

Luke 24:36-53

Sermon Notes

What would it have been like if the disciples had been expecting the resurrection?

- Camping out by the tomb like those eager to be first to buy a new iPhone.
- All getting up early on the Sunday ready for the tomb to open and the risen Jesus to emerge to the sound of a huge cheer, band playing and champagne corks popping.
- But they weren't expecting it – the women went with embalming spices, 2 of the disciples even left Jerusalem to head to Emmaus.

This week we will see how Jesus changed the disciples to believers – next week we will look at Jesus' commission to them in this passage.

There is a turning point in our passage – a surprising moment

- Did you spot it?
 - When Jesus appeared? Showed them his hands and feet? When he ate fish?
 - No – the moment is in verse 45
 - So we are going to focus in on that one verse – we will split it in half...

1. Then he opened their minds...

First thing to notice is:

i. That Jesus can open minds

- This shows the scope of Jesus' power
- We may think of God having power over many things – the creation, the forming of mountains, the governing of the stars and planets.
- But we tend to view our minds as an impregnable fortress that God won't or can't penetrate.
- But here Jesus opens their minds to understand.
- Indeed the Bible points to the fact that all wisdom and understanding come from God – see Proverbs 2:6 and Daniel 2:21
- So every 'Ah-hah!' moment you have had is from God.

ii. Jesus needs to open minds

- The disciples were struggling – even with the risen Lord Jesus in front of them they were struggling to believe he had risen.
- Even though he had taught them that this would happen (see v44).
- For them to come to belief they needed Jesus to act in their minds
- And we need this too.
- The Bible says all mankind has closed, blinded and darkened minds (see Romans 1:21 and 2Corinthians 4:4).
- So for any to come to faith requires Jesus, by His Spirit, to open our minds.
- If you are a Christian today – it is not because you grew up in a Christian home or because you worked through the logical reasons for the Lordship of Jesus, it is because God opened your mind.
- The song we sing 'O great God of highest heaven' captures something of this:

*I was blinded by my sin
Had no ears to hear Your voice
Did not know Your love within
Had no taste for heaven's joys
Then Your Spirit gave me life
Opened up Your Word to me
Through the gospel of Your Son
Gave me endless hope and peace*

- And if He can do that for you, he can do it for your neighbours and family and friends – so we need to pray for God to open people’s minds.

2....so they could understand the Scriptures

That probably isn’t what we would expect. Shouldn’t He open their minds to what their eyes can see – that Jesus is risen?

- But he opens their eyes to understand the **Scriptures**
- Scriptures they had known all their lives, that they had believed, trusted and obeyed.

i. So they could understand the Scriptures

- They may have known the Scriptures but they didn’t really understand them
- The truths were there in the text of Scripture all along, but they didn’t grasp them.
- Which shows there is a difference between knowing the Bible and understanding it.
- Biblical scholars may know their Bibles very well, but do they understand them?
- Don’t be over-awed by a theologian simply because they are an academic at a top university – ask: Do they understand the Bible? So what will that mean...?

ii. Understanding that the Scriptures are all about Jesus

- This is what Jesus says to them – see v44 and 45-47
- Jesus is saying that to grasp the Bible is to see how it all points to Him.
- So... we have not really grasped the Old Testament until we see how it points to Jesus. But how does it?
- We tend to think that it will always be in the form of a simple prediction – so we want texts that say: ‘the Christ will die and rise to life’.
- While there are many prophecies of the Old Testament that fit into this kind of category there are so many more ways it points to Jesus.
- A good place to start to see how the Old Testament points to Jesus is in the New Testament – what Jesus taught the disciples they passed on to us.
- And you find a deluge of ways the Old Testament points to Jesus – through quotes fulfilled but also through images like the temple or the lamb of the Passover or through the lives and actions of people like Moses or Jonah or King David or events like the exodus or the miraculous provision of water in the desert or the raising up of the bronze serpent.
- It becomes like the kind of artwork in which you are asked to see, for example, how many wolves there are in a picture and you see the obvious 2 in the foreground but with careful inspection you see the image of a wolf in the clouds or in the pattern of the bark on a tree or in the shape of a rock – in fact they are everywhere, so too with Jesus in the Old Testament.
- So when thinking about Old Testament passages we must ask – how does this point me to Jesus?

Conclusion

- So we should ask – Do we see that Jesus’ life, death and resurrection are the key moments of the Bible and of all history and have we therefore concluded that Jesus really did rise from the dead. If not – will you ask Jesus to give you understanding?
- But more than understanding the Bible – have we responded to Jesus as the disciples did? See v52
- Minds that are opened by Jesus respond by worshipping Jesus with joy.