

## Third Sunday of Easter

### Text: Luke 24:13-35

<sup>13</sup>Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. <sup>15</sup>As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; <sup>16</sup>but they were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup>He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. <sup>18</sup>One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" <sup>19</sup>"What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was



a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. <sup>20</sup>The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; <sup>21</sup>but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. <sup>22</sup>In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning <sup>23</sup>but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. <sup>24</sup>Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." <sup>25</sup>He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup>Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" <sup>27</sup>And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. <sup>28</sup>As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. <sup>29</sup>But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup>When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. <sup>32</sup>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?" <sup>33</sup>They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together <sup>34</sup>and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." <sup>35</sup>Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

### Theme: He Walks with us and He Talks with us

One of the best known old Christians songs in our country is "In the Garden." (To be honest, it's not one of my favorites.) You probably know the phrase "And He walks with me and he talks with me." In our text we see how our Lord walks with us and talks with us.

I. Our risen Savior walks with us, even when we don't recognize Him.

These two followers of Jesus were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus, discussing all that had happened on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. They had heard the report from the woman that the Lord had risen, but they didn't believe it. Then Jesus came and asked them what they were talking about, and they walked with Jesus for 7 miles without recognizing Him. He was with them every step of the way, even though they didn't know it.

The joyful Easter Gospel that we hear again today is that Christ is risen indeed. His grave is empty,

and He lives. But He isn't with His people for just a moment, and then He goes away. He lives and walks with us every step of the way of our life, even when we don't see Him, and even when it's hard to feel His presence.

It was already that way in the Old Testament. Remember the story of Jacob. After He tricked His father into giving Him the blessing rather than Esau, Esau threatened to kill him, so he fled to His uncle Laban in Haran. The first night of the journey, he stayed in Bethel where he saw the vision of the stairway to heaven. This is what God promised him at the end of that vision, *"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."* (Gen 28:15) God showed His presence among the Israelites as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night as He led them to the promised land. Just before Israel entered the promised land, God promised Moses and Joshua that he would never leave or forsake His people. King David gives us one of the most beautiful pictures of God's presence in Psalm 23, *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me."*

Again and again God assured His people in the Old Testament that He was with them. That is just as true in the New Testament. Jesus rose from the dead, and in Matthew 28 He told His disciples, *"Lo, I am with you always to the end of the age."* In Matthew 18, He promises that where two or three are gathered together in His name, there He is with us. Christ is with us as our Savior, our helper, our friend, and our brother. We know that because He paid for our sins on Calvary, that He will be with us in every need and help us through every trouble in life, and through Him we can go to God boldly and confidently in prayer.

But sometimes it gets easy to forget that He is with us. There was a time when Martin Luther was feeling very blue and melancholy. As often happens, his misery spread to the rest of His family. Finally, his wife came to him dressed in black. He asked her what happened and why she was dressed that way. She answered, "God must be dead, for I find Dr. Luther to be very downcast." Her little object lesson helped him to remember that God was alive and that his Savior was with him.

When troubles come into our lives, we sometimes worry and fret as if Christ was dead and buried and no place to be found. Sometimes when temptation comes calling, we forget that He sees everything that we do, and we do things of which we would be very ashamed if we remembered that He is always with us, even when we sin. There are times when we know that He is risen indeed, but we forget that He is with us indeed! But even if temptation makes Him seem far away, and if we can't see and feel His presence in times of trouble, He is still there...

II. He talks with us and reminds us of His presence through His Word and His supper.

As Jesus walked with the 2 disciples He began to explain the Scriptures to them. He showed them how the Scriptures say that the Christ must suffer before entering His glory. Later the disciples recalled how their hearts burned within them as He opened the Scriptures to them. They finally recognized Him when He took the bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them.

In those same two ways, Jesus reveals Himself to us today. Through His Word and His supper, He reminds us that He is with us. He showed them that the Scriptures are all about Him and His

salvation for us. The Law shows us our need for a Savior, and the Gospel shows us that He is the Savior of the world. When we read the Scriptures, be they the New or Old Testament, we are reminded of Jesus and His salvation for us. That's why we have our daily devotions, to remember that Jesus is with us today. It's why we gather to worship and to hear His Word, to remember that Jesus is with us. I hope that the basic message that you get from every one of my sermons is what Jesus is doing for you. When we hear God's Word, we remember, "Yes, Christ is risen! Yes, Christ is with me!"

As if words were not enough, He also reveals Himself to us in His supper. He gives us His body and blood, which were given and shed for our salvation as the assurance that our salvation is accomplished. Sometimes it's hard to believe that we are saved, but in this Sacrament, He reminds us that He paid for our salvation, by giving us the very things that purchased our salvation. At this altar we remember, His body was given for me, and His blood was shed to pay for my sins too.

God's Word and Supper remind us that our sins are forgiven, that there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ, and that we are heirs of heaven through Jesus Christ. They remind us that we are His, and He is ours, and nothing can ever separate us.

III. He will remain with us, even after we leave this place.

As evening approached, the disciples asked Jesus, "*Stay with us , for it is nearly evening, and the day is almost over.*" But then after they recognized Him in the breaking of the bread, He disappeared from their sight. They couldn't see Him anymore, but He was still with them.

Even when our worship is over or when your devotional times ends, Jesus is still with you. Remember those words that He spoke to His disciples, "*Lo, I am with you always, until the very end of the age.*" He is with you, guiding you, comforting you, holding your hand, and defending you from all kinds of evils that the devil brings your way. When you leave this place, Jesus doesn't say good-bye. He goes with you through that door. He is with you every step of your life. He is even there in the dark days when you also pass through the valley of the shadow of death. As it says in Psalm 121 when you look at the hills and obstacles in front of you and wonder where your help will come from, He is your help. Such times test our faith, and remind us not to lean on our own wisdom or strength, but on Him who walks with us every step of the way.

In this Easter Season we rejoice that Christ died to take away our sins, and He rose as our victorious Savior. But He isn't off on vacation someplace. He is not a God who is far away. He is near all who call upon His name. Christ walks with us and He talks with us through His sure Word of the Scriptures!

Go today in that peace.  
Amen.

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