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Open Our Eyes, Lord

Luke 24:13-35

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Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Supper at Emmaus* (1601)

Background

We gather in worship to remind ourselves who God is, what he has done in Christ and what he is doing through his Spirit. Our desire is to praise God and receive afresh his Spirit in us, to affirm that we are family reconciled one to another and to be empowered to reach out to the world.

Sermon Text: Luke 24:13-35 (ESV)

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles^[a] 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.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

c. What stands out to you the most from this sermon?

2. Sermon Questions

In Brian's sermon, he quotes James 4:8, "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you." Let's discover some of the ways we can cultivate our hearts and minds to allow God to draw near to open our eyes.

a. "Walking away" to get perspective.

Cleopas and Mary were walking and talking with each other about all these things that had happened, when Jesus drew near to them.

What is the conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk? Do you experience Jesus with you while you are walking? Did you experience times when your "walk spiritually rejuvenated" you?

b. Articulating all the tensions of our faith.

Brian says, "Whenever we thoughtfully pour out all the dissonance and 'pain-drenched thoughts and emotions that fester in the deepest recesses of our soul when God doesn't come through for us in the way we believe he is supposed to,' the Lord draws near in a personal way." Could you share a time in your lament when Jesus came through for you?

c. Willing to listen and to receive a new way of "seeing".

As N. T. Wright explains, "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...the suffering which would be taken on himself by ...the Messiah." What new perspective are you seeing now, after reading this passage of Luke?

d. Prevailing hospitality becomes a holy feast with burning hearts.

"God wants to give us the desires of our hearts, but only if we have enough zeal to ask. Drawing near to God and creating space for him to draw near to you takes initiative, determination and time, a lot of time." Where in your life could you put this insight into practice?

e. **“Walking home” for confirmation in a unified community (Heb.10:25)**

“As we trace Luke’s story together piece by piece, we discover the process by which the disciples came to ‘know with certainty’ that Christ had been raised. In each case it took wrestling with the Scriptures, testimonies from eyewitnesses, and a personal encounter with the risen Christ to see the Scriptures in a new light, through the lens of suffering. In the end they are all united male and female, slave and free in the bonds of fellowship with hearts aflame to spread the good news.” Do you belong to a community of faith? Could you describe what your community of faith looks like?