

Revealed
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Luke 24:18-31

Opening: Susan and I have a running joke between us as empty nesters. She will be engrossed in a task in another part of the house or outside and I innocently walk up to where she is and speak, and she jumps ten feet in the air! *"You scared me to death! Don't sneak up on me!"* *"I wasn't sneaking up on you!"* 😊 So, now it's become a big joke when I'm approaching her if she's not expecting me I'll stomp my feet and clear my throat over and over and we laugh. The problem was I was there but she wasn't expecting me.

A couple of Jesus' followers had a similar experience walking home from Jerusalem after His crucifixion. They were confused and disillusioned. They had been convinced Jesus was the promised Messiah but Rome and the Jewish leaders had destroyed their hopes for a conquering King. They heard rumors Jesus had risen from the dead but they couldn't wrap their minds around it. Let's walk along with them starting in Luke 24:13 (NLT.)

Luke 24:13–35 (NLT) — 13 That same day two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. **14** As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. **15** As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus himself suddenly came and began walking with them. **16** But God kept them from recognizing him. **17** He asked them, "What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?" They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. **18** Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days." **19** "What things?" Jesus asked. "The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth," they said. "He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people. **20** But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him. **21** We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel. This all happened three days ago. **22** "Then some women from our group

of his followers were at his tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report. **23** They said his body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive! **24** Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, his body was gone, just as the women had said.” **25** Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. **26** Wasn’t it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?” **27** Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. **28** By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. Jesus acted as if he were going on, **29** but they begged him, “Stay the night with us, since it is getting late.” So he went home with them. **30** As they sat down to eat, he took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them. **31** Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared! **32** They said to each other, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?”

- You can learn a lot from the “funny papers!” With the advent of digital newspapers we may rarely see the comic pages but let me illustrate this passage with two memories from the comic strips.
- Do you remember, “Where’s Waldo?” What was the premise of it?
- Do you remember the “Magic Eye” pictures? How did that work?ⁱ
- Waldo was there but you had to really look to see him. The 3-D image in the Magic Eye picture was there but some people just couldn’t see it.
- I had walked into the room but Susan didn’t realize I was there.
- Though we know He’s there, sometimes Christ-followers don’t perceive Jesus’ presence in our lives.

Truth that should change us: Jesus is always there but sometimes we’re not paying attention. He will always reveal Himself to those who seek Him.

- Let's look into these verses to learn how to look for Jesus in our lives.
- This post-resurrection appearance of Jesus is only in Luke's account.
- Verse 16 says God kept them from recognizing Jesus.
- Scripture doesn't tell us why but let's speculate.
- How would their experience have been different if Jesus had been immediately recognizable? What would they have missed?
- Example: Wouldn't reading be more efficient if writers and publishers only gave us the first and last pages of a book? Why don't they do that?
- As we walk with Jesus we all want to skip to the last page of the book. *"Lord, this is too hard, can't we just get to 'they lived happily ever after?'"*
- These disciples needed this encounter. They needed this Old Testament seminar. They needed Jesus to make their "hearts burn" with truth.
- We've touched on it; why were these two Christ-followers so down?
- How can that apply to us? We would never be disillusioned if God the Father allowed everything to go exactly as we _____(what?)
- We might think it would be terrific if God arranged life to be exactly as we expect it to be. Granted, we would be able to avoid sad, hard chapters, but what else would we miss if God simply did things the way we expect?
 - God's plans are always better than my plans (Eph. 3:20.)
 - God uses difficult circumstances to draw us closer to Him.
 - God uses difficult circumstances to cause us to depend on Him.
 - God uses difficult and unexpected circumstances to glorify Himself.
- God is not our "butler" serving up whatever we order. He is our Heavenly Father Who orchestrates the events of our life for our good and His glory.
- In verses 25 and 26 Jesus rebuked them for not understanding what the Old Testament scriptures had revealed about the coming Messiah.

