



THE EXHORTER

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40

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Jump Start # 1381

Luke 24:13 *“And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.”*

The road to Emmaus became one of the most impressive post resurrection stories of Jesus. Our risen Lord took the time to walk the seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus with Cleopas and another unnamed traveler. The two travelers did not recognize Jesus. They were saddened because they had heard that Jesus was to redeem Israel. They knew of the crucifixion. They knew that something was supposed to happen after three days. They had even heard reports from some women who had gone to the grave of Jesus and found it empty. They told of angels and visions and the claim that He was alive. Some of the disciples had checked out the tomb, and found it to be empty. Rumors were flying that day.

But now, these two were walking home. They were walking home, the text tells us, sad. They seemed to be disappointed. They must not have believed the reports. As they walked, they talked. As I write these words, a neighbor is out for a morning walk. The neighbor is walking fast. A brisk walk for exercise. These two heading home to Emmaus, were sad. A sad walk is not the same as the early morning exercise walk. I've seen the sad walk before. I've seen it when parents have dropped off their child at college for the first time. There is some reluctance to let them go. I've seen that sad walk after the funeral. The final "amen" has been said, folks have hung around and visited, most have left, and now the family returns to the car. It's a slow, sad walk. There have been a few times when I have preached my final sermon at a congregation. That last time to the pulpit, the one final look around the office where so many hours were spent, the pulling out of the parking lot, and the final look back, tears, reflection, prayers and a bit of sadness.

There are some interesting things about these two Emmaus guys.

First, with what seemed to be such convincing evidence about an empty tomb, they still didn't believe. The women had been there. Some of the disciples had been there. It fit with what Jesus was saying, "three days." It all made sense, but here they are, walking home sad. They seem to be a bit like Thomas, the doubter, who said, I will not believe unless I see. Jesus said, 'blessed are those who have not seen yet believed.' That's us. You are I walk on that road to Emmaus.

(OVER)

The Lord hasn't shown Himself to us literally. He has not appeared in a vision like Saul of Tarsus witnessed. He has not held out His hands as He did for Thomas. Our faith is based upon what others said. The evidence is overwhelming. The proof is there.

Second, the Emmaus duo would experience with the disciples, what they had with the report from the women. Once they reached Emmaus, a seven mile journey, and their eyes and hearts were opened and they realized that it was Jesus, they hurried back to Jerusalem. Another seven miles. I expect the journey back was much faster. They had changed from being sad to being excited. When there is exciting news to share, we hurry. They couldn't wait to see the rest of the disciples. They had good news to share. It is Jesus. He is alive. The sad walk turned into a fast, exciting walk. They probably ran. I would have. The Gospel of Mark tells us that when they reported to the others about Jesus, "they did not believe them either." Just as the reports from the women were disbelieved, now their story was not believed either. They felt what the women felt.

Third, it's amazing that the resurrected Savior took the time to walk seven miles to Emmaus with these two men. Why spend the time with these two? Why walk toward the small village of Emmaus? Why not show up in Pilate's palace? Why not stand on top of the Temple and thunder your voice? Why not appear in Rome? Why on a lonely road with two lonely guys heading to a small village? God doesn't operate the way we think He should. His ways are higher than our ways. The two disappointed men heading home would have spread their disappointing news to others. The gloom and doom would have been told over and over. Instead, Jesus appeared. He didn't just show up and vanish. He walked with them. Seven miles. He began with Moses, and using Scriptures, told His story. He connected the dots spiritually. He didn't just show them, He taught them. They understood. They could now tell others, based upon Scriptures why Jesus came and died. They had Biblical proof, taught by Jesus.

Wouldn't you have loved to sit in that Bible class, with Jesus as the teacher? Now, loaded with this evidence, visible proof and Scriptural proof, these two men, could spread the news about the risen Savior. Not only had they seen Him, they had been taught by Him, and they had proof from the Scriptures. They knew. There was no doubting among them now.

What Jesus did with these two, serves as an example for us. Jesus showed us how to have a Bible study. These two men had doubts. They were not sure. Jesus allowed them to talk. He then began with Moses and showed through the Scriptures what Jesus came to do. That's what we must do as well. Don't just tell someone, show them. Prove it. Use the Bible. Let others read it in their own Bibles. Explain Scriptures. Point to Scriptures. Build that foundation of faith based upon Scripture.

Jesus took the time to teach two guys heading home. It's the same thing that we can do. A simple Bible study. It takes time, patience, listening and showing-but when it all comes together, eyes are opened and hearts believe.

My spiritual hero, Dee Bowman, when preaching about Heaven, talks about seeing these too little guys just inside Heaven's gate. In a masterful way, He makes the journey to Heaven seem like a seven mile walk with the Lord.

The road to Emmaus is a journey that most of us take. We have questions, doubts and are not sure. We look. We listen. We read Scripture. We are taught. We learn. We become sure. Joy fills our heart. The rest of the journey becomes much different than how we started.

The road to Emmaus...our journey with the Lord.

Roger Shouse