Last week on Easter Sunday we followed Jesus on the Road to Resurrection from the garden of Gethsemane, through the agony of the cross and then on to His triumphant resurrection from the grave. As we begin this morning I want to rewind the clock back to the day of resurrection and follow a road that leads beyond the empty tomb.

This was the day third day since the crucifixion of Jesus. These two men are heading west, away from Jerusalem traveling on the road that would lead them about seven miles to the town of Emmaus. They were obviously believers, but only one is mentioned by name, Cleopas. It was a time of great sadness, perplexity and discouragement, for the one they hoped would be their Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, was dead.

After His brutal crucifixion He was laid in a borrowed tomb and now there are women who have come declaring the tomb is empty. Such strange stories and strange events fill their minds as they now walk and reason together on the road to Emmaus.
What confronts these two as they walked this dusty road is the very same challenge we as believers face everyday of our lives. What does it really mean to be a Christian, to truly follow Christ? Do we really believe He is who He said, and how can we follow Him today?

Does it just mean going church because it’s the right thing to do and trying hard to be good and not break any rules? Are we just trying to clean up our behavior or has something truly miraculous happen within us? Have our lives been transformed by an encounter with the living God or, is He just a historical figure to whom we pay lip service but He doesn’t have much effect upon our present lives?

In this passage we find two men on the road to a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ. We must ask ourselves, have we truly had such an encounter? Or do we have a passive acquiescence to an idea or belief about Jesus, that in and of itself is powerless to change anything? Much less heal a wounded soul and deliver a lost and dying humanity?

There is a vast difference between a morally restrained life and a transformed life; in just trying to be good for Jesus and truly being born from above. Life
transformation is always the result of a divine encounter, and a supernatural birth.

Let’s follow these two men as they meet this mysterious stranger on the Road to a Burning Heart.

I. EYES TO SEE AND SEEING NOT

Luke 24:13–16 Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. 16 But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

A. As these two men walked upon the road to Emmaus, they were discussing and pondering all the things they have witnessed. Have you ever thought about what they might have discussed? Perhaps they remembered...

1. The first time they laid eyes on Him at the Jordan River hearing John Baptist declare, “behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”

2. Or the wedding in Canaan when he turned water into wine or maybe the first time they heard Him speak of the kingdom of God.
3. Perhaps they spoke of times they walked daily by His side and sharing His journey and breaking bread with Him.

4. Maybe they remembered the miracles, the healings and devils cast out by just a spoken word.

5. And I’m sure they wept as they remembered Judas the traitor, the horror of the crucifixion.

6. But the greatest mystery of all, the tomb now stands empty, His body gone and the tales of these women!

B. Now as they walk along, thinking, discussing and reasoning together the Word says, “Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.”

1. This was not an apparition or a vision. The language Luke used plainly reveals it was actually the Lord Jesus!

2. But notice something else; “their eyes were restrained,” the NASB says that they were prevented from recognizing Him!

C. Jesus appears and walks along with them; they had eyes to see this stranger, but they could not discern who He really was.

1. I wonder, how often our Lord draws near to us in our daily lives and we do not recognize Him?
2. How often in a discouraging trial or a difficult circumstance have we found it hard to believe that God is really there with us? (More often than not is isn’t even a matter of faith, we just don't think about Him.)

3. We don’t like to admit those things, but at times they are true, for all of us!

4. Perhaps He held their eyes from seeing Him so He could reveal the true condition of their hearts?

5. Maybe He was probing to see if they would remember what they’d been taught throughout their entire lives from the Law of God?

**Genesis 28:15** Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”

**Joshua 1:5** No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

D. Did you ever think that in the midst of our trials, Jesus is drawing near to us to see if we will remember and believe His word, if we will trust in Him?

1. He is truly ever with us, but do we have the eyes of faith to see Him?
Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

II. RIGHT RELIGION BUT WRONG THINKING

Luke 24:17–18 And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” 18 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?”

A. I find it so very interesting as Jesus draws near to these traveling men He notices their disposition, inquires of the things they are discussing, and questions why they are so sad.
1. How marvelous is our God! This reveals something that distinguishes our God from all others; He is truly is interested in our lives, in everything we are going through!

B. Upon His question they share the recent events and their understanding of this one called Jesus; but they also reveal a critical error in their thinking about who Christ was.
Luke 24:19–21 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.

1. Just like many in our day have the information about Jesus, but do not have a real, intimate relationship with the living God. They know the facts but not the person of Jesus Christ.