- *“Wasn’t it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?”ⁱⁱ*
- Then Jesus gave them a walking Bible seminar starting with Moses and going through all the prophets. The topic: What scripture said about HIM!
- Jesus “connected the dots” of scripture’s predictions about the Messiah.
- Can you imagine having Jesus lead your Bible study! Sorry, you’re stuck with me! How does Jesus actually STILL lead us unpacking scripture?
- In **John 14:26 (ESV) — 26** Jesus said, *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”*
- You may not physically see Jesus when you are studying scripture but He’s there through the Holy Spirit to open your heart to the truth.
- These two disciples took Jesus home for dinner. They had their own version of the “Lord’s supper.” Just as Jesus blessed the meal:

³¹ *Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And at that moment he disappeared!* ³² *They said to each other, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?”ⁱⁱⁱ*

- Their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus. As followers of Christ we’ve all had those moments where suddenly we said to ourselves: *“That was Jesus!” “When I was encouraged, protected, carried, that was Jesus!”*
- Jesus was there working in our lives as He always is, we just didn’t notice.
- What keeps us from seeing Jesus in our daily lives? Let’s look at that.
- We have a saying, *“You can’t see the forest for the trees.”* What does it mean? What would it take to see the whole forest and not just the trees around you? How does that apply to not seeing that Jesus is with us?

- Sometimes we become so focused on our immediate circumstances that we miss God's big picture. We need to climb up to see His perspective.
- You've heard of Mt. Everest? We need to climb Mt. NEVERLEFT to remember that Jesus never leaves or forsakes us. (Heb. 13:5)
- Sometimes we can't see Jesus not because of the trees but the "weeds."
- Remember the parable of the sower? Jesus said in **Luke 8:14 (ESV) — 14** *"And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature."*
- In the garden of our relationship with Christ it's crucial to pull the weeds.
- Jesus said weeds can be worries, pleasures, or possessions. If we don't deal with the weeds regularly they can grow so tall we can't see Jesus.
- Sometimes we can't see Jesus because of the "fog" of disappointment and disillusionment. When driving through fog what should we NOT do?
- When we're driving through the fog of disappointment and disillusionment we need to go slow and trust Jesus for what we cannot see until He lifts the fog. He always, eventually lifts the fog.
- Let's apply this to our lives. How can we improve our vision to see Jesus?
- First, we need to remind ourselves He's always there and look for Him.
- Back to my story of "sneaking up on Susan." I stomp and cough but sometimes she still doesn't hear me. Jesus said in **Revelation 3:20 (ESV) — 20** Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.
- That verse isn't for the unsaved, it's for the church, for followers of Christ.
- Jesus is always at the door ready to have relationship with us but we have our earpods pumping with the noise of life and can't hear Him knocking.

- If you were expecting company you would listen intently for the knock on the door. As Christ-followers we need to be looking and listening for Him.
- How do we improve our vision so we can see Jesus? How did it happen for these two men on the road to Emmaus?
- Chuck Swindoll gives us a great application in four points:
 - *“Invite God in.* If you haven’t begun a relationship with God, you will continue to struggle in vain.
 - *Surrender your expectations.* Personalize the following prayer and then offer it to God. *My Heavenly Father, I greatly desire _____.* *While this expectation is mostly honorable and good, it is nonetheless mine and may not be Yours. I am frustrated and disillusioned because all my efforts to accomplish what I believe to be right fail to accomplish anything. Therefore, I must accept that the outcome I desire is not what You desire. Lord, I release my expectation, and I humbly ask You to accomplish Your will in whatever manner You see fit and in whatever time You consider appropriate. Amen.*
 - *Seek God’s perspective.* To help the two disciples see their circumstances from God’s perspective, Jesus explained the Scriptures.
 - *Trust God’s timing.* God, in His perfect discernment, did not allow the two disciples to recognize Jesus until the time was right. He didn’t allow them to suffer in grief a moment longer than was absolutely necessary, yet He didn’t end their discomfort too soon. Spiritual maturity rarely occurs instantaneously. Growth usually requires a journey, and journeys take time. Submit to God’s will and trust His timing. He is faithful.”^{iv}

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Am I looking for Jesus? Am I listening for His knock?
- Illustration: Knox sees “shapes” that we miss.
- Jesus is always there but sometimes we’re not paying attention.
- He will always reveal Himself to those who seek Him.

- This week let's pray the words of that little chorus we sing: *"Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. I want to see you!"*

ⁱ The books feature [autostereograms](#), which allow some people to see [3D](#) images by focusing on [2D](#) patterns. The viewer must [diverge](#) their eyes in

ⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Lk 24:26). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Lk 24:31–32). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

^{iv} <https://www.insight.org/resources/article-library/individual/encountering-jesus-along-life%27s-road>