of Jesus' resurrection!—but if our eyes are not opened to see Jesus in the Scriptures, we will never believe!!
- I am reminded of Andy Stanley's teaching (one of the most influential pastors in the world) that people in our post-modern society won't accept the truth of Scripture, so we just need to accept that and instead focus on proving the reality of resurrection. "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so," is no longer good enough, he says. Here's a quote:
 - *"We must shift the debate away from whether the entire Bible is true and focus the debate on whether Jesus rose from the dead. That is the issue. And that is an event for which we have overwhelming evidence. And no, our evidence does not come from the Bible. Evidence for the resurrection comes from the eyewitness testimonies of Jesus' first-century followers who documented not what they believed but what they saw."*
 - To be fair, Stanley claims to believe the Bible is true. But his approach is different from what Jesus teaches here in Luke 24. Jesus points doubters and skeptics to Scripture rather than convincing them with apologetic proof. In fact, Jesus makes the emphatic point that the latter will not engender faith on its own. Proof does not birth faith; Scripture does. The nature of saving faith is that it is conceived by the seed of the Gospel.
 - The Apostle Paul appeals to a church of Gentiles—who had no innate respect for the authority of Jewish Scriptures—to believe the truth about Christ's death and resurrection, not merely based on eyewitness accounts (although that matters, see 1 Corinthians 15:5-8). More foundationally, he appeals to the Scripture: *"Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I*

*preached to you--unless you believed in vain. 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**" (1 Cor. 15:1-4).*

- Faith without Scripture is not just dead; it was never alive!

--Returning to the original question of why Jesus didn't just reveal Himself to them fully and immediately: the first part of that answer is that He does exactly that with His disciples in the subsequent scene, but it's not until they believe from the Scripture that the "proof" has any effect on their soul. Faith without Scripture is not faith.

--The second part of that answer is that Jesus will instead journey with these two disciples—as He journeys with us—revealing Himself through the Scripture because that's where faith is born. First Peter 1:23: We *"have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God."*

--At its core, faith in God is faith in God's Word. God doesn't ask us merely to believe that certain events happened—although that is essential. He asks us to trust Him to do what He said He would do. We must trust Him to save us. To heal us. To forgive us. To restore this broken world. To redeem our pain.

--Hebrews 11:6: "Without faith it is impossible to please God, for anyone who comes to Him must believe He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Again, faith doesn't just believe what's real about God (His existence; or for that matter, the resurrection), but that God will reward us for seeking Him. And where do we learn that God rewards our seeking? From His Word. Without Scripture, it is impossible to have faith.

--Their eyes were not kept from recognizing Jesus because of the devil's blinding work (2 Cor. 4:4). In this case, God planned a gradual revelation as He gradually journeyed with them in Jesus, gradually walking through the Scripture as they walked along the road, and then finally sharing a meal. The journey of meeting Christ in the Scripture achieves its destination when we meet with Christ at the table. His heart is for friendship.

17 And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 And he said to them, "What things?"

--Jesus comes asking questions that He already knows the answer to. I am reminded of "the LORD God walking in the cool of the day" (Gen. 3:8) after Adam and Eve ate the fruit, and God asks, "Where are you?"—the first in a series of questions He already knows the answers to. Likewise, Jesus walks with these disciples and asks questions. Why? Because God is willing to meet us in our sin (Gen. 3) and unbelief (Luk. 24), and He wants to connect with our hearts. Questions do that. They reveal the heart. God could have arrived with guns blazing and fingers pointing. Instead, He arrives with questions. He wants to connect with us on a heart-level.

--"Cleopas" I mentioned above. He might be the same as "Clopas" from John 19:25, which introduces the possibility that Clopas's wife, Mary, is the other disciple here.

--“Are you only a visitor...”: the irony! In truth, Jesus *was* only a visitor. He’d spent the past hundred-trillion-*plus* years fellowshiping with the Father and Spirit in glory. Only for thirty-three short years did He spend on earth, and most of that outside of Jerusalem. As Jesus told Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world...” Jesus was a stranger to this earth, and we treated Him like one, crucifying Him outside the city gates. When He rose again, He came unrecognized. A stranger indeed! But not in the way Cleopas imagined. Cleopas thought Him a stranger on account of ignorance about Jesus; in truth, it was Cleopas who had been ignorant about Jesus! And it was that very ignorance—from Cleopas and the unbelieving world—that made Jesus a stranger to them.

