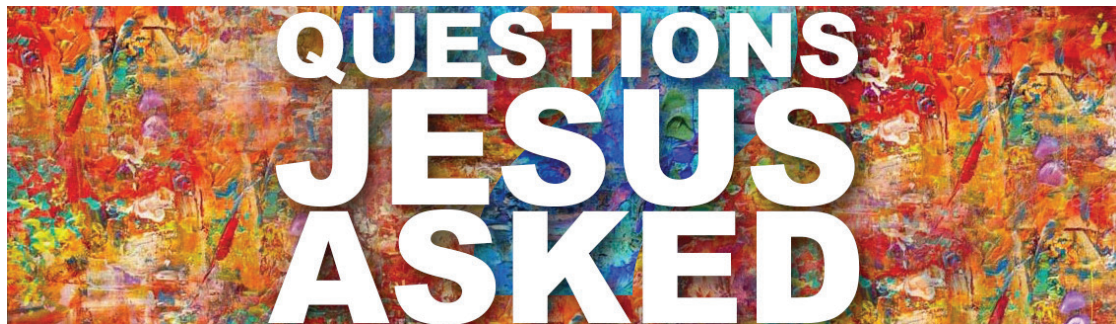


GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 7
WEEK OF APRIL 12



Growth Group Lent 2020

What Are You All Talking About?

Week 7 – April 12, 2020 - Luke 24:13-35

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at a church. In this time of Corona19 and “social distancing” please don’t meet in person, but do continue to check in with each other. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

This encounter on the road to Emmaus takes place during the late afternoon of Easter day. Two of Jesus’ followers are making their way back home. More than likely they had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Perhaps, they had been a part of the crowd that had shouted praises to Jesus when he had ridden into Jerusalem. We don’t know anything about these two, other than that they had been followers of Jesus and they were in Jerusalem when he was crucified.

There is no certainty about the location of Emmaus, other than it was around seven miles from Jerusalem. As the two make their way home, Jesus begins to walk with them, but they do not recognize him. They tell him about what has happened and again we hear the disappointment in their voices. They had such high hopes for him and were expecting much more from him. The irony is that even though they had heard stories about an empty tomb, they obviously did not stick around to see if it was true.

Jesus wants to make it clear that the Messiah had to suffer. This idea is perhaps the hardest one for many of Jesus’ followers to fully understand before the crucifixion and resurrection. Though there are several texts in the Hebrew scriptures that point to this reality, most people did not connect them with God’s son.

We see again the theme of hospitality being raised in this story. The disciples ask Jesus to stay with them and when he breaks the bread, their eyes are opened. They see what they had been unable to see before. It is interesting that several of Jesus’ resurrected appearances occur around meals. Once the disciples’ eyes were opened, they understood why their hearts had been burning as they made their way to Emmaus. This was Jesus! They had to go and share the news with others.

The Emmaus story teaches us a valuable three-fold lesson about discipleship. First, Jesus meets us where we are and opens our eyes and hearts to his goodness and grace. Secondly, we have to make a decision about whether to ask him to stop for a while and enter our lives. Finally, if we do invite him in, we don’t just get to sit there. We have to get up and tell others about what we have experienced.



Exploring the Text

Read Luke 24:13-35

¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does 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. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus." ²⁵ He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. ²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" ³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) In the car, or on a trip, is often a good time for conversation. Recall a time that traveling led to a good or deep conversation.
- 2) In this passage, Jesus talks to two men who were insiders, but had left the town. Why do you think He picked them to travel and talk with?
- 3) Have you traveled with another person and the conversation turns to Jesus? How did that happen? What did you discuss? What was the result of that encounter?
- 4) These guys were leaving town (and disappointed), the DAY OF the resurrection. Have you ever walked away from Easter/Resurrection Sunday? How does Easter change us today?
- 5) After talking to Jesus, these two had great news, and HAD to share it (think of the 1970s gas crisis, or a store that's well stocked with TP right now). When you hear good news, who do you tell? What did you do when you first met Jesus?
- 6) Vs.16 says, "they were kept from recognizing him". Do you think God "opens" or "closes" people's eyes today?
- 7) Jesus is disappointed in their lack of Biblical/Torah knowledge. Jesus explains the signs in the Old Testament. How is your knowledge of the Bible? Are you ready for an encounter with Jesus?
- 8) What does this passage say to you about your relationship with Jesus today? Are you content with that relationship?