

Raised by Jesus



**Discussion Guides for Homegroups
All Saints Church, Hoole**

April/May 2022

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These studies accompany our sermon series, looking at what happens after Jesus is raised from the dead. We will find that those initially shattered and bereaved apprentices of Jesus find themselves raised up by their resurrected Lord.

As we come into contact with the risen Lord, we can like them, find Jesus breaking through barriers of sin, grief, unbelief, fear, share and powerlessness.

Through our sermons and group discussions we want to find ourselves encountering Jesus' resurrection life and power in fresh ways.



The studies

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1. The Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

For Starters: Do you have memories of going on a walk with a friend, or a group of friends? Describe what it was like for you.

Read Luke 24:13-27

1. What are these 2 disciples talking about on their 7 mile walk to Emmaus?
 - What do you think would be included in their conversation (v14)?
 - What does the “visitor to Jerusalem” draw out from them by his questions?
 - What indicates that they have lost hope, despite the report from the women?

Jesus had repeatedly foretold not only his death but his rising on the third day (Luke 9:22; 18:33; Matt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19). Straight thinking about the empty tomb, in the light of these predictions, would have made their hearts leap. “He said he would rise; now the tomb’s empty; he’s done it, he’s done it, he’s done it!” But both were too upset to think straight.

(J.I. Packer *Suffering & Glory: Meditations for Holy Week and Easter*)

2. Jesus identifies the root cause of their confusion and despair – they are too ignorant of what scripture teaches. He sets out to remedy this.
 - What is the scope of Jesus’ teaching (v27) ?
 - What is the point of Jesus’ teaching (v26) ?

[See Appendix, page 6]

Why is it essential that they understand what the scriptures say about the Christ?

Read Luke 24:28-35

3. What might have prompted the disciples' invitation to Jesus?
4. Whose position at table does Jesus assume? Why do you think that this is the moment they recognise Jesus? (See also Luke 9:16)
5. Once the disciples have recognised Jesus, what is their response?
6. Imagine the atmosphere, and the emotions of all those present in the room in Jerusalem as they share their stories (v34,35). What would it have been like to be there?

What about us? Choose one or more of the following questions to discuss and to apply in your daily life.

7. In this passage, Jesus drew alongside his disciples in their perplexity and pain, helped them make sense of what they were experiencing through explaining the scriptures, and thus gave them a true perspective of what they were going through.
 - Can you think of a time when He has done the same for you? (Have you ever experienced a 'burning heart'[v32] as you read the Bible, or heard the Bible taught and explained?)
 - Were there particular scriptures or insights into His character that helped you through confusing times?
 - Will you share your story to encourage others?

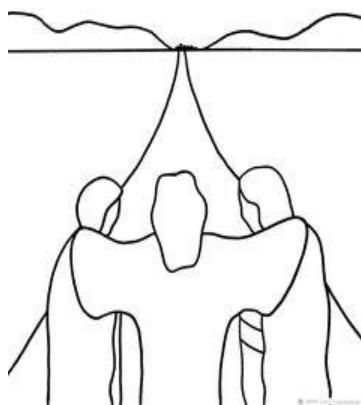
As ignorance of Scripture was the basic trouble on the Emmaus road, so it often is with us. Christians who do not know their Bible get needlessly perplexed and hurt because they do not know how to make scriptural sense of what happens to them. These two disciples could not make sense of Jesus' cross. Many do not know the Bible well enough to make sense of their own cross. The result is a degree of bewilderment and consequent distress that might have been avoided.

(J.I Packer)

8. The resurrected Lord has come to bring new hope and joy.
How can we (as individuals, as a homegroup or as a church)
take Jesus' message of hope and joy to our community?

9. On the road to Emmaus –

Read and respond to this piece of reflective writing. Then talk about how it resonates with you.



Some of us might recognise something of this story reflected in our own lives.

We feel drawn to faith but at the same time it all seems a bit of a mystery. Then we are on the road to Emmaus with these two friends.

Others of us might see the confusion and depression of the two travellers as part of our story, we too are on the road with them.

Some of us know the story of faith quite well, but the journey we're on has become

long and tedious and it is so hard to see the destination. We too are on the road with those two disciples.

Others of us are struggling with what is happening around us, the pace of change, Covid-19, the seeming lack of real direction, trouble in our relationships, vandalism on our estates, our fear which at times threatens to overwhelm us. Yes, we too are on that same road.

We can, if we choose to, bring everything that we experience, and with which we honestly struggle, to that journey, to that walk. Whether because we are in this together or because it is true for us as an individual – all of us in some way are on this journey with the two friends going to Emmaus.

In the midst of everything – before we are even sure who it is, there is someone walking along the road with us – a seeming stranger – if we knew the end of our story we'd know who it was – but now we cannot recognise him. As we talk together online, as we use social media, or as we sit alone and quiet; as we pray with faith or as we struggle to believe, Jesus himself comes near and goes with us.

