

83. Jesus Opened the Eyes of the Disciples

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand all that the Word of God teaches about the sufferings and death of Jesus. That includes both the Old Testament and the New Testament teachings about His sufferings and death. Today, we are going to see how Christ helped two disciples understand what the Old Testament taught about His sufferings, death and resurrection.

We saw in our last topic that Jesus asked the two disciples, “Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” Then, Luke 24:27-31 says, “And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. 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. 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. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.” Here, we see how Jesus opened the eyes of the disciples that day.

As Jesus and the two disciples walked along the road, Jesus began with the first five books of the Old Testament and taught all the things those books taught about the Christ, especially His sufferings, death and resurrection. He was actually teaching them what those books taught about Himself. Then, Jesus continued through the rest of the Old Testament explaining each of the other passages that taught about Himself. One of the things the two realized that day was that the Old Testament talked many times about the sufferings, death and resurrection of the Christ. We also want our children to understand this same thing. That will only happen as we help them become familiar with the Old Testament.

The time passed quickly that day as Jesus walked with the two disciples and explained what the Old Testament taught about Himself. As they approached the place where the road to the village of Emmaus turned off from the main road, Jesus walked as though He planned to go on further. Then, the two disciples begged Jesus and asked Him to come spend the night with them and told Him that it was getting close to evening. I am sure they had many questions they wanted to ask so they could understand even better the things Jesus had been explaining along the road.

Jesus accepted their invitation and went to stay with them. The two prepared a meal, and then, they sat down to eat. During the meal, Jesus suddenly did something as they were looking at Him. We read that Jesus, “Took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave it to them.” Suddenly, the eyes of the two were opened, and they recognized that their visitor was Jesus. They knew for sure that it was Him. Then, just as quickly, Jesus vanished from their sight. Luke 24:35 says, “And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.” It was the way that Jesus broke the bread that caused these two disciples to suddenly realize that Jesus was the One who had been talking to them that day as they walked along the road.

The two disciples immediately had their lives changed, and they now had a new purpose for their lives. Luke 24:32-35 says, “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?’ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were* with them gathered together, saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!’ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.” The two could not keep quiet about what had happened in their lives.

The word translated “burn” means *to burn or to set on fire*. The teaching that Jesus had given to the two disciples as they had walked along the road together had set their hearts on fire. However, their hearts had really been set on fire as they had been given understanding of the Word of God. The two would never be the same again. John 5:35 says, “He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.” In this verse, burning is used to describe John the Baptist. Because John the Baptist had his heart set on fire by the Lord, He had been a bold witness of the kingdom of God. These two disciples were going to become bold witnesses for Jesus. This will be true of all Christians who have their hearts set on fire because they more fully understand the Word of God. That is one reason why Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. John 14:26 says, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” The Holy Spirit will give understanding as we ask Him to help us understand the Word.

We see that the two disciples were moved to immediate action because the Lord had set their hearts on fire. They left that very hour to return to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples. They found the disciples gathered together when they reached Jerusalem. Mark 16:12-13 says, “After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either.” The disciples had questioned whether the Lord had really appeared to Peter, so they did not fully believe him. These two disciples gave the other disciples additional testimony of the fact that Jesus had been raised from the dead. In 2 Corinthians 13:1, Paul wrote, “This will be the third time I am coming to you. ‘By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.’”

As a result, the two gave the other disciples further details about the appearance of Jesus. They explained what Jesus had taught them as He walked along the road with them. Then, they explained how they recognized Jesus when He broke the bread. Here, we see that these two disciples were given their first opportunity to explain to others the understanding Jesus had given to them as they walked along the road. Each time we explain the Word of God to others, the things we explain become clearer in our own minds. The disciples did accept the witness of these three different witnesses, but some of them still had doubts in their own minds.

Luke 24:36-43 explained what happened next. Those verses say, “Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, ‘Peace to you.’ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’ When He had said this,

He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, ‘Have you any food here?’ So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took *it* and ate in their presence.” Here, we see that Jesus came personally so that none of the disciples would have any doubts about His resurrection.

Jesus did several things that night to erase any doubts the disciples might have about the resurrection. First, Jesus spoke to them. That did not get rid of their doubts. Instead, they were terrified and frightened. They actually thought that they were seeing a spirit, not Jesus. Then, Jesus asked them two questions. Jesus asked the disciples why they were troubled. Then, He asked the disciples why they had doubts in their hearts. Jesus knew that the disciples needed more than words so He gave them additional evidence. Jesus then showed the disciples the holes in His hands and His feet which were the result of the nails that held Jesus on the cross. He next invited them to handle Him so that they could feel His body and be convinced that He had flesh and bones. He also reminded them that a spirit does not have flesh and bones.

The disciples were still having a hard time believing. They were filled with joy and amazement, but it was very difficult for them to believe, because they knew that there was no question about the fact that He had been crucified and died. We see that Jesus understood their doubts. As a result, we see that He continued to give them further evidence of the fact that He was really alive. Jesus asked the disciples if they had any food there that night. They gave Jesus a piece of broiled fish and a honeycomb. Then, Jesus ate those things as the disciples watched.

Since Thomas was not there that night, he was given a special invitation a week later. The next week, Jesus appeared again. John 20:27-29 says, “Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’” Acts 1:21-22 tells us about the most important ministry of the apostles, when those verses say, “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” To be accurate witnesses of the resurrection, every apostle had to be absolutely convinced.

In our next topic, we will see that Jesus did even more to help every disciple become fully convinced of His resurrection. However, we see that it is important that we fully believe and are convinced of the resurrection ourselves, so that we can help our physical and spiritual children develop that same strong conviction. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children, by your belief, that you believe in the reality of the resurrection.