

Sunday Stroll

Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" (Luke 24:18).

A Sunday stroll is always good to take if you can get one in, especially in the spring. A short walk of reflection, meditation, and communication with the Lord, along with a time of preparation for the week ahead, does wonders for the soul. Luke tells us about a short walk that two of Jesus' followers took between the city of Jerusalem and Emmaus. One of the men is named Cleopas, and the other man's name we are not told, but we will know in heaven. And it is here on this road that a very bizarre, fascinating, and intriguing interaction takes place.

Jesus, who walked out of the tomb earlier that morning was now walking with Cleopas and his friend but was doing so in such a way that "their eyes were kept from recognizing him" (Luke 24:16). Cleopas and his buddy had thought that Jesus' body has been stolen. Yes, they had heard the report of Mary Magdalene and the other ladies at this point, but it seemed that they didn't connect the dots on Jesus' resurrection just yet. They were sad, they were confused, and probably had a huge feeling of dejection... Some commentators suggest that these men had given up their jobs and families to follow Jesus, and they were now Sunday strolling back to their normal lives. The fun was over, the Messianic mania had fizzled out, the reality check was coming... Or was it?

The name of Jesus was on the tip of their tongues, as it should be on ours as believers. Cleopas and his friend were talking about Jesus as Jesus himself was right before their eyes. Yet being concealed in His identity, the men continued to talk in a despairing mood of how they "hoped that Jesus was the one to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21). Finally, the atmosphere shifted as Jesus removed the spiritual veil from their eyes and they recognized the Resurrected Jesus standing before them. Jesus quickly vanished, and these two men ran back to Jerusalem to share with the Apostles in the Upper Room of this amazing encounter.

Now, what can we learn about this Sunday stroll? Well, many things... But here are a few:

- Never underestimate Jesus... Jesus always comes through with more than we expect!
- Seek to see Jesus in the most bizarre of places... A dusty farm-to-market road outside of the big city. Sounds like a great place to encounter the Redeemer to me.
- "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12). Ironically enough, the One who died on the tree has forever brought true life. These men had lost hope. Jesus flipped the script forever! Never lose hope in Jesus, for you have been "born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3).

Take a Sunday stroll soon. Enjoy the wildflowers, let the warm sun hit your skin, and look for that Third Man on the Road to Emmaus. Recognizing Jesus for who He really is changes everything!

Respect the Blood,
Dalton Mathis