And as we continue on our journey of life, unsure what the future holds, even if we don't recognise him, Jesus himself walks with us. And we have the opportunity to encounter Jesus not only as the unknown friend on the road – but as the one who welcomes us with nail torn hands into the warm embrace of God's love. And in our shared faith, we take him in some mysterious unfathomable way into our lives and he becomes one with us in soul and body.

Take a few moments now in silence to imagine yourself walking on a journey.
... See the stranger approach you and walk quietly alongside you on the road.
... Walk with him, enjoy in your imagination talking to him as you walk.
And as you go on with your life today say these words to him. "Lord, make yourself known to me in the mundane and the ordinary, speak to me and help me to listen to you."

[By Rev Roger Farnworth (April 25 2020) WordPress.com]

Pray together : turn all you have discussed and learnt into prayer.

"Lord, walk with me (v15), open the scriptures to me (27), stay with me (v29), reveal yourself to me (31), put your fire in my heart and transform me. Amen."

What is said about Jesus "in all the scriptures"? (Luke 24:27)

The most striking passages in the law & the prophets foretelling the character and sufferings of Jesus are:-

- Gen 3:15 - promise to Eve
- Gen 22:18 - promise to Abraham
- Exo 12 - Passover lamb
- Lev 16 - the scapegoat (v10,22)
- Num 24:17 - the star & sceptre
- Deut 18:15 - the greater prophet
- Isaiah 7:14 - Immanuel
- Isaiah 9:16 - a son is born
- Isaiah 40:10,11 - the good shepherd
- Isaiah 49:1-6 - the servant of the Lord
- Isaiah 50:6 - the meek sufferer
- Isaiah 52:13- 53:12 – he who bore our griefs
- Ezek 34:23 - the heir of David
- Micah 5:2 - ruler from Bethlehem
- Zech 6:12 - the Branch
- Zech 9:9 - the lowly king on a donkey
- Zech 12:10 - the pierced victim
- Malachi 3:1 - the messenger of the covenant
- Malachi 4:2 - the sun of righteousness

And in the Psalms (Luke 24:44):

- Ps 22:1-21 – the agony of the cross; lots cast for his clothes, thirst on the cross
- Ps 34:20 - bones will not be broken
- Ps 41:9 - close friend would betray him
- Ps 45: 6-7 - throne will last forever
- Ps 69:21 - offered vinegar for his thirst
- Ps 110 1,4 - David's son & David's Lord; eternal priest-king.

2. Jesus and the Fishermen John 21:1-14

For Starters: When you have some spare time whilst you wait for ‘the next thing’ (the start of a new job/course; a house move; etc) to begin, what do you tend to do to fill the time and occupy your thoughts?

Background

Jesus has appeared to his disciples twice in the Upper Room in Jerusalem since rising from the dead (John 20:19-29). The events in John chapter 21 occur sometime after this.

In Matthew’s gospel we read that when the women met Jesus at the tomb on the first Easter day, he said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.” (28:10). In this passage, we find a number of the disciples by the Sea of Tiberius (the Sea of Galilee).

Read John 21:1-14

1. Look at verses 1-3 and describe the scene – the time, setting, people present and action.
 - What do you see and sense?
 - What might have been Peter’s motive for going fishing?
2. What is revealed about Jesus in this passage? What difference does his arrival make?
3. The realisation gradually dawns on the disciples that this is no ordinary man on the beach. From their reactions, what do we learn about
 - John (“the disciple whom Jesus loved”)
 - Simon Peter
 - the other 5 disciples?

4. What echoes are there here of an earlier incident? (See Luke 5:1-11).

What similarities and differences do you notice?

What had first convinced Peter of Jesus' divinity?
A miraculous catch of fish (Luke:5:1-11). And now Jesus comes to Peter again in a familiar place: on the lake. He is saying, in effect, "Peter, I'm still the same, and I'm still with you."

Bible Application Handbook p220,
J.I.Packer & Derek Williams

5. Read aloud the 4 statements of Jesus that are recorded in this passage. Notice how he repeatedly takes the initiative in the encounter with his disciples.

- What impressions do you get of Jesus from this?
- What do you find most meaningful in these interactions?
- Looking at your own life and relationship with Jesus, are you conscious of the same pattern? (i.e. that He is the one who initiates moves towards you, rather than you initiating the moves towards Him?)

Consider : If you were to film this encounter on your phone or i-pad, how would you do it? What would you particularly want to highlight or capture?

What about us? Choose one or more of the following questions to discuss and to apply in your daily life.

6. In verse 7, John has a “lightbulb moment” and recognises the man on the beach as Jesus. In verse 12, all the disciples realise they are with Jesus.

- What seems to have allowed them to recognise Jesus?
- Have you ever recognised Jesus’ presence and involvement in something you are doing or experiencing? What enabled you to recognise Christ in that, perhaps ordinary, situation?

7. What does it mean to you that the disciples eat breakfast with Jesus – and that Jesus provides and shares His food with them?

When has God miraculously and abundantly provided for your needs?