--“stood still, looking sad”:

- Their emotion crops up again in verse 21. These two disciples were paralyzed with disappointment, even as they had once been energized by hope. This was not just sadness over the loss of a dear friend, but disappointment that the redemption of Israel was no longer in sight. Indeed, it had sunk like a brick in the sea.
- It’s important to realize that Jesus’ disciples staked everything on this hope for redemption. Jesus had embodied not just grace and truth and glory (John 1) but also hope to be out from under Caesar’s rod. As much as we feel angry and frustrated at our own government at times, they would have felt it more palpably. At last, they thought, Jesus would change all that.
- Not only would Jesus rescue them from Rome, but He would establish God’s everlasting kingdom! At last, Daniel’s visions would be realized and Israel would emerge on top with Jesus as King! Now, however, this vision only saddens them.
- The truth is, Daniel’s vision *was* realized. Jesus *did* conquer Rome. Caesar paraded about like he was really something, but Jesus was crowned in heaven after He rose and ascended to the Father. Today, He is “the ruler of the kings of the earth” (Rev. 1:5). Jesus conquered the oppressor! But not in the way anyone imagined. He allowed oppression to continue for a time—a small part of Daniel’s vision, which his followers overlooked (Dan. 7:12; cf. Rev. 13:1-3). Rather than judging His foes immediately, Jesus opted for delay, allowing more to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3). In the meantime, He reigns over all, but His reign is hidden. He reigns from heaven and through His church, exhibiting grace toward enemies and turning them into friends. He will continue this way until He returns, until the long fuse of wrath ignites, and at last, He comes to judge.
- It would take a long while for any of Jesus’ disciples to understand this. Nobody imagined redemption playing out this way. Because God didn’t do it their way, and in their time, they “stood still, looking sad.” We often do the same.

And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.

--“a prophet mighty in deed and word”:

- This same emphasis—on “deed and word”—is emphasized in Acts 1:1, where Jesus “began to do and teach” during His earthly ministry. After ascending to the Father, He continues “to do and teach.” Thus, we should expect that Christ continues to be “mighty in deed and word” because Christ is alive and reigning!
- They had a grid for “a prophet mighty in deed and word” being slaughtered, since many of the Jewish prophets were. But they had no grid for a crucified Messiah. Why? Because the Messiah was supposed to “redeem Israel.” Like Israel had been redeemed from Pharaoh’s oppression in Egypt, the Scriptures taught how the Messiah would enact an even greater exodus than that one! Surely, this meant rescue from Rome, right? Or so they reasoned.

--“But we had hoped...”:

- Most of our disappointment comes from one single thing: we lose confidence in God to do what He said He was going to do.
- Some have counted twelve occasions in the Synoptic Gospels where Jesus predicted His death and resurrection in plain terms. All the disciples should have seen this coming, but they lost hope in Jesus to do what He said He would do.
- How do we do this? We lose confidence that God will answer prayer, so we give up praying. We lose confidence that God will redeem our pain, so we give up hoping. We lose confidence that God will wisely mete out justice, so we hold grudges. We lose confidence that God will provide and protect, so we worry. We lose confidence that God will give us strength, so we either stop trying altogether or else we try all the harder—in our own strength.
- So often we say, either out loud or in our thoughts, I “*had* hoped”!! How easily disappointed we are. O God, give us confidence to do the things You said You would do!! May we not give up hope!!! And for those of us who have already given up hope, Lord journey with us and meet us in our disappointment like You did with these two disciples. Thank You for Your patience and grace.
- Wright: “It wasn’t just that Jesus had been bearer of their hopes and he was now dead and gone. It was sharper than that: if Jesus had been the one to redeem Israel, he should have been *defeating* the pagans, not dying at their hands! Cleopas’s puzzled statement only needs the slightest twist to turn it into a joyful statement of early Christian faith: ‘They crucified him – but we had hoped he would redeem Israel’ would shortly become, ‘They crucified him – and that was how he *did* redeem Israel.’ And it was, of course, the resurrection that made the difference.”

Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. 22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, 23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

--The first half of verse 21 makes crystal clear that they “had hoped”—they no longer hoped—in Jesus as the Christ. Nevertheless, this section makes it seem as if they “half

hoped” He might be alive. In the least, they are confused. They speak out of both sides of their mouths. It’s almost like they want to believe, but they can’t. They’re like an engine that’s sputtering to start after a long winter. The engine turns a few times and they think it might go... their faith catches light and they think He might have risen... but no. The engine won’t turn. Their sleepy eyes of faith shut drowsily.

--Earlier we observed that in the subsequent scene, Jesus “proves” Himself to the disciples rather than revealing Himself gradually as He does here. We learned from that scene that it’s not “proof” but “truth” that births faith and then sustains it. This scene corroborates the “proof versus truth” interpretation because these disciples have enough “proof” to believe! The women saw angels. Why didn’t they believe the women? Or the angels? By the mouths of two or three witnesses a word is established. Multiple women, multiple angels—yet no faith. And if that hadn’t been enough proof, “some of those who were with us went to the tomb” and validated the empty tomb story. These disciples had more than enough proof! But they still didn’t perceive the truth of Scripture. This sets us up for what happens next.

--Too often we mistake a “craving for proof” with a “craving for truth.” They are not the same. No amount of proof will convince the one who craves only proof. She who craves truth, however, will find it.

25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

--“O foolish ones”: this was not intended as an insult but as an accurate assessment. In the Proverbs, the “fool” is the one who fails to discern the way of God.

--“slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken”:

- He doesn’t say, “slow of heart to believe the stories of the women and the vision of angels and the report of Peter...” They COULDN’T believe these convincing proofs because they DIDN’T believe the Scripture—not “all” of it, anyway. Their reading was selective.
- Jesus clarifies in verse 26 how they failed to believe “all” the prophets had spoken: before Christ entered “into his glory” He first had to “suffer these things”—namely rejection and crucifixion (24:20).
- These disciples had read all the verses about the second exodus, which the Messiah would lead; they had read about the “consolation of Israel” (Luk. 2:25) and “redemption of Jerusalem” (2:38). They read the happy parts of the prophets, but not the sad parts! They somehow skipped over the pierced and slain redeemer of Psalm 22 and the suffering servant of Isaiah 42 and 49 and 50 and 52-53. They missed how the suffering of Joseph and David—before their rise to power—foreshadowed Christ’s suffering and subsequent rise. They missed Zechariah’s prophecy about Israel’s great shepherd being struck down and the sheep scattered, or how “they would look upon Him who they had pierced” (Zech. 12:10; cf. Jhn. 19:37).

- O, how important it is that we believe ALL that the prophets have spoken! We see the same thing happening in churches today, where in place of the Gospel, people are taught to expect only health, wealth, and prosperity. How does this align with taking up our Cross and following Jesus? How does it cohere with the teaching of the early church that “it is through many afflictions that we enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22)?
- One sure way to be disappointed is to stake our hope in only SOME of what the prophets have spoken. We need the whole counsel of God to be healthy sheep (Acts 20:27)! If we are to maintain hope, we need more than a diluted diet of God’s Word, filtered through the ego of a preacher who wants to build crowds with happy verses instead of preaching the whole truth (and risking a smaller audience). No, we need everything—the happy parts and the hard parts. As Paul tells the church in Rome, *“For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have **hope**.”* (Rom. 15:4). The Scriptures give us hope!
- Wright: “But before they could begin to understand what had just happened they had to be prepared. They, like everybody else in Israel, had been reading the Bible through the wrong end of the telescope. They had been seeing it as the long story of how God would redeem Israel from suffering, but it was instead the story of how God would redeem Israel through suffering; through, in particular, the suffering which would be taken on himself by Israel’s representative, the Messiah.”

