

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster  
Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, Easter III  
Acts 2:14a, 36-41 Psalm 116:1-3, 10-17 1 Peter 1:17-23 Luke 24:13-35

I have talked about the Road to Emmaus previously, and about Jesus' actions and understanding the passage from that point of view. That it is a model for how we talk to people outside of the church.

But Joseph G. Donders reminded me of seeing this passage from the point of view of the two walking with Jesus Emmaus.

Jesus joins Cleopas and his companion walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Donders suggests that the companion the other person must have been Cleopas' wife otherwise another name would have been mentioned in the story. Some experts seem to think Emmaus was not really a village, but more of a barracks, a group of buildings the Romans used for their occupational forces. The two, Cleopas and his wife, being Jews, must have been servants in those barracks for the Romans.

It is likely the two would have taken the weekend off to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. They would have heard that Jesus had entered Jerusalem as a king, and they would hope and expect that Jesus would show himself as the Messiah changing their whole world. Maybe they thought this would mean they wouldn't have to go back to Emmaus, they would no longer be servants of the Romans.

So, they were on their way back home disappointed, dejected, their hopes dashed with the news of Jesus crucified on the cross. What they had hoped for had not taken place, the kingdom of God had not been restored.

Jesus joins them on the road back home and explains to them what had happened, including putting it in context of what had gone on before, but it didn't make sense to them. It didn't jive with what they had seen and felt. It didn't fit with what they were expecting and that they were disappointed because it didn't happen.

When they arrived back home, Jesus indicated he wanted to continue on, but they told him he should not do that because the night was too dark and since nothing is changed in this world there were dangers everywhere.

Jesus stays and he took their bread, and he broke it, then he gave a piece of bread to each of them, then he leaves. What had changed? What is the two understood then that they didn't understand before?

Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit had made a change. It was subtle and, in a sense, invisible. They saw that Jesus had risen from the dead. The Kingdom of God had begun. The world wasn't quite the same place. There was hope a new possibility. And perhaps, it was more about what had come inside of them, rather than externally, from the outside.

In other words, the world had not changed, but they had. The world could become a different and better place, but it was up to the two of them and people like them.

So, the question becomes.....

Was two weeks ago the end of the story of Easter with the resurrection, or the beginning of the rest of the story? And us taking part in it from now on. Do you recognize the hope and expectation within yourself and others going forward after receiving the broken bread?

Amen

The Lord bless you and watch over you,  
the Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you,  
the Lord look kindly on you  
and give you peace;  
and the blessing ...