

Sermon April 26, 2020 Sunday

On the Road to Emmaus

Hallelujah, Praise the Lord!

The story of resurrection continues as two of the disciples of Jesus travel to Emmaus.

It was Sunday afternoon. The two disciples of Jesus began to travel to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

Why Emmaus?

It was their escape place from their broken life after Jesus' death.

They wanted to get away from Jerusalem.

Jerusalem was a place of pain, sorrow, and loss. A place of death, and disappointment. Their high expectations on Jesus were not met.

“We just cannot handle this anymore!!” Where do we go? What do we do now? Oh, how disappointing!

No more reason to stay in Jerusalem. Let's get out of here!!
So, there they were, on the Road to Emmaus!!

We sometimes feel like “we did everything right” “But life still did not work out the way we planned.”

“This is not what we wanted!”

We have grieved the death of a loved one. Our lives have been broken.

We are leaving! No more of this!

So, we know what it was like to be Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus.

As they walked, they talked about everything that had happened and everything that did not happen.

While they were talking, a man, [Jesus] came to join them. They did not recognize who this man was. They were so preoccupied with disappointments.

But Jesus recognized them, His own beloved children.

The road to Emmaus was a Jesus' way to walk with each of us.

Jesus' promise to us. "I am with you always." (Matthew 28:20)

Then the man asked, "What happened?" "What were you talking about"?

Cleopas replied. "Are you the only one who does not know what happened in Jerusalem over the last few days? Jesus' crucifixion was the only thing people were talking about in Jerusalem!" You know, "We were talking about Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people."

Cleopas continued sadly, "And we thought he was the one to save Israel. Oh yes, we had heard stories that he was alive. Yeah, the women told the stories Jesus' resurrection! But we just couldn't believe them."

Luke 24:11 says, ***"but these all sounded like an idle tale, and they did not believe them."***

Then Jesus wanted to help them see by opening the eyes of their hearts. The opening of the eyes of our hearts is a way to find ourselves. It is a way to restore from our brokenness. We were all once lost and struggled with our lives. Then, there's a story of restoration with Jesus in our hearts.

We all have stories of a road to Emmaus, a road we thought was to a better place, where we tried to escape from our life full of problems.

The two disciples did not truly, truly believe the Scripture, so they could not recognize Jesus.

Then Jesus said: *“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!”*

What?! They were in shock.

Then the man said, *“Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”*

Then, he explained to them the entire Scriptures and everything about Christ.

They listened!

The faith and hope they had lost when Jesus died, **came back to them.**

There was something about this man, they listened and understood. Who is this man speaking about Jesus? Wow he makes sense of everything that had happened! **Jesus was the true Messiah! He died on the cross for us, to save us from our sins! And, yes, he has been raised from the dead!**

Jesus touched their hearts and they began to understand the Scripture!

When they arrived Emmaus, the two disciples asked him to stay with them. He said, sure, and they were happy.

At dinner, at the table, Jesus, took bread, blessed it. He broke the bread and gave each of them a piece. (Luke 24:30)

Just like the Holy Communion service we have at our church every first Sunday of the month. There is something special about the Holy Communion when Christ touches our hearts.

“Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.” They recognized who he was, Jesus Christ the Messiah, a true Savior.

This was their restoration moment, “aha” moment. When Jesus broke the bread, Jesus opened their eyes, and brought hope to their life.

What about us? We all had times when our lives were broken. Then Jesus comes to us to open our hearts and put us back to life. Jesus walks with us, talks with us and helps us to find truth and hope in our lives.

We are all hungry. We are hungry spiritually and emotionally. We hunger for life, love, and something more in our life, to satisfy our emptiness. The disciples were hungry. So, they asked Jesus **“Please stay with us.”**

Loving Jesus not only stayed with them, but also fed them to satisfy their hunger.

Despite how we feel, brokenness is not the end of our life. That’s when we need Jesus the most. After the brokenness, after Jesus opens the eyes of our hearts, there will be a grand opening to a new life.

Jesus fed the two disciples not just with bread but with his love, his strength, and his forgiveness. They were fed, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. They were satisfied.

As soon as they recognized Jesus ***“he disappeared from their sight.”*** Where did he go? **Jesus was not in front of them anymore, because now he was in their hearts.**

“Did not our hearts on fire while he talked to us on the road, while he opened the scriptures to us?” They said.

And “right then, they got up and returned to Jerusalem” to tell the other disciples what has happened.

The Road to Emmaus is a journey of finding who we are, a journey to find Jesus. It is a journey **going back home, a place where we all belong.**

Whether you left God for whatever the reason, whether you left the church for whatever the reason, it's time to be back. Jesus has been walking with you, talking with you, trying to open your hearts all along until now and even now. Let him come into your heart. Jesus welcomes you whenever you are ready. He is there for you.

Jesus was in Jerusalem, before Cleopas and his companion, left Jerusalem. He was with them on the road to Emmaus. He was with them in the breaking of the bread in Emmaus. And he was already in Jerusalem when they returned. **Jesus being with us all the time, that is the gifts of God for the people of God.** God is love.

Jesus' birth and his resurrection were the fulfilment of God's promise.

I also experienced something similar when I was a teenager. I was at the revival meeting. As I listened to the preacher, there was a change of my heart, through faith in Christ. **My heart on fire.** I had the assurance that Jesus saved me from all my sins. I decided to follow Jesus all my life.

Do you feel your heart on fire when you read the Scripture, or when you worship?

Invite the Holy Spirit to come into your heart. Let the Holy Spirit help your hearts be on fire when you begin to understand the Word of God.

Let your life shine with the love of Christ. Let your love reach out to people around you to bring hope to people in need. Let this church, Community United Methodist Church be a vessel to bring Jesus' light to the community. As faithful stewards, we serve God by giving what we can offer, our hearts, for the glory of God and by living our faithful life in Christ.

In Christ, we shine, in Christ we love. In Christ our hearts will be on fire to serve God and the community we live in.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

I miss you all. I pray that you are safe and well. May God continue to bless you. God is love. Pastor Jane