--“And beginning with Moses and all the prophets...”:

- Jesus preaches Jesus! What a sermon this would have been!
- Jesus’ approach teaches us something about the Bible: the whole thing is about Him. From the very first blood shed in the Bible, which covered the shame of two naked sinners, every story has pointed forward to the shed blood of Jesus, which covers our sin and shame, and to His subsequent reign as King.
- “all” reminds us that it’s not just a few select passages that point to Jesus. We should read the Old Testament in a way that looks for Jesus in all its pages (without violating sound interpretive principles).
- Jesus teaches that Jonah’s three days in the belly of a fish point forward to His three days in the heart of the earth. In making this connection, Jesus shows us how to find Him in the OT. It’s not just through direct statements, but through foreshadowing, which was normal in Jewish thought. It’s why Matthew (our most “Jewish” Gospel account) can apply a statement from the prophet Hosea about Israel’s exodus—“out of Egypt I called my son”—and apply it to the greater Israel, the greater Son of God, who returned from Egypt after Herod died (Matt. 2:15). It’s not a direct statement about Christ, as westerners would expect. It’s a foreshadowing. The whole Old Testament is this way. It’s how Jewish people understood the Scriptures (even if these two disciples failed to see it until later).

- Wright: “the fact that they couldn’t recognize Jesus at first seems to have gone with the fact that they couldn’t recognize the events that had just happened as the story of God’s redemption. Perhaps Luke is saying that we can only now know Jesus, can only recognize him in any sense, when we learn to see him within the true story of God, Israel, and the world. For that we need to learn how to read the scriptures; and for that we need, as our teacher, the risen Lord himself. This passage forms one of the most powerful encouragements to pray for his presence, and sense of guidance, whenever we study the Bible, individually, in pairs or in larger groups.”

--The disciples failed to recognize Jesus in three ways: (1) Jesus in their midst; (2) Jesus in recent events; (3) Jesus in the Scripture. All three are wound together.

28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, 29 but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them.

--Emmaus was seven miles away. This conversation was not short.

--“He acted as if he were going further”:

- Why? Because He doesn’t want to invade; He wants to be invited. Jesus is not a conquistador. He’s a friend. Invitation is the language of friendship. Jesus gives them the opportunity to invite Him.
- We see something similar in Mark 6:48, where Jesus walks on water while the disciples are rowing hard and late into the night. There we read that Jesus “meant to pass by them...” What in the world?! This is almost funny. I’m imagining our Lord’s thought process. “I’m just gonna stroll by the guys while they row and watch ‘em react. This is gonna be great!” Why would Jesus do such a thing? Is He teasing us? No. He’s testing our faith.
- Another example is that of the burning bush (Ex. 3:4): “When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush.” God is looking for those who are looking for Him. He wants to be invited. He’s testing our faith: are we looking for God to be at work, or have we given up on Him? Once we sense that He might be at work: are we willing to “turn aside and see”? Are we willing to invite Him over for dinner? Or onto the boat? Do we press the issue or let Jesus just pass us by like a ghost on the water or a stranger on the road?

--“but they urged him strongly...”:

- Later we find out why they urged Him so strongly: *“Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”* (24:32). They had spiritual heartburn!
- When the Spirit operates on our hearts, when He opens the Scripture to us, when He stirs inside of us, when He convicts us of sin, when He dawns the light on us—then, and right then, and not a single second later!—then, we must respond!
- And we must respond in force. We must be like these who “urged him strongly” to remain. We must be like blind Bartimaeus crying out, “Son of David, have

mercy on me!” We must be like Zacchaeus climbing up a tree to see Jesus. We must be like the Canaanite screaming for help and not being deterred by the label, “dog.” We must be like the woman with the issue of blood reaching out to tug on Jesus’ robe. Once God gives us a glimpse of glory—even the faintest glimpse of fading light!—we must not back down, but press in for more.

- I’m reminded of the quote by Blaise Pascal: “In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who don’t.”

--“evening”: Emmaus was west of Jerusalem, so they walked facing the sun. Jesus rose that morning—a symbol of the dawn of new creation. The darkness of their despair would soon be displaced by resurrection light. “The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day” (Pr. 4).

