

Emmaus

“Places in the life of Christ”



“And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him” Luke 24:30-31

Where the town of Emmaus was located and the distance from Jerusalem is unknown according to many scholars. According to Luke the walk to Emmaus with Christ takes place on the evening of the day of Jesus' resurrection. The town was evidently near Jerusalem.

Two men were walking home after the Passover feast and discussing the events of the past few days. As they were discussing what had happened with the death of Christ, a stranger caught up with them. The stranger asked them why they were so sad. They told him how a man named Jesus from Nazareth whom they believed to be a man of God and a prophet had been taken in by the high priests and how leaders had betrayed him. They told him this wonderful man had been crucified and buried, but when some people went to the grave to mourn his loss he wasn't there. They said everyone was sad.

Then the stranger began to talk and told them that these things had to happen. The Messiah had to suffer and then enter into His glory so they would have the promise of being with Him some day. He went into great detail mentioning many things from the Old Testament. They must have really wondered who this stranger was, but they couldn't see at that time. They were fascinated with the stranger. As they neared the town of Emmaus it was near dinner time and they asked the stranger to stay with them and eat with them. The stranger thanked them and said he would stay. As they were eating, the stranger seemed to take over. He took some bread and broke it and gave it to the two men. At that moment they realized this stranger was Christ. Then He disappeared just as fast as He had appeared to them on the road. This would have been the first meal that Christ had since His resurrection, and it happened in a little known town called Emmaus with two men who are almost strangers to us. We know that one was named Cleopas but there has been much speculation about the second man.

The important thing to me in this Scripture is that it was just an ordinary town with two ordinary people who had a personal encounter with Christ. They didn't recognize Christ. Sometimes we don't recognize God. Christ walks with us every day. The Scripture tells us that He even knows each sparrow. He sees each one of us and walks along whatever road we are traveling.

His offer of new hope and a new vision are open to us every day. When He breaks bread with us we also have the opportunity to see Him and the promise is renewed that He is with us always.

Emmaus is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. I find that very interesting and feel that shows us again that Christ came for everyone. The promise was given to shepherds who were at the bottom of the social ladder and the first appearance of Christ after the resurrection was to two men who are unknown to us in a little town whose exact location cannot be agreed on by archeologists.

I know that I would have loved to be on the walk to Emmaus when Christ caught up with the two people and began to talk with them. It would have been disappointing to realize that I had walked with the risen Christ and not known it was Him, but it would have been a wonderful experience to be among some of the first to actually walk and talk with Christ. But, we can walk with Him today and every day. In fact, we do, but we don't always recognize Him. The Holy Spirit is with us always, but sometimes we walk with people that help us along the way. It may be a relative, a friend, or a total stranger. But Christ dwells in everyone and we just need to be able to recognize Him.

I am reminded of a song I sang as a young person called "The Stranger of Galilee" by Leila Morris.

"In fancy I stood by the shore, one day,
Of the beautiful murm'ring sea;
I saw the great crowds as they thronged the way
Of the Stranger of Galilee;
I saw how the man who was blind from birth,
In a moment was made to see;
The lame was made whole by the matchless skill
Of the Stranger of Galilee.

"And I felt I could love Him forever,
So gracious and tender was He!
I claimed Him that day as my Savior,
This Stranger of Galilee.

"His look of compassion, His words of love,
They shall never forgotten be;
When sin-sick and helpless He saw me there,
This Stranger of Galilee;
He showed me His hand and His riven side,
And He whispered, "It was for thee!"
My burden fell off at the pierced feet
Of the Stranger from Galilee.

"I heard Him speak peace to the angry waves,
Of that turbulent, raging sea;
And lo! at His word are the waters stilled,

This Stranger of Galilee;
A peaceful, a quiet, and holy calm,
Now and ever abides with me;
He holdeth my life in His mighty hands,
This Stranger of Galilee.

“Come, ye who are driven and tempest-tossed,
And His gracious salvation see;
He’ll quiet life’s storms with His “Peace, be still!”
This Stranger of Galilee;
He bids me to go and the story tell—
What He ever to you will be,
If only you let Him with you abide,
This Stranger of Galilee.

“Oh, my friend, won’t you love Him forever?
So gracious and tender is He!
Accept Him today as your Savior,
This Stranger of Galilee.”

There are several songs that talk about walking with Christ, but I don’t know of any that mention the walk to Emmaus. Maybe that is because Emmaus is everywhere we are. We can walk in the same places where Christ walked while He was on this earth, but to have actually walked with Him that day must have been electrifying. Christ can be our walking companion or a stranger; the choice is ours. We can choose to walk with Him and He will forgive our sins and welcome us to eternal life with Him. We don’t have to be someone special. We just have to talk with Him and He will listen.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for sending Your son so that we may have Eternal Life. Help us to walk with Him and listen to His truth. Help us to walk in the light of it and in the warmth and love of His companionship through life. We pray in His name. Amen

1. Have you ever encountered a stranger that had a great influence on your life?
2. Have you ever felt the presence of God in nature as you were walking?
3. Do you feel there is significance to this taking place to two basically unknown people in an unknown town?
4. Have you ever spent a lot of time with someone and didn’t realize their influence on you until after they were gone? A spouse, a teacher, a friend?

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