

Church Year Story 21

*Catechism and Memory Verse
from the Congregation at Prayer for the Week*

BIBLE STORY: JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Luke 24:13-35

Central Thoughts

- God's Word is the only thing that can create and sustain faith in Christ.
- God's Word is the only thing that can teach us that it was necessary that Jesus suffer and die for our sins.
- The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the central message of the Old Testament Scriptures
- The purpose of preaching and catechesis is to create and sustain faith in Christ.
- The Lord's Supper is faithfully celebrated only when it is preceded by the faithful preaching and teaching of God's Word.
- The preaching of God's Word and the celebration of the Lord's Supper will continue until Christ returns in glory.

Discussion Questions

What day were the two disciples traveling from Jerusalem to Emmaus?

Easter Sunday, the day that Jesus rose from the dead

What were they talking about?

Jesus' suffering and death at the hands of the chief priests and elders of the people

Why did Jesus prevent them from recognizing Him with their eyes?

He wanted them to "see" Him through the Scriptures, to hear how the Scriptures taught that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and die, and on the third day to rise again.

How does Jesus begin to catechize them?

He pretends not to know what had happened and He asks them to tell Him. By doing this he teaches us that they knew everything that had happened to Jesus. They even recorded the facts accurately, but still they did not believe that it was necessary for Him to be crucified and to rise from the dead the third day according to the Scriptures.

What question does Jesus ask them?

"What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

What does their immediate reply tell us?

Everyone in Jerusalem knew what had happened to Jesus of Nazareth.

How does Jesus respond to their question?

He asks them another question about what happened.

How do they answer Him?

They recall for Him how they believed that Jesus was the Prophet who was going to redeem Israel (Deut. 18) and how He had been condemned to death and crucified. They also reported to Him how the women who went to the tomb earlier that day had seen a vision of angels who said He was alive, and how the disciples went to the tomb and found it empty.

Did the disciples accurately report the basic facts surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection?

Yes

What fact caused them to doubt that Jesus was the Redeemer?

His suffering and death

What is ironic about them not believing that He was the Redeemer?

The very cause of our redemption, Jesus' suffering and death for our sins, is what they stumbled over.

Why do they not believe?

Faith in Christ can only be created by God's Word through which the Holy Spirit calls us to repentance and faith. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17).

How does Jesus respond to their unbelief?

He calls them "foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!"

How does Jesus catechize them?

He opens up to them all the Old Testament Scriptures (the Torah and the Prophets), teaching them from the Scriptures that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and die before entering into His glory in the resurrection.

How long did Jesus' catechesis from the Old Testament last?

Perhaps as long as half a day, since the journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus was seven miles.

Why did the disciples ask Jesus to stay with them?

It was toward evening and they wanted to hear more

When did the disciples recognize Him?

When He "sat at table with them...took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them."

What happened immediately after they received the bread from Jesus?

They recognized Him with their eyes.

What was the breaking of the bread?

The Lord's Supper

What preceded the Lord's Supper?

Jesus' catechesis or preaching from the Scriptures.

What does this teach us about how the Lord's Supper should be celebrated today?

The preaching of the Gospel from the Scriptures must always precede the celebration of the Lord's Supper, so that communicants receive the Sacrament with true faith in Jesus' words.

How do we know that faith in Jesus' death and resurrection had been kindled in their hearts?

They said to each other, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

Did Jesus leave them?

No, Luke records that Jesus "vanished from their sight." He is still present with us by His Word and sacraments, even though we may not see Him with our eyes.

What did these disciples do immediately after having received the Sacrament?

They ran back to Jerusalem to tell the Eleven that the Lord was risen indeed.

When did they say that Jesus was made known to them?

"In the breaking of the bread"—the Lord's Supper

Where should we seek Jesus?

In the preaching of the Gospel and in the Lord's Supper

Meditation on the Bible Story

Jesus' catechesis of the disciples on the road to Emmaus teaches us that the only source and foundation for faith in Christ is the Word of God. Jesus prevented the disciples from recognizing Him with their eyes, so that He could teach them to recognize Him with their ears in the preaching of the Gospel from the Holy Scriptures. Faith in Christ comes by hearing the Word of God preached to us. According to Jesus, the entire Old Testament is about Him and preaches that His death and resurrection is necessary for salvation. The Old Testament Scriptures not only teach the necessity of the death and resurrection of the Christ, but also that coming to faith in Jesus depends upon the preaching of repentance and the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. The proper celebration of the Lord's Supper always involves preaching before the Sacrament is received. Through the preaching of God's Word, the Holy Spirit refreshes our faith, so that we receive Jesus' body and blood worthily. This is why the sermon always precedes the distribution of the Lord's body and blood in the Divine Service.

Prayer on the Bible Story

O Lord Jesus, by the preaching of the Gospel from the Holy Scriptures, open our hearts to believe in Your death and resurrection for the forgiveness of our sins, so that we receive Your body and blood in true faith, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



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