

The Risen Lord With The Disciples Of Emmaus.

Text: Luke 24:13-35

1) As Their Companion

Suggested Hymns:

2) As Their Guest

88, 103, 92, 91, 95

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Luke 24:13–35, ¹³ *Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.* ¹⁴ *And they talked together of all these things which had happened.*

¹⁵ *So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.* ¹⁶ *But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.* ¹⁷ *And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”* ¹⁸ *Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”*

¹⁹ *And He said to them, “What things?”* *So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,* ²⁰ *and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.* ²¹ *But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.*

²² *Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.* ²³ *When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.* ²⁴ *And certain 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 *Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!* ²⁶ *Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”* ²⁷ *And beginning at Moses and all the*

Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.

³⁰ Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

The event of our Gospel occurred on the day of Christ's resurrection. As we are told in the tenth chapter of Luke,¹ Christ, besides the smaller circle of twelve disciples, had another, a larger circle of seventy disciples.

The two disciples that walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus in the afternoon of the resurrection day, most likely, belonged to this larger circle of Christ's disciples. The name of one of them was Cleopas.

These two disciples, it seems, did not feel safe in the city. They were in a state of bewilderment. A rumour had been circulated that Christ was risen. This fills them with fright. They quickly depart from the miserable place where their dear Lord and Master was apprehended, condemned, crucified, and taken down from the cross a corpse; away from the dangerous spot where they themselves were in jeopardy of life and had to hide for fear of the Jews.

Who could vouch for them that the chief priests and the elders of the people would not keep on in the course which they had begun? that they would not send out their servants to search for the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, and have them share the same fate of their Master?

So these two flee from the city. With the city behind them they feel more at ease, and the topic of their conversation, as they walk along, is the tragic end of Jesus whom they loved, and of whom they had expected that He would redeem Israel.

And behold! while they walk along in sad conversation a stranger overtakes them. They probably took him for one of those pilgrims who came from distant parts to attend the feast of the Passover, and who was now on the way home.

It was Jesus, the risen Lord, but their eyes were kept from recognising Him. So we find the risen Lord with the two disciples of Emmaus, walking with them and then staying with them at Emmaus.

Let us consider with the help of God's Holy Spirit, *The Risen Lord With The Disciples Of Emmaus*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. The Risen Lord With The Disciples Of Emmaus As Their Companion

“What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” By this question the risen Lord interrupts the two disciples in their conversation. He does not want to see them sad and depressed. He inquires about their trouble.

If they had recognised Him immediately, how great would have been their amazement and their joy. But their eyes were restrained so that they did not know Him. So one of them, Cleopas, makes a reply and expresses his surprise at His question, saying, *“Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”*

What he is saying is this, *‘even though you are a stranger, you ought to know what has been the talk of the town during the last days, and you ought to know something at least of that which is disturbing our minds.’*

But Jesus, as if totally ignorant of those things, asks again and thus leads them to express the doubts and troubles of which He would make them free.

He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain 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."

What ignorance concerning Christ's person and office, what doubts and uncertainties, their words show! They admit that Jesus was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; but what do they think of Him now?

He is nothing more to them now than Jesus of Nazareth, condemned to death and crucified by the chief priests and rulers. Why do they not dare now to call Him the Son of the living God? Oh, they are very much in doubt about that now. They say, "*we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.*"

They speak as if all their hopes and expectations were dashed. For what could they expect of a dead Messiah? Could a dead Messiah redeem Israel, restore the glorious kingdom of God's chosen people, and re-establish the throne of David and Solomon?

As long as He was alive they firmly believed in His future glorious kingdom, and although Christ informed them time and again that His kingdom was of a different nature than they supposed, that it is a kingdom in the hearts of people, still they held fast to their own ideas and pictured Jesus in their minds as a great worldly ruler to be honoured by all the nations on the earth.

But now that Jesus was dead, what could they hope for? It seems to them that all was a dream. Still there is something mysterious in this matter, something they cannot account for, something encouraging them not fully to abandon their hopes.

This is the third day, and had not Jesus told them that on the third day He would rise again from the dead? And did not the women who had been at the sepulchre early in the morning claim they had seen a vision of angels, saying that He is alive? Had not some of their own number gone to the sepulchre and found it empty? This is what puzzles them and makes them feel uneasy.

Christ, their companion, hears what they have to say and then replies, “*O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!*”²⁶ *Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”*

²⁷ *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.* What a powerful sermon that must have been! Christ removes all their doubts and sets aright all their prejudices.

He shows that according to Moses and the prophets the Messiah had to suffer precisely those things which Jesus of Nazareth had suffered, and that He had to die and rise again from the dead.

