

happened concerning Jesus. They did not recognize Jesus when he joined them. They were amazed that he didn't seem to know what had happened, but it was just Jesus' way of joining in on the conversation. Jesus began to explain to them from the Old Testament prophets that the Messiah had to suffer these things and be raised again. When they arrived home, they invited him to stay for the day was nearly over. So Jesus did.

### **Bible Reading**

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 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?" They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen..."

From Luke 24:30-34a (NIV)

**Music Leader:** The reader gave the highlights of the story -- now let's sing the story....

### **Music On the Day of Resurrection (to tune of Jesus Calls Us)**

On the day of resurrection  
to Emmaus we return;  
while confused, amazed, and frightened,  
Jesus comes to us, unknown.

Then the stranger asked the question,  
"What is this which troubles you?"  
Meets us in our pain and suffering;  
Jesus walks with us, unknown.

In our trouble, words come from him;  
burning fire within our hearts  
tells to us the scripture's meaning.  
Jesus speaks to us, unknown.

Then we near our destination.  
Then we asked the stranger in,  
and he yields un-to our urging;  
Jesus stays with us, unknown.

Day of sorrow is forgotten  
when the guest becomes the host.

Taking bread and blessing, breaking,  
Jesus is himself made known.

Opened eyes, renewed conviction,  
journey back to scenes of pain;  
telling all that Christ is risen.

Jesus is through us made known.

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### **Sermon Established: By Resurrection (Part 2)**

Are any of you are familiar with the Emmaus Community? [Couple of you] It is a parachurch organization that hosts week-end retreats. The focus, their model Scripture for them is this pair's Emmaus Road encounter with Jesus -- They use that model to provide an opportunity to stir hearts of (primarily) new or still seeking potential Christians by opening their understanding by walking them through the basics of the Christian faith and spending time with more mature Christians on that intensive week-end retreat. You've heard this story several times today, now you are going to hear it one more time! 😊 We are going to get it from every different angle we can - but even through all these highlights we haven't read it through word for word in its entirety, so I encourage you to read the story in Luke 24 at some point during the day.

T-o members of Jesus' wider circle of disciples were returning from this most eventful Passover in Jerusalem and since they didn't have go-anywhere-media to stream, they talked about what was happening. We don't do that any more do we? We go to an event, and by the time we have hit the exit doors, we're talking about the Lions and Tigers and Bears Oh My!, or whatever crosses our mind. But they didn't have media -- things to fill their ears with, and so they talked about all that had happened this week-end. They were waling (probably northwest) toward home. Like many of Jesus' followers, they not only loved him as their leader, but expected him to be the promised Messiah who was going to exert his power during this great Feast and establish his kingdom. Instead, Jesus is arrested without resistance (except for one little aggressive "blurp" by Peter which Jesus quashed quickly. And then Jesus was tried without defense or objection, beaten, lashed, crucified and laid in a tomb. And then they also heard the rumors of women who found the tomb empty and an angel appearing and telling them he had risen. The men had then run to the tomb and found it empty but they did not see Jesus. They were intently running over all the details and all these rumors they had seen or heard and were trying to make sense of it all. What did that grand entrance mean

that last week? Why'd he have to die? What now?

And Jesus joins them. Perhaps it was because of the depth of the discussion, or perhaps they simply wouldn't have expected to see him (having died and all), or the depth of their mourning (the Bible says their faces were downcast - so they may have never really looked up and actually *seen* him very closely), or the shock that someone would approach them when expressing such intensely personal emotions with each other -- would you approach a couple that was talking with that kind of intensity with each other? Probably not), or perhaps that his now heavenly nature made him not as easily recognizable, or maybe it was a supernatural prevention, or some combination of all of these things, but they did not realize who this stranger was that was interrupting their discussion, saying. "Whatcha talkin' about?" (light sing song tone). One of Jesus' favorite ways of drawing out our hearts and putting them on the table is through asking questions.

