

THE JOURNEY TO EMMAUS

(Restoring Our Hope)

Luke 24:13-35

JOSHUA, WHISKY

World War II pilot Eddie Rickenbacker and three friends survived in a raft at sea for 21 days and nights without food or fresh water after their plane crashed in the ocean.

Miracles preserved them. When they were faint from thirst, a rain squall blew up, providing fresh water. And when they were hungry, seagulls flew close enough so that they could catch them After their rescue, they were individually asked, "To whom do you attribute your survival?"

All of them answered, "One of us brought a New Testament Bible that we read every day".

"The Bible-THE BIBLE GAVE US HOPE TO LIVE

Not only was Eddie Rickenbacker given hope to live, He was living with the hope of being saved.

How Important is Hope?

- "Those who require heart surgery need hope.
- Hope can cure nearly anything."
- Yes, hope is vitally important in our human life. Faith in God offers hope.
- The Bible also offers hope through its hundreds of promises.

Just one Bible text will suffice: "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4, NIV).

We've all faced times when God does not do what we think that He is going to do -- or for that matter what we think He should do. We know deep in our hearts that God must have a plan; but as humans we still tend to lose hope in these situations. We become frustrated because we cannot see or understand why the reason behind God's actions are not evident The two men on the road to Emmaus were facing just such a situation when they encountered the God of hope William Barclay writes, [The story] tells us of the ability of Jesus to make sense of things. The whole situation seemed to these two men to have no explanation (Barclay, 295).

Their hopes and dreams were shattered. In their very word was "We were hoping that he was the one who was going to rescue Israel." These were the words of men whose hopes were dead and buried. Then Jesus came and talked with them, and the meaning of life became clear and the darkness became light.

HOPE

Before the death of Christ, many people had hoped that Christ was going to be the redeeming Savior. They had hope that Christ was the only one who could bring back Israel lost glory. They had hope that Christ could solve all their problems

SHATTERED HOPE

- The Christ they had hope for, now could not save himself on the cross.
- The Christ they had hoped for was helpless that he cried to the father to let the cup pass over him.
- The Christ they all had hoped for died a painful death on the Cross

SHATTERED HOPE

- You may be hoping on God for better jobs but still you keep hearing the same thing.
- Maybe when you think things are almost getting better, then the unexpected happens.
- Maybe you've been struggling with this same sickness and it is taking the best part of you. Still the Doctors keep saying it will be well soon
- Maybe your marriage is not working out and you are still hoping on God for divine restoration.
- You may be devoted to the word of God, but you think God is far from you
- You may be discouraged with all that has happened over the last few days, weeks, months, years, and the next option now is to call it a quit.

I Have Few Words For You- KEEP WAITING
LET HIM

If we will allow Him to do so, Jesus will make sense of that which has left our hopes and dreams shattered. The mystery is solved when Jesus helps us to understand the realities that remain. Note the realities that we can see in our text.

1. Christ is still with US.
2. It is always too soon to give up.
3. There is still a work to be done.

I. CHRIST IS STILL WITH US (vv. 15-16).

A. He is present even when we cannot see Him. Our human minds tell us that if God were really with us then we would be able to always see Him at work. This leads us to face disappointment by closing our eyes to the presence of the Saviour in all situations. We sit in our disappointment and mumble about what we had hoped for.

Max Lucado reminds us of how often we hear those words spoken on the road to Emmaus.....**"But we had hoped." He writes,**

How often have you heard a phrase like that? ***“We were hoping the doctor would release him.” “I had hoped to pass the exam.”***

“We had hoped the surgery would get all the tumour.” “I thought I got the job already.” (Maxwell, 71)

Words painted grey with disappointment.

- What we wanted didn't come.
- What came, we didn't want. The result? Shattered hope. The foundation of our world trembles.
- We trudge up the road to Emmaus dragging our sandals in the dust, wondering what we did to deserve such a plight.
- “What kind of God would let me down like this?”
- Tears fills our eyes
- And so limited is our perspective that God could be the fellow walking next to us and we wouldn't know it.
- He seeks to reveal Himself to us in all His power and glory.
- Notice that when the two men revealed their unbelief in verses 18-24 that He began to reveal himself to them through the scriptures

Luke 24:18-24

One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.

IT IS ALWAYS TOO EARLY TO GIVE UP (vv. 21 & 25-26).

They had given up their hope because they did not understand.

- The empty tomb mentioned in vv. 22-24 -- without the appearance of Jesus himself -- only served to confuse them more.
- Human logic and understanding had failed them.
- They could not *see* a reason to hope.

B. Their ability to believe and have faith had been challenged.

- The worst possible response to adverse situations is to give up.

The Lord calls us to press forward in our faith. He calls us to persevere until we are triumphant in our faith

III. THERE IS STILL A WORK TO BE DONE (vv. 33-35 & 46-49).

- A. Discouragement does not make the job go away.
- B. There were others who needed to hear what had been revealed to these men on the road to Emmaus.
- C. There is a great ministry of sharing Jesus Christ which has been entrusted to us as the church.
- D. Sure, we are going to face trials; but we do so knowing that ultimately our perseverance through those trials will further the message of Jesus Christ.
- E. The “*genuineness of our faith*” is exactly the testimony some need to hear and see.
- F. Those who truly know Christ are the only one's truly qualified.
- G. These men and women had been witnesses to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ according to verse 48.
- H. Who better to send into the world to preach the reality of Jesus Christ?

WE MAY NOT HAVE SEEN THE SAME THINGS AS OTHERS, BUT WE WHO KNOW CHRIST AS OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR ALSO HAVE A MESSAGE TO TELL.

WE "ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS."

- WE MUST NOT LET DISAPPOINTMENT LEAD US TO LOSE HOPE.
- We must share hope with those who are without it.

CONCLUSION

John Maxwell tells a story that emphasizes the importance of maintaining our hope in dark times.

“An experiment was performed with laboratory rats to measure their motivation to live under different circumstances. Scientists dropped a rat into a jar of water that had been placed in total darkness, and they timed how long the animal would continue swimming before it gave up and allowed itself to drown. They found that the rat lasted little more than three minutes.

They dropped another rat into the same kind of jar, but instead of placing it in total darkness, they allowed a ray of light to shine into it. Under these circumstances, the rat kept swimming for thirty-six hours. That's more than seven hundred times longer than the one in the dark! Because the rat could see, it continued to have hope.” (Maxwell, 71)

We are not rats in some grand cosmic experiment by God. However, we are like all of God's creations -- we need hope -- a ray of light if you will.

For the child of God, Jesus is that "Light." And He is constantly calling to us that we must not lose hope,

HE IS IN CONTROL