He expounds to them all the prophecies concerning the suffering and death of the Son of God, and thus convinces them by Scripture. O how their hearts burn within them now, how they hang upon the lips of their companion, how convincingly His words penetrate their soul!

They are so charmed with their companion’s conversation that they loathe to part when they arrive at their journey’s end.

And let us note, that to this day the risen Lord is a comforting companion to all His disciples upon life’s pathway. Note well, this is the benefit, this is the blessing of Christ’s resurrection that He is with us always.

He is invisibly, but really present, present not only according to His divinity, but according to His exalted humanity also, present in the body of His resurrection, present with us where we go and stand; invisibly present both in the days of prosperity and in the days of adversity.

Jesus speaks to us in His holy Word, in the Scriptures, and we address Him in our prayers. He is our companion on life’s pilgrimage, just as He was the companion of those two disciples on their way to Emmaus.

2. The Risen Lord With The Disciples Of Emmaus As Their Guest

But let us hear the continuation of our narrative. We read,²⁸ *Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.*

Their companion now became their guest. He had won their hearts. They felt as if they could not part with Him. So they constrain Him, that is, they implored and prevailed upon Him, to remain and spend the night with them. And their dear companion accepts their kind invitation. He enters the house with them.

It is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Supper is served. And what do we hear? ³⁰ *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.* How strange!

He is their guest but He assumes the duties of the landlord. He takes the bread, pronounces the blessing, and distributes to the disciples.

The defenders of the papacy claim that the risen Lord celebrated Holy Communion at this instance, using merely the bread and not the wine. They do so to support their erroneous practice of withholding the cup from the laity.

But, in the first place, there is not the slightest indication in the text that this was to be a celebration of Holy Communion. And, in the second place, even if it was, the fact that Jesus distributed the bread certainly does not warrant the assertion that He declined to give them wine also.

Does not St. Peter say in Acts 10:40-41 that Jesus both ate and drank with His disciples after His resurrection? Christ simply did here as He was accustomed to do when eating with His disciples. He said a prayer, broke the bread, and gave the pieces to His disciples.

And what was the effect of these proceedings? ³¹ *Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him.* Like a flash of lightning it dawned upon them, that it is the Lord. They knew Him at once. It was their dear Lord and Master risen from the grave. The women had not been mistaken and the angels had told the truth. He was risen from the dead. He was again among the living.

But how was it that they did not know Him before this, when they looked into His face and He spoke to them? Had He changed His appearance? Had He put on a different form? No; He was the same, His body was the same. But their eyes *were restrained, so that they did not know Him.*

Now, however, when He raised up His hands and gave them the bread, the veil drops from their eyes. They recognise Him. But before they can find words with which to express their amazement, Jesus vanishes out of their sight.

For now Jesus had accomplished His purpose with them. He had removed their doubts concerning His suffering, death, and resurrection. He had, by eating with them, shown and proved that He was alive. Now they are surprised that they did not recognise Him before, ³² *And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

And what further effect did this manifestation of the risen Lord produce? Although they evidently had intended to stay in the village over night, and had asked their unknown companion to stay with them and not to proceed on His journey, because night was near at hand, *"they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem."*

They were anxious to communicate the good news to their fellow disciples and to tell them how He was their companion on the way to Emmaus and their guest in the village. And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they *found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,* ³⁴ *saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"* ³⁵ *And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.*

My friends, this also is one of the comforts and blessings of Christ's resurrection that He will be our guest as He was the guest of those disciples at Emmaus. Not only does the risen Lord accompany His faithful believers in the pathway of life, He enters our homes also and abides with us invisibly, but really and truly.

He even enters into our hearts by means of His Word and sacrament and makes us His holy temple. It is not in vain to pray to Him at meal-time and say, *"Come, Lord Jesus, be our Guest and let this food to us be blest."* It is not in

vain to call upon Him and say, *Abide, O dearest Jesus, among us with Thy grace.*²

It is not in vain to sing,³
Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,
For round us falls the eventide;
Nor let Thy Word, that heavenly light,
For us be ever veiled in night.

Even when death comes, we can depend on the invisible presence of our risen Lord and can grasp His divine hand, which will lead us safely through the dark valley of death into the heavenly paradise.

May the Lord, then, keep us steadfast in the faith, that we remain His true disciples; and we will enjoy the benefits of His presence with us to the end of our pilgrimage, until in Jerusalem above our happy home shall be with Him forevermore. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Luke 10:1

² Hymn 181

³ Hymn 260