30 When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

--There is some debate amongst scholars about whether this meal was the Lord’s Supper. I don’t think it was. It was a normal meal.

--Nevertheless, I believe Jesus intends to teach us about the Lord’s Supper through this story. This is common in Jewish theology. For instance, Genesis teaches about tithing (Gen. 28) and the law of levirate marriage (Gen. 38), even before these are enshrined by the Mosaic law code. Likewise, Luke teaches about the Supper even before it became the regular practice of the early church.

--I don’t think we can avoid the conclusion that Luke is teaching us about the Supper in these verses. Evidence to support this conclusion:

- Word and Table complement one another in Luke’s second volume (Acts 2, 6, 20). It makes sense that they complement one another here.
- “Breaking bread” is Luke’s normal language for communion; it is used here too.
- In fact, the formula, “took... blessed... broke... gave” coheres almost perfectly with Jesus’ institution of the Lord’s Supper, where He “took... had given thanks... broke... and gave” the bread of His body to His disciples (22:19).
- It is far too significant that Jesus would open their eyes at the precise moment they share a meal with Him—if it didn’t in some way point to the Lord’s Supper.
- The revelation of Jesus in “the breaking of bread” is re-emphasized in verse 35 so that we don’t miss it.
- Jesus is invited as a guest but becomes the host—just like He does when churches gather to invite Him, only to be hosted by Him.

--If this meal is to teach us about the Lord’s Supper, what do we learn?

- We learn that Word and Table complement one another because Jesus’ goal is not just that we learn new doctrines. Rather, He aims for friendship. The risen Christ is alive, and He wants to sit with us over dinner.
 - Thomas Watson: “*The Word is a trumpet to proclaim Christ. The sacrament is a glass to represent Him.*”

- John Mark Hicks: *“The Word interprets the table as the table embodies the Word. The table without the Word is subject to misunderstanding, and the Word without the table misses the experience of the living Christ as host. The two belong together.”*
- We also learn that His Word is best comprehended—and Jesus is most perceived—not merely in a solitary Bible study but in a fellowship of believers, talking about the Scripture and the things of God.
- Wright: “So, too, we are invited to know Jesus in the breaking of the bread... Luke intends that his readers should see this simple meal pointing forwards, to the breaking of bread which quickly became the central symbolic action of Jesus’ people. Though Jesus was no longer physically present, they were to discover him living with and in them through this meal (Acts 2:42). Scripture and sacrament, word and meal, are joined tightly together, here as elsewhere. Take the Scripture away, and the sacrament becomes a piece of magic. Take the sacrament away, and scripture becomes an intellectual or emotional exercise, detached from real life. Put them together, and you have the center of Christian living as Luke understood it.”

--“their eyes were opened”:

- Mankind hurled creation into death, decay, and futility over a meal thought to “open their eyes” (Gen. 3:5). Their eyes were opened indeed, but not in the way they had imagined. They thought they would become “like God, knowing good and evil”—but instead, they became less like God. For the first time, their “eyes were opened”—to the shame of their nakedness—and their eyes were closed to the glory of God. Ever since that first meal, all of us have felt its nuclear fallout.
- Echoing this narrative, Jesus comes as the harbinger of new creation. He comes not as a ghost that escapes creation, but as a resurrected man who redeems it. Like Adam and Eve and all humanity after the Fall, these disciples’ eyes are closed to the glory of God in their midst. But Jesus walks toward them asking questions, like Yahweh walked in the cool of the garden. He comes to open eyes—not like Satan did, but in the only way God can. Eyes once blinded by a forbidden meal are suddenly opened—by a holy meal.
- Wright: “He has, it seems, gone through death and out the other side into a new world, a world of new and deathless creation, still physical, only somehow transformed.”

--“He vanished from their sight”:

- The word seems to suggest a supernatural vanishing. Jesus has a human body, but it is a glorified body, like we will have at His return (Phil. 3:20). Maybe our bodies will be able to perform supernatural feats like this? We can only guess.
- The more important point in the text is that Jesus stayed with them until they *got it*. He will do the same for us if we follow our hunger.
- Danker: “he vanishes out of their sight, but remains visible to those whose eyes are opened.”—There is coming a day when Jesus will never again vanish. Jesus

launched His new creation project, which progresses until He returns and places the capstone. Until then, “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).

