

When You Meet the Master (Luke 24:13-35)

Every year on the anniversary of the death of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, friends gather and attempt to get in touch with his spirit. This is only one example of the interest people have in communicating with the dead. From seances among young girls at slumber parties to visits to psychics by people of all ages, an interest in spiritualism and communication with the dead is on the rise.

But in spite of all the attempts through the years to reach the dead and communicate with them, Jesus is the only one we know of who has risen from the dead all by himself. We realize, of course, that this is the Son of God who has been raised from the dead by the power of God. The resurrection is at the basis of our faith in Christ. The entire New Testament was written from the perspective of those who lived through Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. At least ten appearances of the risen Christ are recorded in the New Testament.

Not the least interesting of the post-resurrection appearances of Christ was his appearance to two believers on the road to Emmaus. Emmaus was about seven miles from Jerusalem, almost the same distance from St. Jacobi to Holy Hill. After hearing the report of the resurrection from them, Jesus began to teach them that this was the fulfillment of Scripture itself. When they reached their destination, he would have gone on, but they invited him to go in with them. When he took the position of host and began to break bread, they recognized who he was. This was the Master! He had indeed risen! They had been met by the Master!

The supreme need of each one of us is to meet the Master. We must have the kind of knowledge about Christ that is more than just knowing about him. We need to know him personally and experience his power in our lives. In this time after the cross and after the resurrection experience, we too can meet the Master.

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We can meet the Master when we are fearful.

Knowing that the other believers were meeting behind closed doors because of their fear of the Jews, we can be sure that these two believers were also fearful. Fear seems to be characteristic of our day. Many people are crippled by fear of any number of things, including the future.

We can meet the Master when we are disappointed.

The Christ-followers on the Emmaus Road were very disappointed. They had based their faith in Jesus, and he had been crucified. So many things disappoint us—other people, thwarted progress, failed projects, unfulfilled expectations, and more. In the midst of our disappointment, Christ appears to lead us to faith and life.

We can meet the Master when we are hopeless.

Verse 21 indicates that the hopes of these believers were dashed. They had hoped that Jesus would be the one to redeem Israel. Now he had been put to death, and

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their hope was gone. Yet, at the same time, when their hope was the lowest, Christ met them on the road.

We can meet the Master when we need forgiveness.

One of the most beautiful expressions in all the Gospels is found right here. When these men went rushing back to Jerusalem, they were met with the news that Jesus had appeared to Simon Peter. Remember the last time we saw Peter? He had openly denied Christ. But both here and in Paul's account in 1 Corinthians, it seems that Peter was the first disciple to whom Christ appeared. The one who most needed forgiveness and reassurance was the one Christ met first.

We can meet the Master through God's Word.

Jesus gave these believers an exposition of Scripture. He showed how he fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures. Here we have the living Word of God interpreting the written Word of God. Christ is the key to the

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interpretation of Scripture. We can meet Christ through the Bible.

We can meet the Master through divine revelation.

The eyes of these two believers were opened, and they realized who was talking to them. God revealed to them that Christ was the Son of God.

Whenever we meet Christ, that too, is a revelation of God.

We can meet Christ through the normal affairs of life.

The breaking of bread was not an observance of the Lord's Supper; it was a regular meal. In their normal affairs of life, eating a meal following a journey by foot, these believers met Christ. We look for special experiences, but in our normal, everyday activities we can meet the Master and have our lives totally changed.

When we meet the Master, it is an unforgettable experience. “Did not our heart burn within us?” these men ask themselves.

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In 1735, John Wesley went as a missionary to the colony of Georgia. He was to be a pastor to the settlers and a missionary to the Indians, but he confessed that he went to save his own soul. He failed as a missionary and returned to England.

On the evening of May 24, 1738, Wesley went to a society that met on Aldersgate Street in London, where someone was reading from Luther’s preface to the epistle to the Romans. He recorded that while the reader was describing the change God works in one’s heart through faith in Christ, he felt his own heart strangely warmed. He knew that he did trust Christ alone for salvation. With that, he had the assurance that Christ had taken away his sins and had saved him from the law of sin and death. As

with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, his heart burned within him.

When we meet the Master, it is a primary experience. This living proof that these believers had of the truth of the resurrection became their most important

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concern. They forgot their weariness and went rushing seven miles back to Jerusalem to let it be known that Christ was truly risen. When we meet Christ, everything else becomes secondary. This is indeed the most important experience we will have—the experience of salvation through Christ.

When we meet the Master, it is a shared experience.

The truth of Christ cannot be hidden; it must be shared. This truth has been called “hot potato news.” You don’t just stand around holding a hot potato. Neither do you just stand around holding the news of salvation in Christ. It must be shared. These Christ-followers rushed back to Jerusalem to

share it. Our commission is to share the news of salvation with all the world. This is what we must do.

You can meet Christ today just as those believers met him on the road. This is the truth of the resurrection. Christ is able to meet you now and bring you salvation

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even as you journey down the road of life. Come to him today.

So, what are the lessons we can learn from this Scripture reading from Luke?

Key lessons from this scripture reading include Jesus meeting us in our times of disappointment, doubt, and confusion, showing us that he meets us when we are sad and in doubt. Jesus teaches us

the importance of Scripture as he explained that His suffering and resurrection were necessary and predicted in the Scriptures. Jesus respects our free will as he waits for the disciples to invite him in, as he acted as if he was going further. The risen Lord transforms despair into action as the two believers shifted from disappointment to sharing their news of seeing the risen Christ.

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Please bow your heads as I pray.

Risen Savior, like those disciples on the road to Emmaus, we struggle to recognize you in the everyday journey of our lives. Open our eyes, Light of the World, to your work of transformation in and around us. As you opened the scriptures to the disciples, open our eyes to behold you in your Word. Help us to recognize and welcome the stranger in our midst, Help us to develop a “burning heart” to

increase our belief of your Son. We ask this in the name of your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.