You can almost hear the offended-ness of a biting response, which is given by Celopas (Klee-oh-pus), who *may* have been the brother of Joseph, Jesus' human father. He asks, "*Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?*" (v 18) Jesus presses on with a follow-up question, "What things?" (lighthearted, sing song-y tone) (v 19a)

And so they begin to unbear their soul to him. They recognize a sincere interest from this stranger and they pour out their hearts about who Jesus was and what he had done and their hopes of who he was and what he was going to do, but now he's been dead 3 days, and now there were also rumors from women who had seen angels declaring he was alive, and others went to the tomb, who saw it empty but didn't see Jesus.... This was the typical struggle of frustration and hope and defeat and wishes and fears all wrapped together in some confused bundle. Typical of followers in those first couple of days. And after they poured their hearts out to him, Jesus gently answered that they should have seen from the prophets that this would happen.

Well, we have the New Testament that spells it all out for us, letter and verse -- literally. They didn't have that. They only had the Old Testament prophecies that predicted that all this was going to happen. But it seems that in Jesus' day, the prophecies that were quoted most often were those supporting the earthly view of a triumphant Jewish Messiah, and the ones that were about a suffering servant were explained away in many ways -- just one example: They would say the texts of suffering servant were about Jerusalem and Israel the nation, God's chosen

nation -- rather than God's chosen king. For it was a monstrous idea to them that God's chosen king would ever suffer, would ever be despised, would ever be God-smitten, would ever suffer for humanity, or by humanity.

A handful of people got it -- Simeon, Anna, (the ones at the Temple who held Jesus when he was 8 days old). They saw him as a fulfillment of those prophetic concepts. Jesus began to explain all of this to the pair on the way home to Emmaus, saying you can't just pick and choose what you want and ignore the rest. Yes you like the triumphant Christ, so we'll just focus on that and ignore this other part. You have to take it *all* in. And if they believed it *all*, they would not have been surprised. They would have understood that this is what would have had to happen if he was going to redeem the world -- if he was going to buy back from sin's enslaving ownership -- redeem the people who turn to him.

If we understand the reality of evil, we would understand it would have to be a battle like this. For the consequences of evil is death, and so death had to be fought and overcome. And Jesus gives his message of salvation. There is no answer, no objection, no argument that can permanently defeat God's plan. If Easter means anything, it means you can take God's saving love, nail it to a tree, wrap it in grave clothes, seal it in a tomb, and guard against it, but God's love will rise again. It will never be defeated. It cannot fade, it cannot be destroyed.

In the drama, *The Trial of Jesus*, after its all over, a roman soldier reports to Pilate, and Pilate's wife asks him how the prisoner Jesus had died. After he gives the story, she asks, "Do you think he is dead?" The soldier says, "No, lady, I don't." "Then, where is he?" The soldier replies. "Let loose in the world, where [no one] can stop his truth."

As that pair neared their home in Emmaus, Jesus began to part ways, but it was nearly evening and hospitality was the custom of the day, plus his teaching of the Scriptures electrified them, they described it as a fire in their hearts, so they urged him to stay with them. They served a meal, and Jesus took the lead role at the table. This was not a communion meal, it was a common meal, but there was something familiar about how he gave thanks, and how he broke and distributed the bread, (which they probably saw on many times) or maybe it was a supernatural insight, but they suddenly realized who was with them, the resurrected Christ himself -- and all their doubts evaporated into joy. And now they know he lives, and he is the promised Messiah and Redeemer. And now they knew why they were so moved as they listened to him.

As soon as Jesus knows they know, his purpose with them is done and he is gone. Unphased, filled with joy, they couldn't wait to share it.

A pastor's three-year-old daughter, Nicole was anxious for Easter -- she liked Easter as much as she did Christmas. She had already gotten to pick out a new dress and bonnet. They were going to get some new shoes (you know how ladies have to have everything coordinated). So Pastor Daddy and Nicole went to the store. And she said it again, "I can't wait for Easter, Daddy! " Pastor Dad sensed a teaching moment, so he decided to test what she thought was just so great about Easter. "Do you know what Easter means?" "Yes." "What does it mean?" And she smiled big and threw her arms to the sky and yelled, "Surprise!" What better word could sum up Easter! Surprise to death, surprise to sin, surprise to grieving disciples, surprise to the modern world, He is alive!