8. It can often be hard to sense God’s presence, or to see God working in our lives, especially if we have worked hard with few or no tangible results (as in v3). Yet,

- Through what ordinary events of life have you encountered Jesus?

- what effect has knowing Jesus' presence in your circumstances meant to you?
- Have you ever had surprising results for your efforts? (as in v6)

9. How does this passage give hope and reason for faith?
Who can you share this with?

Have breakfast with Jesus and let Him minister to you before you try to serve him. Ministry occurs when you're full of Jesus and spill Him over onto others. So let Him fill you by eating what He has provided in His Word. Then you'll have the strength and resources to minister to others, and to impact them spiritually.

Steven J Cole

Pray together: turn all you have discussed and learnt into prayer.

- Thank the Lord for his presence and involvement in your life and pray for grace to see this more and more.
- Thank God for a specific need that He has met in your life.
- Ask for opportunities to share the good news of the living Lord Jesus with people you meet.

3. Do you love me? Follow me

John 21:15-25

For Starters: A TV advert for perfume includes the question "What would *you* do for love?"
What *do* people do to show, or try to prove, their love?

A. Do you love me?

Background

The angels' message to the women at the empty tomb after Jesus' resurrection included "Go and tell his disciples **and Peter**"(Mark 16:7). In Luke 24:34, as the 2 disciples from Emmaus share their encounter with the risen Jesus, they are told "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Peter has already seen Jesus alone since the resurrection and should know that he has been forgiven for denying his Lord.

Read John 21:15-19 (You might like to try reading this conversation as a dialogue with different people taking the parts of a narrator, Peter and Jesus.)

1. When does Jesus initiate this conversation with Peter?

2. Why do you think Jesus asks Simon Peter the same question 3 times? (See Luke 22:54-62; also John 18:15-18;25-27)
What is the effect of this repetition on Peter?

Two Greek words for 'love' are used here. In verses 15,16 Jesus uses the word 'agape' (a self-sacrificial love), while Peter replies using the word 'phileo' (affection; brotherly love). The third time (v17), Jesus uses 'phileo' when he repeats his question. Bible commentators differ in their conclusions about the significance of the use of these 2 words.

3. What does Jesus ask Peter to do?
 - What motivation for obeying is indicated?
 - What will these commands mean in practice?

4. Jesus' commissioning of Peter is followed by a prophecy.
 - What will following Jesus include for Peter? (vs 18-19) **
 - How might recalling this conversation in subsequent years have given Peter courage to keep following Jesus?

Peter denied Jesus by a charcoal fire; here the Lord restores him to ministry by another charcoal fire (Jn 18:18; 21:9).
Peter had denied Jesus before others 3 times; so 3 times Jesus asks Peter to confess his love for Him before others.
Peter had boasted that he was a notch above the other disciples in his commitment to the Lord (Mk 14:29). But now he is humbled, so that he doesn't say, "Yes, I love You more than these," but simply, "Yes Lord; You know that I love you."

B. You follow me

Read John 21:20-25

5. Having been told by Jesus to follow Him, Peter's question is "What about him?"
 - What might have been going through Peter's mind?
 - What does Jesus' response teach us?

6. What rumour does John, the author, refute in vs 20-23?
What had been mis-heard and misunderstood?

7. How are 21:24-25 (and 20:30-31) both important and reassuring?

What about us? Choose one or more of the following questions to discuss and to apply in your daily life.

8. Jesus' question, "Do you love me?" is addressed not only to Peter, but to each of us, as the basis for our relationship with Him and our service for Him.

- Can you think of times when you, or someone else, has served God for reasons other than love for Him (perhaps motivated by a need to feel useful, to impress others, obligation, guilt, etc) ?
- How do we make sure that love for Jesus stays central and the root of all our work and worship?

9. In this conversation Jesus shows he knew Peter's future – including when and how he would die; and He was sovereign over that future.

What does it mean to you to know that He is also aware of, and sovereign, over your future?

10. Even as I follow Jesus, am I like Peter, sometimes inclined to take my focus off Him, and be thinking about what others are doing, saying or thinking? ("What about him/her?"v21)

- What forms can this take?
- How is this unhelpful?
- What would be more helpful?

What practical difference will it make for you to follow Jesus in your home, in your job, in your community?

11. Throughout this gospel, John refers to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved". This was central to his identity.
- How much do I think of myself as a disciple whom Jesus loves?
 - How would it change the way I live to have this as my core identity?

In conclusion

The first disciples' personal encounters with the risen Lord Jesus transformed their lives. They realised that all God's promises were true, and that He had triumphed over darkness, fear and death.

We have this same wonderful truth to share.

Pray for opportunities, wisdom and sensitivity to share this message of hope and life with people around you in the days ahead.



Pray together: turn all you have discussed and learnt into prayer.

** A commonly accepted church tradition is that Peter was killed in October of the year 64 AD by the Roman Emperor Nero. It is reported that he requested to be crucified on a cross upside down, because he did not consider himself worthy to die as Jesus had done.

- Notes -