

Walking with Jesus 2020 Luke 24:13-35

My friends, this reading, from Luke, is a very familiar story, which has sometimes, been described, as one of, the loveliest short stories, ever written. For it tells, the story of a journey – something many of us, usually do, around Easter, and the Easter break, as we visit loved ones, family and friends. But on such an occasion, it can also, be a time, of mixed emotions. For we happy, to be with those, we love; but, BUT, we also remember those, who are no longer, here with us, to enjoy, the occasion.

And so today, I would like us to consider 3 points, from the Journey, of Luke 24, Firstly : Making the journey

Now, if we think, about the theme, of journey, we notice, that a number of journeys, play their part, in this reading, and the journey from Jerusalem, is the most obvious; for it's a journey, in which the disciples, are joined, by the risen, Jesus, apparently, a traveller, on a journey, of his own, which will continue, after theirs, is finished. But, BUT, during the journey, they talk, of the path, that has led them, to this moment; noting, their experiences, with Jesus, the travelling rabbi; their change, in perspective, as they have come, to realise, who he is; and then, THEN, the last journey, of Christ, to Jerusalem, followed by, his brutal death, which has made them, wonder, question, perhaps even doubt, the conclusions, about Jesus, that they came to, before. And all of this, takes place, beneath the journey, **from light to darkness**, as the day ends.

My friends, I have no doubt, that during the journey, there is some relief, in sharing their memories of Jesus, and their time together; but, BUT, if truth be told, their memories are, well, caught in a storm, batted to and fro, and they don't actually, seem, to get them, anywhere.

For, I think, understandably, in the midst, of their grief, they have lost, their sense, of perspective, like us, you and me, this is something, that can happen, when we feel grief, or guilt. For regret, takes over; and we think, about the things, we can no longer, say, or the things, we wish, we had said, and done. But, as perhaps you and I, already know, for ourselves, we cannot do anything, ANYTHING, about any of these, and so, we go, round and round, **round and round**, wishing..., wishing things, had been different. The result being, that all too often, our journey, of introspection takes us nowhere, just like, the two disciples. **For although, their physical journey, had a beginning, and an end, their journey, of discovery, was in, a downward spiral.**

Secondly : Sharing the journey

My Friends, it seems to me, that it is, only, ONLY, when Jesus, shares the journey, that they start, to make sense, of what, had happened. For Jesus, encourages them, to put these memories, in context; and the context, that truly matters, is to remember, the eternal purposes, of God, and it is, through doing that, they then see, who Jesus is.

Now, it must be said, that the life of Jesus, significant, though it was, only lasted, for 33 years. And in Luke, Jesus says '**Look, remember, remember that God, has been here, all along, and that his hand, HIS HAND, has been on, this whole situation.**'

My Friends, I sincerely believe, that our grief's, and struggles, whatever they may be, as well as, our joys and triumphs, are underneath, are surrounded by, the over-arching mercies, of our compassionate, eternal God.

Friends, for me, it is crucial, that the disciples on the Emmaus road, allow Jesus, to walk with them; for they, have to be prepared, to listen, TO LISTEN, to what he, has to say; and, and, in the end, they have to, invite him, **invite him**, to stay with them, for the miracle, to occur.

I must admit, that I like, the fact, that there were, two of them. Two disciples, two friends of Jesus, to share in this journey, for it allows, another point of view, to get in. And for me, this can be, a picture, of the church, that in community, we provide, different points, of view, and enable, one another, to move on. For, there is a time, when we grieve, that I have known, full well, when our loss, takes all our time, and energy, and trust me, this, **THIS**, is to be expected. But, **BUT**, if we are in a shared journey, then we can often, be enabled, supported, to move on; but, **BUT**, we, **WE**, have to be prepared, to do it. For if we sit alone, licking our wounds, as sometimes, many of us do, we need to allow others, **someone, to share our journey**, for if we do, we may find, that others, can be Christ, to us when we, **When We**, desperately need it; and, **AND** - when we feel better, we can be, Christ to them.

My Friends, I believe, that this, can be, the case, in many aspects, of church life, too. For we need, fellow believers, other Christians, around us, providing us, with a new perspective. You see, I think, that, we can, sometimes, become so used, to the church, **as it is**, that we can, get into, **a bit of a rut**. And, **AND**, in my experience, we can, even become, irritated, at the voice, that is pointing out, how we, should be doing, things differently. But, **BUT**, might this, just be, the voice, of the Holy Spirit, encouraging us, urging us, to new insights.... new ways of being, and doing ? I wonder, how harmful, could it be, if we do not, **DO NOT, ALLOW JESUS, to walk, into our journey, because we, are so afraid of change !**

Thirdly and to Conclude : Recognising Christ

My friends, the conclusion, of the story, is when Christ, is recognised, at an unexpected, moment. This can be, an awesome experience, and perhaps, the disciples, on the road to Emmaus, may have been told, about, the transfiguration, of Christ, on the mountain top. But here, he meets with them, not on a mountain, with a flash of light, and in the company, of prophets, of old, but at a meal table, through the breaking of bread, and flanked by two ordinary people.

For as we hear, in the Contemporary Version, of Luke 24 and verses 31 and 32 “At once they knew who he was, but he disappeared. They said to each other, “When he talked with us along the road and explained the Scriptures to us, didn’t it warm our hearts?”

My friends, those words, remind me of our founder, John Wesley, and his faith journey, who wrote of the events, on the 24th of May 1738, sating, “That evening he reluctantly attended a meeting in Aldersgate. Someone read from Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to Romans*. About 8:45 p.m. "while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

My friends, wherever we are, in our Journey of life, and of faith, I pray we may come, to recognise, Christ, for ourselves, as our Risen Saviour, Lord and friend; and that we would know, our hearts warmed, by the power, of God’s love, assured of his forgiveness, and purpose for our lives; lives transformed, by the power, of the Spirit, as the disciples of Christ.

Finally : Friends, for all of us, life changes; we move house; youngsters go, to university; there are births, deaths, weddings, and so on. Even everyday activities, are changed; things, that were shared, must be done alone, and they are, never the, same again; again, experiences, that we enjoyed, just as we like them, have to be adapted, so that others, can join in. And the changes, that life brings, can leave us, feeling anxious, and uncertain.

My Friends, the challenge, of the scripture, is to remember, that Christ, **walks with us**, even if, we aren't always, aware of it. For I believe, He walks with us, as others, get alongside us, and share, the journey, with us; for as I know, He was there, before loss; He is there, at times of celebration, and afterwards. And we, WE, are called to see, the whole, as part of, the same journey, in which Christ, comes alongside us, and asks, **ASKS**, our permission, to walk with us, and stays, **STAYS**, if we ask him, and helps us, to make sense, of the whole, of the journey, from its beginning to its end.

May we walk with, and know, the presence, of the Risen Christ as we journey on.. May we live, to Christ's Praise and Glory. **AMEN.**

Father, we thank you that you come out and meet us where we are.

We worship and adore you.

We thank you that you walk the road with us, that you treat us as an equal even when we fail to recognise you.

We worship and adore you.

You always love us, always care for us, always want to eat and drink with us – such is your love.

We worship and adore you.

Thank you, Lord, that you are not a stranger, but our friend.
We worship and adore you. **Amen.**

Well thank you for listening, and until we see each other again.
May may the blessing and peace of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you, and those you love,
this day and always Amen.