- They don’t believe while they see Him, but they do believe after He’s gone! Luke is emphasizing this point—the value of faith over sight; over proof. While they interacted with the risen Christ, perhaps for hours, they did not believe. After He vanished, however, they believed and hastened to proclaim the Gospel News.

--Bock: “It is in the intimacy of fellowship that Jesus is recognized. This setting is no mistake; it is a major Lukan theme. Many of the resurrection appearances he describes are associated with table fellowship (Lk. 24:41-43; Acts 1:4; 10:41; also Jn. 21:9-15).”

--Bock: “The lack of recognition of verse 16 is reversed. Their perplexity over recent events is removed. It is through sitting with Jesus and listening to him that we get to know him.”

32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

--“Did not our hearts burn within us...”: the Scriptures are not just for learning doctrine, as important as that is. They are for growing in faith and giving us hope and showing us Jesus. I still remember when the Scriptures first came alive for me. Before that, I had read them a few times, but there was no life in the words for me. After I was born again, however, I underlined practically every page in my Bible! It felt like Christ Himself was speaking to me through His Word.

--The religious leaders cared a lot about the Scripture, but they didn’t let the Scripture lead them to Christ. John 5:39-40: *“39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.”*

--Luke is showing how the ever-living Jesus continues to teach and feed His church. It’s one thing to read the Scripture; it’s another to have Jesus teach it to you. It’s one thing to partake in the Supper; it’s another to experience Jesus as Host.

--As a charismatic church, we love “power encounters” with the Spirit of God. And praise God for that! But just as much, we should love to encounter the risen Christ through His preached Word and at His Table. Both are places of divine encounter.

--“while he opened to us the Scriptures”:

- Again, note the connection to 24:45: “Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”
- In verse 31, their eyes were opened to Jesus at the table. In verse 32, their eyes were opened by Jesus to the Scripture. O, how we need Jesus to open our eyes!
- It wasn’t enough to have their eyes open to Jesus in the Scripture, however. Their hearts burned, but it wasn’t until their eyes were opened at the Table that the fire in their hearts caught dry wood and spread.
- This is a story about Jesus opening our hearts to Himself in Scripture and at the Table. It is about not losing hope that Jesus will do what He said He would do because we encounter the living Christ in His Word and believe what He says, and because we enjoy the fellowship with Christ at His Table.

33 And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, 34 saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

--They literally just completed a seven-mile trek, and now "at that same hour" return! I hope they found an Uber.

--Throughout Luke's Gospel, urgency is a theme. The point is that once faith was ignited, they made haste.

--Why Jerusalem? Because they knew "the eleven" (twelve apostles minus Judas) would be there.

--"appeared to Simon": this is a new detail since in 24:12, Simon only saw an empty tomb. Therefore, the Emmaus disciples travel seven miles to report on the appearance of Jesus, only to discover that he had also appeared to Simon! Jesus is showing up all over the place—by now they should really believe! And yet, the next scene shows a continued slowness to believe. Again, it's not until they see Christ in the Scripture that they believe. Proof alone did not cut it. It won't for any of us.

--"how he was known in the breaking of bread":

- Jesus is revealed in the quietness of table fellowship, for that is the aim of the Scripture—to show us Christ so we can be His friend.
- This is also a confirmation that the revelation of Christ in the "breaking of bread" was significant and almost certainly indicative of His purpose in communion. Communion completes the spoken word, for it gives us fellowship with the Christ we just heard about from the Scriptures.

--Wright: "Earthly tyrants borrow power from death to boost their rule; that's why crucifixion was such a symbol of Roman authority. Victory over death robs the powers of their main threat... Jesus has led God's new people out of slavery (to sin and death), and now invites them to accompany him on the new journey to the promised land. The road to Emmaus is just the beginning. Hearing Jesus' voice in scripture, knowing him in the breaking of bread, is the way. Welcome to God's new world."