

82. Jesus Appeared to Two on the Road to Emmaus

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children grow in their understanding of the resurrection of Jesus. We saw that the Holy Spirit is the One who gives them that spiritual understanding. In this topic, and the next, we will see how two of the followers of Jesus received spiritual understanding directly from Jesus, as He explained the Old Testament Scriptures about Himself, as they walked together from Jerusalem to the town of Emmaus.

Two of the disciples of Jesus were walking to their home in the town of Emmaus. Luke 24:13-16 says, “Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.” We see that these two were part of the larger group of disciples of Jesus, because they were not Apostles. In fact, in verse 18, we will see that one of the two was named Cleopas.

The two were talking about all of the things that had happened in the city of Jerusalem during the previous few days. The main event had been the death of Jesus on the cross, and people throughout Jerusalem were talking about that event. However, these two had also heard about the report of the resurrection before leaving Jerusalem that day. As a result, they were talking about the things that had happened and what they had heard. Jesus caught up with the two and began to walk with them. God restrained their eyes so they would not recognize Jesus.

As Jesus began to walk with the two, Luke 24:17-18 says, “And He said to them, “What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” 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?’” Here, we see that Jesus began His conversation with a question. This question gave the two an opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and opinions about all the things that had happened in Jerusalem the previous week.

Many times, people are not able to really hear what a person is saying until they have had the opportunity to share their burdens and fears. This question caused Cleopas to ask two questions of his own. First, he asked Jesus, “Are you only a stranger in Jerusalem?” Before Jesus could answer that question, Cleopas asked a second question, “Have you not known the things which happened there in these days?” When people are sad, their greatest need is often to have someone who cares enough to listen while the person shares his or her burden. Since Jesus is God, He knew every word the two had said as they walked along the road. However, Jesus also knew that the two needed someone who cared and was ready to listen as they talked about the reason they were sad. Jesus showed, by His example, the importance of taking time to listen to the burdens of others, before He started trying to give them answers to their burdens and questions.

Luke 24:19-21 says, “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, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. 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.” Here, we see that Jesus answered the question of Cleopas with just two words, “What things?” That was an invitation for Cleopas to continue talking and share the reason why the two of them were so sad that day.

Cleopas immediately began to talk about Jesus. He made it clear that it was the Jesus that had come from the town of Nazareth. He said that Jesus was a Prophet who was mighty in deed and word. We see that this is the name the people of the city of Jerusalem had given to Jesus. Matthew 21:11 says, “So the multitudes said, ‘This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.’” Here, we see that the people of Jerusalem distinguished Jesus from any other person named Jesus by calling Him, “The Prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.” Jesus had become well-known for two reasons. First, Jesus was well-known because of the deeds He did. Although Jesus did many miracles, the most recent deed was chasing out those who bought and sold in the temple. Second, Jesus was well-known for the words He spoke. Matthew 21:12-13 says, “Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, ‘It is written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer,” but you have made it a “den of thieves.”’” These actions and words showed His authority as God.

Cleopas said that the actions and words of Jesus were recognized by both God and the people. Many of the people wondered if Jesus was the promised Messiah. That was the thing the chief priests, elders and scribes asked Jesus as they had Him on trial. Luke 22:67-71 says, “‘If You are the Christ, tell us.’ But He said to them, ‘If I tell you, you will by no means believe. And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.’ Then they all said, ‘Are You then the Son of God?’ So He said to them, ‘You rightly say that I am.’ And they said, ‘What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.’” Jesus said, many times, that He was the Messiah. However, the religious leaders refused to accept His words and recognize Him as the Messiah.

That was the very reason the chief priests and elders delivered Jesus to Pilate and demanded that he crucify Jesus. They had seen the miracles Jesus had done. They had heard His words. However, they chose to reject Jesus as the Messiah because they were more concerned about holding on to their own power. That was why they demanded that Pilate crucify Jesus. That was why they were there when Jesus was crucified, because they wanted to make certain that Jesus died.

Cleopas also told Jesus about his hopes and desires as well as those of the other disciples. They were all hoping that Jesus was the One who would redeem Israel. The disciples wanted Jesus to set up His earthly kingdom immediately. This desire was still being shown on the day Jesus returned to heaven. In Acts 1:6, the disciples asked Jesus the question, “Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’” Jesus knew that the disciples were thinking of an earthly kingdom, so we are going to see that Jesus had to open the understanding of these two disciples, and then the other disciples, in

order for them to be able to carry out the work Jesus had for them to do on this earth.

Cleopas went on to say that this was now the third day since Jesus had been crucified. Then, Luke 24:22-26 says, “Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. 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.’ Then, He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?’” In these verses, we see that Cleopas told about the amazing news that the women had brought to the disciples after they had gone to the tomb early that morning.

Cleopas said that the women had reached the tomb but did not find the body of Jesus. Instead, he said that the women had seen a vision of angels who said Jesus was alive. Here, we see that Cleopas and the other disciple did not really believe the women. Instead, they thought the women had just seen a vision of angels. We see the action of two of the disciples in John 20:2-3, which say, “Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.’ Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb.” Cleopas said Peter and John had found that what the women had said was correct. However, they did not see Jesus.

Once Jesus had given Cleopas time to tell why he was so sad, Jesus then began to speak to the two disciples. Jesus began by explaining to the two disciples that the reason they could not understand was due to the fact that they were slow of heart to believe all the prophets had spoken. Many Old Testament prophecies talked about the sufferings and death of Jesus. Jesus said the disciples did not believe everything the prophets had written. They believed what was written about the kingdom but had failed to believe, and understand, what was written about the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus pointed out that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory. Here, we see one thing that is very common. People can be selective in what they believe, without even realizing that they fail to believe everything in the Bible.

This same thing is true for our children. Here, we see the value of showing our physical and spiritual children the importance of believing all that is written in the Bible. Paul wrote, in Acts 20:27, “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.” From this verse, we see that the way to help our children believe the whole counsel of God is to teach them the whole counsel of God, not just our favorite topics. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children become familiar with the whole Word of God so they know what the whole Word teaches about Christ.