2. They have heard of Him but have yet to come to know the reality of the kingdom and of it’s king, our Savior, Jesus.

C. That is easy to understand for we are two thousand years removed and after all the time spent with Jesus, hearing Him teach and witnessing the miracles, then hearing the reports of His resurrection, these men are still thinking wrong.

1. Still waiting for a Messiah that would conquer the Roman oppressors and restore Israel to its former glory and independence. They are still seeking a physical kingdom.
2. Still looking with natural eyes, and missing the true, spiritual Messiah.

D. Before we are too critical, they are really no different than we are today.
   1. Many people come to Christ in the same manner today. They realize their need for a better life, a need to change have a plan laid out for God to follow.
   2. Simply defined, if what we believe has as it’s ultimate end our own personal happiness then it is not the gospel of Jesus. It is secular humanism

E. God does indeed desire to bless His people and He delights to do so, but that is not the bottom line of the gospel; of the kingdom. It is transformation.

   **Luke 19:10** For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.
   (The image of God in man)

   **Romans 8:29** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

F. Jesus came to establish the eternal kingdom of God among us, to bring heaven to earth and to show us that we can walk as the Sons of God in the fullness of the Holy Spirit and power.
Luke 17:20–21 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

Romans 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1. Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God throughout His earthly ministry, but not of the one these men were expecting to see.
2. They had the facts, but they missed the point of His coming.
3. They were looking for a physical kingdom; Jesus came to bring a spiritual one.

G. How often is it the same with us? We have the Bible, the greatest book ever written, the very Words of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit and sown through the ages in the blood of the martyrs.

1. We have the faithful preaching and teaching of the Word and the life giving presence of the Holy Spirit.
2. Yet we must be careful not to have right religion and wrong thinking.
3. The gospel is all about the restoration of what was lost, a reestablished relationship with the Father and
many sons being transformed and conformed to the image of Christ.

III. THE ROAD OF THE BURNING HEART LEADS TO HIM

**Luke 24:25–29** Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. 28 Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. 29 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.

A. First there comes a loving rebuke from the Savior as He challenges them for their unbelief. These were Jews, familiar with the Holy Scriptures, but even more, they had walked with Jesus Himself.
   1. He then begins to expound from the scripture the truth of who He really was.

B. The Lord has never intended for us to live our lives in mystery, shrouded by darkness and confusion. Such
is that manner of the pagan gods, but not Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life!

1. The Father’s greatest desire is to be known of man and to abide in continual relationship with.

**Luke 24:30-32** 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. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. 32 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?”

C. This was not a communion service as we first think, this was a family meal and it is Jesus who takes the place of leadership.

1. It was the Jewish custom of that day for the father, the head of the house to assume the responsibility to break the bread and serve that family.

2. Jesus blesses, breaks and gives them bread and then their eyes were opened.

D. More than anything else, the Father desires to have communion, fellowship and relationship with us through the person of His Son Jesus realized in the presence of the Holy Spirit!
1. As He broke the bread, blessed it and gave it, their understanding was opened and the eyes that could not see now recognized the master.
2. Jesus is near today, He is still willing to make Himself known to us, but we are the ones that must open our hearts unto Him.
3. William Barclay said, “God gave men the greatest and most perilous gift in the world, the gift of a free will; we can use it to invite Christ to enter our lives or allow him to pass by.”

E. Our God truly desires to reveal Himself to us, to dwell with us, and we can be mentored personally by God, the Holy Spirit. Jesus is drawing near but we must respond
1. Barclay goes on to say, “The quiet times in which we wait upon God are never wasted; for it is in these times when we lay aside life’s tasks that we are strengthened for the very tasks we lay aside.”
2. As they walked on the way to Emmaus they took time to break bread and commune with the Lord and found a new and deeper place in the heart of God.
3. As we are walking out our daily lives, we must take time to wait before the Lord, to read His Word and be mentored by His Holy Spirit.
4. Salvation is our birth, the beginning, and an introduction if you will to Jesus. But the glory, and power of the full revelation of Jesus comes only through communion, fellowship with Jesus, in prayer, in worship and in His Word.

Conclusion

We may have the experience of salvation, a long history in the church and with religion or we may be complete strangers to all of this.

But there is one thing certain – Jesus is drawing near and He is drawing men to Himself.

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

What we need most is an intimate knowledge of Him, a connection and encounter with Him that moves us from head knowledge to a heart relationship.

Luke 42:32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

These with burning hearts rose up and returned to tell the others – to share the beauty of the risen Christ, to
spread the good news, Christ has risen and Jesus has opened the way for us back into relationship with the Living God.

The Road of the burning heart leads straight to Jesus and He reveals to us the Father’s heart.