And these two who had walked 7 miles home, now rushed 7 miles back. They didn't wait for morning to come, even though the day was almost over and it was dangerous to drive at night -- drive -- walk -- I'd have to drive I couldn't walk 7 miles, much less again... But anyway, they rushed back to Jerusalem not waiting for morning, and they found the eleven disciples and proclaimed, "***It is true! The Lord has risen...***" and they told them of their encounter with the risen Jesus.

What would have happened if these two had failed to be hospitable, if they had just simply let Jesus go when he had planned to go on? They may have stayed paralyzed in their doubts. But because their hearts burned with love, because they invited him in, it was because of that that they received the richest of blessings -- so bountiful, so joyful, they could not remain quiet about their experience with Christ. Even after walking almost 7 miles, and the day was nearly over, and night travel was dangerous, they rushed 7 miles back to Jerusalem.

And I think Luke shares this one in depth resurrection appearance because it so typified the flip-flopping hearts of the Savior's followers in those first days. First expecting a physical kingdom set up on earth, and then filled with fear, and emptied of any potential future -- only then to find an empty tomb and an even better spiritual kingdom and future glory taking root in their hearts because the risen Christ is invited in.

So the Easter question is, Have we encountered the risen Christ in our life? Do our hearts burn with the fire of his Spirit? He still desires to enter any life that will open their heart to him. The question is, will you open the door, and let him in? Can you recognize him in the bread and cup?

## Communion

Pastor: Let's prepare our hearts for the table by singing Christ is Risen -- note in the 2nd and 3rd verse, the reference to the cup of resurrection and the bread of new creation that is offered to us by the risen Lord....

## Music

### Christ is Risen

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days.

Christ is risen! Hush in wonder; all creation is amazed.

In the desert all-surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.  
Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.  
Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.

Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend;  
Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven never more shall be the same.  
Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.

Tell its grim, demonic chorus: "Christ is risen! Get you gone!"

God the First and Last is with us. Sing Hosanna everyone!

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## Invitation

The table is open to **all** of us who desire to receive God's grace and life within us. Let's prepare our hearts by a time of confession.

**Confession** O God, source of all that makes life possible, giver of all that makes life good; we gather to give our thanks, yet we confess that too often our hearts do not burn with your presence, we fail to live out our thankfulness, taking what you have given for granted, and we grumble about what we think we lack. We squander your bounty, with little thought of those who are in need or who come after us. We are more troubled by the few who have more than by the many who have less. Forgive us, O God. In this hour of Easter worship, accept our thanksgiving; remind us how rich is our salvation, and teach us to make gratitude and sharing our way of life; through the grace of Jesus Christ.

**Assurance** And our assurance comes from you, Father who is always merciful and gracious, endlessly patient, loving, and true, showing mercy to thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and granting pardon. Amen.

## The Great Thanksgiving (L - Pastor C - Congregation)

It is Easter, so be energetic.

L: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them up to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, you love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our Sovereign God, and set before us the way of life. And so, with all your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

L: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, By his suffering, death and resurrection you gave birth to your church and delivered us from sin and death. By your great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of your Son from the dead -- to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. Once we were no people, but now we are your people, declaring your wonderful deeds in Christ, who called us out of darkness and into your wonderful light. When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always, in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit. And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**ALL: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

L: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. **ALL: Amen.**



L: On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, and he gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Take and eat.

And when the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, and he gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this all of you, this is the blood of the new covenant, poured out



for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." Take and drink.

### **Prayer**

Now Lord, we rise from this Communion, we praise you this day because the cross is empty, the tomb is empty, your love has conquered and continues to expand and defeat the dark forces of Friday that would drag us down, filling us instead with the light of Easter joy. You are no longer bound to an ancient story, you come to us in today's Fridays, in our conflicts, our fears, our suffering our struggles, you enter into every temptation and opposition and conflict and offer to restore us with your Easter-bought joy, justice, love, and praise. And it is in the risen Lord's name that we pray. Amen. Let's sing what I hope is all of our testimony - He Lives, I serve a risen Savior.

### **Closing Hymn He Lives**

### **Blessing**

So as we go, go in the glory in the cross that brings forgiveness, the grace that watches over and protects us... Know that the tomb is empty and your faith is established in our faith relationship with God by the resurrection, and that we serve a risen Savior who is unrestrained in his world today. Experience and share the joy of his risen life in you. Amen.